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Immigration, Integration, and Intersectoral Partnership: A Critical Examination of Introductory Winter Sport Programmes for Newcomers to Canada

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Immigration, Integration, and Intersectoral Partnership: A Critical Examination of Introductory
Winter Sport Programmes for Newcomers to Canada

by

Simon John Barrick

A THESIS

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Abstract

Sport participation is popularly constructed as a key aspect of integration for newcomers into their new countries of residence. These claims, however, are critiqued by sport and migration researchers. While newcomer sport participation is receiving increasing scholarly interest, lived experiences of newcomers in introductory winter sport programmes and the (in)efficacy of such programmes remains underexplored. Winter sports hold a central place within Canadian culture and identity, making the intersection between winter sport, immigration, integration, and Canadian identity a timely topic of investigation. I approached this research from a relativist ontological as well as interpretivist and social constructionist epistemological perspectives. The overarching purpose was to explore the realities of designing and implementing introductory winter sport programmes as well as the lived experiences of newcomer participants. First, six Canadian *Intro to Sport* programmes involving newcomers were examined using an interpretivist, qualitative research design. Results from this study were incorporated into designing the WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP), an intersectoral community partnership comprising sport administrators, settlement service practitioners from three separate organizations, and me. I adopted a qualitative case study research design to explore the lived experiences of WNP participants and their parents as well as the (in)efficacy of the WNP as an intersectoral community partnership. Results illuminated the value of winter sport participation for newcomers to Canada as well as various challenges facing the sustainability of newcomer winter sport participation. The WNP represents a maturing intersectoral community partnership that has excelled at introducing newcomers to Canadian winter sports. Yet, various weaknesses (e.g., collaborators negotiating job-related time pressures) are obstructing the collaboration's effectiveness. Together, the results critique and identify shortcomings in newcomer introductory

winter sport programmes, while also offering important insights into how newcomer introductory winter sport programmes may be designed to foster positive outcomes.

Preface

Under the supervision and guidance of my primary supervisor, Dr. William Bridel, and my co-supervisor Dr. David Paskevich, I, Simon Barrick, was the principal researcher for this doctoral study. I took a leading role in all stages of the research process (i.e., study conceptualization, procuring institutional research ethics board approval, study recruitment, fieldwork, data analysis, preparing manuscripts for submission/publication), and was the lead and/or sole author of all dissertation chapters. Dr. Bridel oversaw my progress through all dissertation stages, while serving as co-author for *chapters two* and *four*. Ms. Joan Bard Miller was also a co-author of *chapter two*. Drs. Paskevich, Nicole Culos-Reed, Reed Ferber, Lloyd Wong, and Kyle Rich provided feedback on the final version of all five dissertation chapters during my dissertation defence.

Chapter two of this dissertation has been submitted – and subsequently published – as: Barrick, S., Bridel, W., & Bard Miller, J. (2021). Striving for newcomer inclusion: A critical analysis of Canadian Intro to Sport programs. *Leisure/Loisir*. 45(1), 1-34. DOI: 10.1080/14927713.2021.1872406

I led all stages of the research process (i.e., study conceptualization, procuring institutional research ethics board approval, study recruitment, fieldwork, data analysis, preparing manuscripts for submission/publication), with Dr. Bridel and Ms. Bard Miller being active collaborators at every stage.

Chapter three of this dissertation has been submitted as: Barrick, S. “It’s just about having fun”? Exploring the lived experiences of newcomers to Canada in introductory winter sport programmes. Submitted to a sport sociology journal on April 2, 2022.

I solely performed all stages of the research process (i.e., study conceptualization, procuring institutional research ethics board approval, study recruitment, fieldwork, data analysis, preparing manuscripts for submission/publication), with Dr. Bridel providing support and guidance at every stage.

Chapter four of this dissertation has been submitted as: Barrick, S. & Bridel, W. “It’s all about making a difference”: Interrogating a newcomer intersectoral community partnership. Submitted to a sport management journal on January 4, 2022.

I led all stages of the research process (i.e., study conceptualization, procuring institutional research ethics board approval, study recruitment, fieldwork, data analysis, preparing manuscripts for submission/publication), with Dr. Bridel being actively involved at every stage.

This qualitative dissertation was informed by the work of the following content experts:

- Dr. William Bridel, *PhD, Associate Professor, Associate Dean (Academic)*, Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Calgary.
- Ms. Joan Bard Miller, *Learn to Skate Coordinator*, Skate Canada¹

¹ Ms. Joan Bard Miller now works as a Governance Analyst at Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

Dedication

“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of [their] skin, or [their] background, or [their] religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

- Nelson Mandela

I dedicate this dissertation to everyone working to make this world a little bit better.

A little more Loving.

Inclusive.

Just.

And.

Anti-racist.

I see you. I stand with you.

Fight on.

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This moment has been a long time coming. I cannot begin to express the emotions I'm experiencing as I sit down to write these words.

Completing a PhD is a journey, one requiring a village of support. Words cannot adequately begin to capture my gratitude to the people who helped make this dissertation possible – but I'll give it a shot!

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I am so very fortunate to have had the pleasure of working with Ms. Joan Bard Miller in the early stages of my PhD. I learned so much from you about working in sport and am proud to call you a colleague.

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Without a doubt, one of the most important people in a graduate student's journey is their graduate program administrator (GPA). I had the distinct pleasure of interacting with two rockstar GPAs during my time at UCalgary. A heartfelt thank you to Rosalie Kolstad and Alix Westgard for your unflinching support over the years. You make huge impacts in many lives.

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I am indebted to various UCalgary student organizations – The Graduate College, Kinesiology Graduate Students' Association, and the Graduate Students' Association – for the opportunity to refine my leadership skills and give back to my communities.

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List of Symbols and Abbreviations

BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour
CFN	Centre for Newcomers
CIWA	Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
CODA	Calgary Olympic Development Association
CSP	Canadian Sport Policy
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
ICC	Institute for Canadian Citizenship
Intro to sport	Introductory sport programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
TA	Thematic analysis
UCalgary	University of Calgary
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WNP	WinSport Newcomers Programme

Chapter One: General Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The role of sport participation in managing immigration and the integration of newcomers into their host societies is receiving increasing popular and scholarly attention (Agergaard, 2018). Amid rising global migration rates (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR, n.d.), Canada represents a leading Global North² immigrant host country that welcomes hundreds of thousands of newcomers – primarily from Global South countries – each year (International Organization for Migration - IOM, 2019; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada - IRCC, 2021a). Canada has also implemented several key pieces of legislation (e.g., Canadian Multiculturalism Policy, 1971) and immigration policy (e.g., The 1967 Points System) to promote immigration, newcomer settlement, and ethnoracial diversity (Bannerji, 2000; Guo & Guo, 2015; Kymlicka, 2015; Leung, 2015; Mackey, 2002; Siemiatycki, 2012).

The central place of newcomers and ethnoracial diversity in Canadian society has led sport and leisure stakeholders to increasingly prioritize the needs and experiences of individuals and communities from diverse ethnoracial and cultural backgrounds (Forde et al., 2015; Golob & Giles, 2011; Kramers et al., 2021; Rich & Giles, 2015). While newcomer sport and leisure research in the Canadian context represents a growing topic (e.g., Curtin et al., 2018; Lauckner et al., 2021; Nadeau et al., 2016; Rich et al., 2015), a dearth of studies exist focusing on newcomer participation in winter sports that hold a prominent place within Canadian identity (e.g., ice hockey, ice skating; Wong & Dennie, 2021b).

² I use the terms Global North and Global South here to organize countries based on socio-economic and political characteristics. Global North countries generally represent socio-economically and politically developed societies including all of Europe and North America, among others. Global South countries are socio-economically and politically developing societies throughout much of South America, Africa, and Asia. Yet, such sweeping generalizations have faced extensive scholarly critique. For instance, Piedalue and Rishi's (2017) postcolonial feminist theoretical interrogation of the Global South categorization is particularly instructive here.

It is at the intersection between immigration, integration, winter sport participation, and Canadian identity that I situated this dissertation. My purpose was to explore the realities of designing and implementing introductory sport programmes (with specific focus on winter sport programming) as well as the lived experiences of newcomer programme participants. Through adopting a community-engaged focus in this dissertation, I am responding to Cooky's (2017) call for sport sociology scholars to "do" public sociology that Donnelly and colleagues (2014) argue is practical, public, and ready to make a difference. Together, the results presented in this dissertation critique and identify shortcomings in newcomer introductory winter sport programmes, while also offering important insights into how newcomer introductory winter sport programmes may be designed to foster positive outcomes.

In the remainder of this chapter, I provide a review of the literature related to newcomer sport in Canada and intersectoral partnership scholarship. I then state the purpose of this dissertation and the research questions that guided the subsequent manuscript chapters. Next, I introduce the theory as well as methodology and methods that informed the study writ large. Data analysis, researcher reflexivity, and positionality considerations are then presented. I conclude by providing an outline of the subsequent dissertation chapters.

1.2. Newcomer Sport in Canada

The inclusion and integration of newcomers into host societies, and the spaces where this happens, is receiving growing scrutiny by immigration practitioners, policy makers, and academics (Hansen, 2014; Omidvar & Richmond, 2005; Siemiatycki, 2012). Sport spaces represent important sites for social inquiry as sport holds a central place in the lives of individuals, communities, and nations (Coakley & Donnelly, 2009). This is the case for many newcomers. Practitioners are increasingly recognizing this reality and using sport programmes to

help newcomers achieve important outcomes like integration (Adler Zwahlen et al., 2018; Agergaard, 2018; Middleton et al., 2020; Spaaij, 2012; Walseth, 2016), social inclusion (Forde et al., 2015; Frisby, 2011; McDonald et al., 2019; Rich et al., 2015), and sense of belonging to one's local community (Jedwab & Holley, 2021; Spaaij, 2015; Wong & Dennie, 2021b). As immigration and the settlement of newcomers into host societies remains a national and global priority, further research is required to investigate the mechanisms of newcomer integration across diverse geographic and sport contexts (Agergaard, 2018).

Scholarly research examining newcomer sport participation across the world represents a burgeoning topic. Relevant research is concentrated in Western Europe (e.g., Anderson et al., 2019; Elmoose-Østerlund et al., 2019; Flensner et al., 2021; Stura, 2019; Walseth, 2016), Australia (e.g., Block & Gibbs, 2017; Jeanes et al., 2015; McDonald et al., 2019; Spaaij, 2012, 2015), and North America (e.g., Fader et al., 2019; Hartwig & Mason, 2016; Robinson et al., 2019; Smart et al., 2020; Whitley et al., 2016). This trend is consistent with migration patterns from Global South to North countries, with the United States of America, Germany, Australia, and Canada routinely being top destinations for newcomers (IOM, 2019). That sport sociology and sport management scholars focus much of their research on the Global North and are principally employed by universities in Global North countries also helps explain this trend (Chen, 2022; Toffoletti et al., 2018).

In Canada, newcomer sport, recreation, and leisure researchers have focused on the social inclusion and exclusion experienced by newcomers, the design of programmes involving newcomers, and the relationship between newcomers and winter sports. I engage with relevant sport, leisure, and recreation scholarship here as these concepts are largely considered related, and similar findings were noted across the literature whether researchers were focusing on sport,

leisure, and/or recreation participation among newcomers. While defining each concept has, and continues to inspire robust scholarly debate, I offer the following conceptual definitions to distinguish each term – *leisure*: activities or experiences that individuals choose to do during their free time, typically outside of work (Raz-Yurovich, 2021; Veal, 1992); *recreation*: any activity pursued during one’s leisure time with an overarching purpose of re-creation or renewal (Veal, 1992); and *sport*: activities involving physical exertion, demonstration of skill, and codified rules, in which an individual or team competes against themselves or others for entertainment and/or personal enjoyment (Coakley & Donnelly, 2009). I use the term “newcomer sport” when speaking generally about newcomer sport, leisure, and recreation experiences and programmes in the following sections to limit repetition and be concise. Demarcations are made between sport, leisure, and recreation where applicable for accuracy and context.

Introductory sport programmes, or “intro to sport” programmes are becoming increasingly common in Canada (Barrick & Mair, 2020). Broadly, these programmes introduce participants to the basic principles of a sport, with an overarching goal of giving individuals the skills necessary to successfully participate and foster positive social and physical development (Barrick & Mair, 2020; Green, 2005). Characteristics of well-designed introductory sport programmes include: structured, scaffolded activities; trained and enthusiastic instructors; sport-specific and social opportunities; and proven mechanisms to support athlete progression beyond introductory programming (Barrick & Mair, 2020). Furthermore, Barrick and Mair (2020) found that adult participants in two learn-to-curl leagues (curling) reported establishing and strengthening existing social connections, developing a sense of belonging to the sport and their curling club, as well as valuing the acquisition of sport-specific skills to expedite becoming competent at the sport.

Newcomers to Canada may also benefit from introductory sport programmes. The Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC, 2014) report, *Playing Together: New Citizens, Sports, and Belonging*, recommended that establishing inclusive introductory sport programmes is key to welcoming more newcomers to Canadian sport. Winter ice and snow sports are ideal foci for introductory sport programming due to many newcomers associating winter sports with Canadian identity and the known barriers to participation. The fact that many newcomers are arriving in Canada from nations that do not generally experience winters (e.g., India, parts of China, Thailand) and are likely unfamiliar with winter sports further supports the need for introductory winter sport programming.

It is instructive to define the term “newcomer” here given its prominence in this dissertation. According to Caidi and Allard (2005), newcomer is an umbrella term for individuals who are born outside of Canada and migrate to their new country of residence, typically within five years of arrival. Sub-categories within this category include *immigrants*: individuals who enter through the economic or family immigrant classes and *refugees*: individuals who are fleeing their country of residence because of persecution or the threat of persecution (IRCC, n.d.-b). While people are admitted to Canada through additional sub-categories – such as temporary visitors or residents, temporary foreign workers, and international students – their lack of status and permanence in Canada led me to exclude them from how I conceptualized newcomer for the purpose of this dissertation. I recognize that individual and group differences exist across both sub-categories (immigrants and refugees); however, I used newcomer in this project to ensure an inclusive approach to participant recruitment and to reflect the reality in community sport programmes that newcomers from diverse backgrounds generally intermingle across sub-categories (Kramers et al., 2021).

1.2.1. Newcomer social inclusion and exclusion in sport

Various scholars have investigated the relationship between social inclusion and exclusion and the experiences of newcomers in sport settings (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Frisby, 2011; Rich et al., 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Social inclusion involves the ability of newcomers to realize full and equal participation in the economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions of life in one's new country (Frisby, 2011). In comparison, social exclusion refers to the mechanisms that act to detach groups of people from the social mainstream (Doherty & Taylor, 2007). In the following section, I will elucidate the places and activities where social inclusion and exclusion occur, as well as how people and institutions shape these processes. To do so, I draw on Tirone and Pedlar's (2005) three functional communities: (1) home, family, and traditional communities; (2) dominant cultural places; and (3) diverse/multicultural leisure spaces.

Home, family, and traditional communities play important roles in the lives of newcomers (Suto, 2013). Tirone and Pedlar (2005) found that study participants' homes were an important source of support, comfort, and security as these were spaces where the backgrounds and family values of youth participants were collectively understood. Afghani refugee women also reported home and family being important during the first few months and years of their re-settlement in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Their reliance on family was exacerbated by the culture shock of arriving in Canada, lacking transportation mobility, and not yet possessing extensive social networks (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). Participants in both studies noted how their reliance on home and family diminished as they became familiar with Canadian culture and their local surroundings, as well as made friends outside their family. Yet, family remained central in their

lives as a source of safety and comfort from any exclusion or discrimination individuals may face in their communities (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009; Tirone & Pedlar, 2005).

Dominant cultural places refer to mainstream sport and leisure facilities where typically Euro-Canadian activities are practiced (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). In these spaces, newcomers are afforded opportunities to try new activities from the dominant culture (e.g., mainstream Canadian cultural activities like ice skating). Campbell and colleagues (2016) argued that mainstream leisure spaces represent places of opportunity, settlement, and socializing. African-Canadian youth in the study reported developing and maintaining friendships and social connections, working on language skills, and fostering an understanding of Canadian culture in such spaces. Social encounters resulted in forging cross-cultural friendships or strengthening relationships with fellow African-Canadian youth. Hence, dominant leisure places represent settings where newcomers can establish and strengthen social connections.

Newcomers also face various challenges when they first arrive in Canada including adjusting to smaller social networks. In many cases, newcomers leave extensive social networks in their previous country and enter Canada with few social connections besides perhaps their immediate family (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). Thus, social isolation becomes a concern for newcomers as they lack community connections in Canada (Curtin et al., 2018).

Tirone and Pedlar's (2005) third functional community comprises diverse, multicultural leisure spaces. The activities held in these spaces bring together diverse individuals and communities through rich cultural exchange. Proponents of diverse leisure spaces argue that engaging with individuals from varied backgrounds benefits all participants and leads to more socially cohesive and inclusive communities. In theory, diverse leisure spaces seem invaluable in promoting cross-cultural exchange; in reality, they are rare. There are few examples of truly

diverse leisure spaces across the relevant literature. Instead, authors espouse the prospective benefits of diverse sport or leisure spaces in strengthening social networks among newcomers from diverse cultural backgrounds and between newcomers and established Canadians³ (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). Two studies responding to this call for different perspectives include Rich and colleagues' (2015) investigation of the Community Cup soccer tournament in Ottawa, Ontario and Frisby's (2011) engagement with Chinese immigrant women in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Community Cup is an annual grassroots soccer tournament organized by multiple community partners to aid the settlement processes of newcomers and promote social inclusion (Rich et al., 2015). This event is an example of inclusion and integration being intentionally designed. Newcomers are included throughout the planning process by joining the over 20 planning teams each tasked with organizing different aspects of the event. This volunteer experience enables newcomers to expand their social networks, experience social inclusion, and gain employable skills. The Community Cup's unique rules also contribute to promoting social inclusion. These rules include playing on a smaller field with only seven players per team – two of whom must be women – and with the absence of formal referees. Instead, volunteers award spirit points during the game. Spirit points are awarded for acts of sportsmanship and positive behaviour and are weighted the same as goals to promote a non-competitive, welcoming environment. Finally, the general role of the Community Cup involves using soccer as a catalyst to bring people together from diverse cultures to gain Canadian experience, meet people from different cultures and countries, and develop social networks. Overall, the Community Cup is an

³ I refer to "established Canadians" here as individuals who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents and do not identify as newcomers. They may have been born in Canada or have resided in Canada for a period of years.

example of cross-cultural interactions between newcomer populations who are racialized,⁴ along with some Canadian citizens serving as volunteers and administrators. Participants value these interactions in aiding their settlement journeys through promoting social inclusion.

Frisby's (2011) research with Chinese newcomer women represents another way diverse sport and leisure spaces can flourish in communities. Using a Feminist Participatory Action Research approach, Frisby worked with a group of Chinese newcomer women and staff from both a local settlement services organization and the City of Vancouver's Department of Recreation to address barriers in recreation services faced by newcomer women. The stakeholders congregated for a two-day Multiculturalism, Sport, and Physical Activity workshop, and one-on-one qualitative interviews. The interviews and workshop discussions uncovered various barriers and proposed solutions. For example, the newcomer participants reported a lack of knowledge surrounding both the then upcoming 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics as well as about sport and leisure programmes offered locally. The latter included being unaware of the City's leisure access policy, not understanding the City's website (English language only), and being uncomfortable with having to "prove poverty" to access subsidized leisure programming. Frisby's ability to create a safe and welcoming space enabled participants to learn from one another. The Chinese newcomer women and settlement services staff learned about the leisure programmes and leisure access opportunities available to newcomers. City staff learned some of the barriers facing Chinese newcomer women and promised to take them into account when (re)creating culturally relevant and streamlined leisure programmes, advertising materials, and leisure access policies. This example demonstrates how dominant cultural and diverse leisure

⁴ I used person-first language here in recognition that societal and institutional structures are what causes individuals from Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) backgrounds to experience discrimination in Canada. I purposefully avoided using the terms ethnic and racialized minority in this dissertation (other than stating the *Canadian Ethnic Studies* special issue title) in line with many critical scholars in this area (e.g., Kendi, 2019).

spaces are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Rather, through engagement with newcomer communities, dominant cultural places can become better suited to offering cross-cultural opportunities for the benefit of all community members.

1.2.2. Newcomer sport participation barriers

Participation barriers (or constraints) are commonly considered limitations preventing someone from participating in something (Allender et al., 2006). Several prominent participation barriers were investigated across the relevant literature and presented as restricting newcomer sport participation. The barriers include: socio-economic (Campbell et al., 2016; Curtin et al., 2018; Frisby, 2011; Taylor & Doherty, 2005; Tirone et al., 2010), socio-cultural (Campbell et al., 2016; Curtin et al., 2018; Frisby, 2011; Stack & Iwasaki, 2009), and structural (Forde et al., 2015; Frisby, 2011; Tirone et al., 2010). I organized the participation barriers into these categories to promote clarity. Yet, I recognize that many of the barriers cross socio-economic, socio-cultural, and structural lines; for instance, racism can influence newcomers' lives in various and multi-layered socio-economical, socio-cultural, and structural ways (Kendi, 2019).

Golob and Giles (2011) argue that participation barriers reflect power relationships between individuals, groups, and institutions, thereby offering an alternative, more nuanced conceptualization. The authors adopt a Foucauldian approach that sees power as an effect. In this approach, power is considered fundamentally always productive of something and is relational in that power is constructed, reconstructed, and transferred through discourses. Golob and Giles define discourses as practices that shape perceptions of reality, in part, to regulate peoples' conduct. Since power is relational and can be altered by individuals, constraints can be thought of as both inhibitors and enablers for newcomers accessing leisure pursuits within Canada's multicultural citizenship discourses.

For instance, family and ethnoracial groups can act as a constraint both facilitating and restricting newcomer sport participation (Curtin et al., 2018; Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). For instance, families and ethnoracial groups tend to offer newcomers safe, non-discriminatory spaces to do leisure activities aligned with the newcomer's cultural background (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). These entities can also constrain newcomers' sport and leisure participation by pressuring them to maintain their cultural activities instead of entering dominant cultural places and trying mainstream sport activities (Nakamura & Donnelly, 2017). This example illustrates how many newcomers (especially youth) continually negotiate multiple lifeworlds within their sport participation. The various ways family and ethnoracial groups shape the lives of newcomers exemplify Golob and Giles' (2011) nuanced understanding of constraints.

1.2.2.1. Socio-economic barriers

Socio-economic barriers consist of participation constraints emerging from the interplay between social and economic factors (Stodolska, 2015). These barriers can be categorized into two areas: limited financial resources to afford leisure and sport (Campbell et al., 2016; Mensah, 2010; Taylor & Doherty, 2005) and limited available time to contribute (Curtin et al., 2018; Stodolska, 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Sport participation becomes unlikely when either or both constraints are prominent due to the additional time pressures newcomers face during settlement (e.g., language classes and retraining), the expense of sport programmes, and the realities of precarious employment (Stodolska, 2015).

These constraints tend to further restrict sport participation for women. For example, women face additional time pressures, as they are typically responsible for schoolwork, part-time jobs, and family responsibilities (Taylor & Doherty, 2005). Suto (2013) adds that these tasks (e.g., interacting with their children's teachers) are challenging for newcomer women in new

cultural and language contexts. In general, women and girls lack sport opportunities based on cultural norms about acceptable behaviour. Furthermore, valuing academic achievement and professional preparations over sport and leisure participation may also further constrain newcomer women and girls (Tirone et al., 2010). While reducing whole groups of newcomers to homogenous categories is problematic, the trends uncovered in this section shed light on the constraints faced by many newcomers. These findings provide insight into the specific experiences of individual newcomers, which collectively can help lead to uncovering inequalities and promoting change through policy, practice, and grassroots action.

1.2.2.2. Socio-cultural barriers

Socio-cultural barriers occur at the intersection of social and cultural forces and originate from social norms and cultural values (Savolainen, 2016). Cultural and language differences between newcomers and established members of the local community represent one such barrier. For example, many newcomer youth have to negotiate both their family's traditional culture(s) and their interest in mainstream Canadian sport activities (Tirone et al., 2010). In multicultural Canada, cultural and language diversity are realities that shape how newcomers perceive the nation's various social institutions. Sport organizations are no exception. As such, cultural perceptions of sport have received attention in the literature (Curtin et al., 2018; Stodolska, 2015; Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). In comparing Canadian sport, physical activity, and leisure with their home country, newcomers note that Canadian culture places more value on purposeful, structured activities that are separate from one's work and family duties (Curtin et al., 2018). Newcomers also view North American leisure as more autonomous and individualistic in nature (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). Consequently, many newcomers characterize sport and leisure in Canada as selfish in nature and opposite to the holistic and interconnected nature of these

activities in their home countries and traditional cultures (Tirone et al., 2010). Newcomers may hesitate to participate in mainstream sport and leisure activities, in part, because of how much they differ from what newcomers are used to. Relatedly, experiencing racism and ethnocentrism in sport spaces – in part, fueled by cultural discrimination and misunderstandings – can also push newcomers away from mainstream sport (Suto, 2013; Tirone, 2010).

When newcomers lack the ability to communicate and understand one of Canada's two official languages, their engagement in Canadian society is constrained. Within sport settings, speaking and understanding French and/or English is essential at all stages of participation (Rich et al., 2015; Suto, 2013). When this is not the case, newcomers report difficulties in connecting with "Canadian friends" (Campbell et al., 2016). A gendered distinction also exists as Taylor and Doherty (2005) argue that language difficulties are easier for newcomer boys to overcome than girls, in part, because they face fewer additional constraints (e.g., gendered family expectations). Cultural and language constraints are interwoven throughout the other constraints outlined in this section and collectively limit newcomers' sport participation opportunities.

1.2.2.3. Structural barriers

Structural barriers are systemic forces (e.g., policies, practices, and norms) that advantage certain, privileged groups (e.g., White Canadians) while systematically disadvantaging Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) groups (Simms et al., 2015). For instance, studies have concluded that neighbourhoods and communities with high proportions of newcomers and BIPOC populations have access to fewer sport facilities (Nadeau et al., 2016). Newcomers' sport participation is hindered if facilities are not in close proximity to their homes or easily accessible via public transit, in part because newcomers have less access to personal automobiles (Tirone, 2010; Tirone et al., 2010).

Newcomers also tend to view Canada's sport system as complex and heavily bureaucratic (Curtin et al., 2018; Tirone et al., 2010). Complaints center on the system's complex rules and regulations, newcomers' limited knowledge of the system, and coaches and administrators lacking the necessary skills and resources to support newcomers (Frisby, 2011; Tirone et al., 2010). A commonly cited example of the system's excessive rules and regulations involves fee assistance programmes. Many Canadian municipalities have adopted fee assistance programmes, which generally provide financial support to low-income community members to participate in municipal sport and recreation programming. Newcomers tend to fall into this low-income category. However, these programmes are faulted for being unnecessarily bureaucratic and forcing newcomers to "prove their poverty" (Curtin et al., 2018; Frisby, 2011). Individuals are required to present personal banking statements and tax forms to prove they meet programme criteria, which can be emotionally distressing for the newcomers. Furthermore, many newcomers fail to access these programmes because they are unaware of their existence or cannot navigate the necessary processes due to language or cultural constraints (Frisby, 2011).

The lack of familiarity newcomers have with Canada's sport system further restricts them from full participation. Stodolska (2015) reports that sport opportunities are far less bureaucratic in regions outside of North America as newcomers typically perform informal sport and leisure activities with their families and peers. Thus, Canadian realities of registration, booking facilities, and signing waivers are foreign concepts to many newcomers. This unfamiliarity leads newcomers to lack knowledge about available sport opportunities, thereby contributing to low participation rates. Moreover, traditional information channels (e.g., websites and leisure guides) tend to exclude newcomers from important details about accessing sport spaces due to language and cultural barriers. For instance, newcomers typically receive information about local sport

opportunities from their social and ethnic networks. Thus, a disconnect exists between how sport administrators communicate relevant information and how newcomers receive these same details. This disconnect emerges, in part, from the lack of knowledge sport administrators possess about meeting the needs of newcomers (Frisby, 2011; Stodolska, 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). In fact, research demonstrates that many coaches and administrators – the overwhelming majority being long-time Canadian residents – lack the necessary knowledge to include newcomers in sport (Forde et al., 2015; Frisby, 2011; Tirone et al., 2010). This discussion has illustrated that without changes to Canada’s sport structures, such as empowering administrators and coaches with the relevant information to best serve newcomers, then newcomers will continue to face interconnected sport participation barriers.

1.2.3. Newcomer sport programme design

How sport programmes in Canada are designed for newcomers is receiving heightened scholarly interest (Forde et al., 2015; Kramers et al., 2021; Rich et al., 2015). Researchers have primarily interviewed programme administrators, the vast majority of whom are established Canadians. Thus, newcomer voices have been largely absent from the planning, implementation, and evaluation of newcomer sport programmes (Rich et al., 2015). Rich and colleagues’ case study analysis of the Community Cup soccer tournament represents one notable exception. As outlined earlier in this review, the authors found that the participatory design of the tournament led to positive outcomes (e.g., gaining “Canadian” leadership experiences to support employment searches). Yet, Rich and colleagues concluded that sport programmes or events on their own will not create extensive social change, calling on researchers to shift focus “to the broader organizational and engagement practices that may allow many events to produce tangible and important social outcomes” (p. 139).

Researchers have also examined what organizations are responsible for administering newcomer sport programming (Forde et al., 2015; Golob & Giles, 2011; Kramers et al., 2021; Tirone, 2010; Tirone et al., 2010). Mainstream sport organizations are generally considered ill prepared to meet the diverse needs of newcomers in applicable programming (Tirone et al., 2010). This results from mainstream administrators lacking the necessary knowledge and resources to best support newcomers (Stodolska, 2015). Moreover, Tirone and colleagues (2010) argued that sport leaders in Nova Scotia, Canada were unsure of who is responsible for inclusion: individual newcomers or sport organizations and governments. Study participants also reported feeling uncomfortable including newcomers in sport programmes largely due to the volunteer make-up of their staff, thereby creating capacity concerns. This dynamic aligns with Forde and colleagues' (2015) work involving a newcomer wellness programme in British Columbia. The authors contended that the challenge of implementing and sustaining social inclusion programmes lies, in part, in a lack of capacity (mainly lacking requisite staff and volunteers) making it difficult to meet the needs of newcomers over a sustained period.

Ethnic community organizations and sport clubs offer alternative safe and inclusive spaces for newcomers who have experienced, or fear experiencing, discrimination and social exclusion in mainstream sport spaces (Tirone, 2010). In these spaces, ethnic community resources are used to facilitate sport and leisure, thereby fostering strong social connections among individuals from the same ethnic group (Stodolska, 2015). Interestingly, ethnic community organizations and sports clubs offer both ethnic-specific activities and mainstream Euro-Canadian activities to newcomers (Tirone, 2010). Thus, newcomers can still be exposed to mainstream Canadian activities while reducing the risk of experiencing racism and discrimination. Although ethnic community organizations and sports clubs are criticized by some

in Canadian society for promoting ethnoracial segregation, Tirone (2010) argues “[ethnic organizations] have the potential to enrich the lives of all Canadians when they share their traditions with Canadians who identify with different ethnic groups” (p. 171). Unfortunately, such cross-cultural interactions have yet to materialize.

Current research is placing greater focus on examining the inner-workings of newcomer sport programmes throughout Canada (Kramers et al., 2021). Kramers and colleagues completed a qualitative case study examination of an established newcomer youth sport programme, focusing on the experiences of the programme founder/leader. Through two semi-structured interviews with the programme founder/leader, the authors found that complex, interrelated factors (e.g., programme philosophy, internal/external challenges, prioritizing collaboration) were being continually (re)considered to intentionally promote positive youth development through physical activity and well-being in an inclusive, culturally-safe environment.

In *chapter two* of this dissertation, my colleagues (Dr. William Bridel and Ms. Joan Bard Miller)⁵ and I critically interrogated six introductory sport programmes from across Canada that solely or primarily serve newcomer children and youth. Qualitative interviews with 20 total programme administrators, instructors, and parents of newcomer programme participants led to the development of two thematic categories: (1) toward inclusion: negotiating sport participation and (2) sustainability. Within each category, study participants shared strategies for promoting newcomer sport participation through reducing programme costs; navigating existing rules and regulations; and promoting accessibility through programme locations and transportation, as well

⁵ I asked my two co-authors – Bridel and Bard Miller – how they preferred being named in this dissertation. They both requested to be referred to by their formal titles – Dr. William Bridel and Ms. Joan Bard Miller – when first introduced as I have done above. I used their first names – William and Joan – in all subsequent mentions throughout the document based on their preferences. Notable exceptions exist in *chapters two* and *four* where I adopted more passive language (e.g., “we” and “the second author”) in line with the respective journal conventions.

as available facilities. Study participants also stressed the value of establishing and maintaining intersectoral community partnerships to promote programme sustainability.

In sum, researchers are fostering more nuanced understandings of newcomer sport participation experiences and the characteristics of inclusive, culturally-safe, and sustainable introductory sport programmes. However, gaps remain in the scholarly knowledge, such as exploring the relationship between newcomer integration, introductory sport programming, and winter sport participation.

1.2.4. Newcomers and winter sport participation

Winter sports, or sports generally played on ice and snow, hold a prominent place in Canada's national sporting and cultural imaginaries (Allain, 2019; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Jackson, 1998; Stebbins, 2010). The following winter sports – ice hockey, curling figure skating, freestyle skiing, speed skating, and snowboarding – are recognized as prominent Canadian winter sports in terms of domestic participation and global high-performance successes (e.g., Canada routinely finishing near the top of the medal table during recent Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games). International audiences also associate these sports with Canadian identity (Stebbins, 2010). Grassroots winter sport participation, high-performance successes, and international recognition thus contribute to shaping Canada's identity as an imagined community (Anderson, 2016).

Ice hockey occupies the center of Canada's winter sport identity (Allain, 2019; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993). Gruneau and Whitson (1993) trace the lineage of how ice hockey became Canada's official winter sport, demonstrating efforts by successive federal governments in the post-World War Two era to the 1990s to construct ice hockey as inherently Canadian. Scholarly research on ice hockey has also expressed how modern ice hockey culture is embedded within

hegemonic white, masculine, heteronormative, ableist, and settler colonial discourses, thereby making the sport an unsafe space for many Canadians (Adams, 2006; Allain, 2018, 2019; Bains & Szto, 2020; Bridel, 2021; Dennie, 2021; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Kalman-Lamb, 2018; Kennedy et al., 2020; MacDonald, 2018; McKegney & Phillips, 2018; Paraschak, 2021; Pitter, 2006; Szto, 2016, 2021; Szto et al., 2019; Szto & Gruneau, 2018). More specifically, researchers have focused on the lived experiences of ethnoracially diverse communities in ice hockey over recent years (Bains & Szto, 2020; Dennie, 2021; Jedwab & Holley, 2021; Szto, 2016, 2021; Szto & Gruneau, 2018; Wong & Dennie, 2021a, 2021b). This research has demonstrated how whiteness is the privileged, often unquestioned, taken-for-granted identity of ice hockey in Canada. Individuals from racialized backgrounds thus face barriers to full participation in the sport, often being met with explicit forms of racism, discrimination, and micro-aggressions (Bains & Szto, 2020; Dennie, 2021; Szto, 2016, 2021; Szto & Gruneau, 2018). Moreover, contributors to the *Canadian Ethnic Studies* special issue entitled: “Hockey in Canada: Indigeneity, ethnic/racialized minorities and the nation” illustrated how communities who are racialized – most notably Indigenous Peoples, people who are racialized, and newcomers to Canada – are making important contributions to Canadian ice hockey (e.g., participating in grassroots ice hockey programming) despite facing resistance from various cultural and institutional forces (Jedwab & Holley, 2021; Wong & Dennie, 2021a, 2021b).

Newcomers to Canada strongly associate winter sports (e.g., ice hockey, ice skating, and downhill skiing) with “being Canadian” (ICC, 2014; Jedwab & Holley, 2021). Researchers have found that the rate of newcomers who make this association is comparable to, and in some cases, more pronounced than among Canadian residents (ICC, 2014; Environics Institute, 2012; Wong & Dennie, 2021b). Many newcomers also report recognizing the link between Canadian identity

and winter sport before arriving in Canada (ICC, 2014), thereby demonstrating the pervasiveness of this specific identity characteristic beyond national borders. However, a multitude of participation barriers exist limiting newcomers' access to winter sport opportunities, such as cost, language barriers, racism and discrimination, lack of access, limited sport knowledge, and unfamiliarity with Canada's bureaucratic sport system (Curtin et al., 2018; Livingston & Tirone, 2012; Stack & Iwasaki, 2009; Suto, 2013).

The lived experiences of newcomers participating in winter sports is starting to receive scholarly attention. Wong and Dennie (2021b) and Jedwab and Holley (2021), in their research involving newcomers to Canada and ice hockey engagement, both found that newcomers reported strengthening their link to national identity and sense of belonging through ice hockey participation. Wong and Dennie (2021b) reached this conclusion after interviewing newcomer ice hockey players, parents of newcomer players, and newcomer fans, while Jedwab and Holley (2021) analyzed several quantitative secondary data sets. Relatedly, Jedwab and Holley noted that while basketball and soccer are catching up to ice hockey as Canada's most popular sport – largely fueled by expanding non-European immigration – ice hockey participation impacts newcomers' sense of belonging far more than other prominent sports in Canada. Thus, ice hockey appears to occupy a significant role in Canadian society and identity amid shifting demographic and sport trends.

Returning to the relationship between winter sports, newcomer participation, and Canadian identity, a noticeable gap exists in exploring the lived experiences of newcomers in introductory winter sport programmes, and how such participation influences their integration into Canadian society. This dissertation project represents the first such project to explore these

relationships in the Canadian context and build on relevant scholarly research exploring newcomers' identities within sport (e.g., McDonald et al., 2019; Spaaij, 2015).

1.3. Intersectoral Community Partnerships

The past 30 years have marked explosive growth of intersectoral community partnerships across the global sport ecosystem (Misener et al., 2022). Intersectoral partnerships are also referred to as interorganizational relationships/linkages (e.g., Misener et al., 2022) and cross-sector partnerships (e.g., Marlier et al., 2015) in the sport management literature. I adopt Parent and Harvey's (2009) definition of partnership in this dissertation to conceptualize intersectoral collaboration:

A dynamic relationship among diverse actors, based on mutually agreed objectives, pursued through a shared understanding of the most rational division of labor based on respective comparative advantages of each partner. A partnership encompasses mutual influence, with a careful balance between synergy and respective autonomy, which incorporates mutual respect, equal participation in decision making, mutual accountability, and transparency. (p. 23-24)

Intersectoral community partnerships involve relevant collaborators from across sectors (e.g., public, private) working together towards achieving mutually-beneficial objectives (Parent & Harvey, 2009). Community sport organizations are increasingly turning to intersectoral collaborations for various reasons. First, administrators are seeking more innovative and entrepreneurial ways to offer existing programmes and services, as well as expand available offerings (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; Misener et al., 2022; Thibault et al., 2003). Second, intersectoral partnerships help protect community sport organizations from external threats, in part, by building cross-sector capacity (e.g., human and financial; Babiak &

Thibault, 2009; Forde et al., 2015). The most pressing external threat facing sport organizations is the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic and corresponding public health restrictions (Doherty et al., 2022). Third, the shift to intersectoral partnerships has resulted from the growing influence of neoliberal ideologies (Frisby et al., 2004; Misener et al., 2022). I understand neoliberalism to encompass a reconceptualization of liberalism that favours free-market capitalism and influences Global North governments to engage in austerity measures (Misener et al., 2022; Parnell et al., 2019; Thibault et al., 2003). Neoliberal ideology and policy force community sport organizations – which are overwhelmingly public and non-profit entities – to adopt commercial, private sector traits such as fiscal restraint, individual responsibility, rationalization, and privatization across their programmes and services (Golob & Giles, 2015; Thibault et al., 1999; Tyyskä et al., 2017). Consequently, neoliberalism is eroding the core purpose of community sport and recreation – sport and recreation for all (Frisby et al., 2004; Parnell et al., 2019; Thibault et al., 2003).

Researchers have examined the components and dynamics of intersectoral community partnerships from diverse disciplinary perspectives: healthcare (e.g., Grindrod, 2021; Hearld et al., 2019), health promotion (e.g., Hope Corbin et al., 2018; Quilling et al., 2020) nursing (e.g., Ansari & Phillips, 2001; Maillet et al., 2021), business (e.g., Irvine Fitzpatrick et al., 2021; St-Pierre et al., 2018), education (e.g., Getnet Abate & Yirga Adamu, 2021; Renwick et al., 2021), and migration studies (e.g., Veronis, 2019; Walton-Roberts et al., 2019). Most pertinent to this dissertation, sport management researchers have studied how intersectoral partnerships operate across various environments (e.g., Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; Marlier et al., 2015; Parent & Harvey, 2017). Relevant topics include senior managers' motivations for seeking out new intersectoral partnerships (e.g., to combat existing environmental pressures; Thibault et al., 1999), how various managerial structures (e.g., lack of planning and policy guidelines,

insufficient human resources) and processes (e.g., insufficient training, lack of evaluation) contribute to partnership inefficiencies (Frisby et al., 2004), structural deficits in the formation and sustainability of intersectoral partnerships, and concerns about the fit between partners (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; MacLean et al., 2011). Sport administrators are increasingly prioritizing collaborating with colleagues across sectors when designing newcomer sport programming (Kramers et al., 2021). Thus, examining how newcomer sport programmes are designed and operate within intersectoral community partnerships is important to elucidate the relationships between newcomers, winter sport, introductory sport programming, and national identity.

1.4. Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

It is at the intersection between immigration, integration, winter sport participation, and Canadian identity that I situated this dissertation. My purpose was to explore the realities of designing and implementing introductory sport programmes (with specific focus on winter sport programming) as well as the lived experiences of newcomer programme participants.

This dissertation was also guided by the following interconnected research questions:

- (1) What promising practices are being used for organizing and administering introductory sport programmes for newcomers to Canada?
- (2) How are inclusive, welcoming introductory winter sport programmes built and administered by diverse community stakeholders?
- (3) How do newcomers to Canada experience introductory winter sport programmes?
- (4) Do inclusive, welcoming introductory winter sport programmes influence the integration and identities of newcomers to Canada?

1.5. Study context

Since immigration is a global phenomenon, it is important to provide some international context and further detail on how the Canadian government has responded to shifts in global migration trends. This information offers prominent political and socio-cultural background for why Canadian sport stakeholders – including those engaged with in this dissertation – are choosing or being influenced by systemic forces (e.g., changing policy and/or funding priorities) to involve newcomers more intentionally in mainstream sport.

Global migration patterns generally involve immigrants moving from Global South to Global North countries⁶, such as the United States of America, Germany, and Canada (IOM, 2019). Various push factors – such as displacement by conflict; the global climate crisis; ethnoracial, religious, and political persecution; as well as limited educational and employment opportunities – are forcing many people to leave their homes and seek opportunities elsewhere (IOM, 2019). Global North countries are popularly constructed as offering economic, socio-cultural, political, and educational stability (Odeh, 2010) – though such Global North-South dichotomies have been critiqued for their oversimplification and reproducing colonialism (see: Piedalue & Rishi, 2017).

Global North countries also privilege welcoming immigrants for related demographic and economic reasons. Developed, late-stage capitalist countries are witnessing concurrent demographic stressors of aging populations and declining birth rates (Segal, 2019). As a result, Global North countries have been increasingly prioritizing immigration as the primary approach

⁶ It is important to note here that migration does not just occur from Global South to Global North countries. Contemporary transnational migration is increasingly complex with movement also occurring between Global North countries, and from Global North to South countries (Agergaard, 2018).

for achieving population growth, thereby ensuring sustained economic progress, a required characteristic of developed countries (Odeh, 2010).

Canada, a Global North country, has long relied on immigration, a trend which predates its founding as a nation in 1867. Until the 1960s, Canada admitted immigrants solely based on the “preferred nations” criteria, which in practice overwhelmingly prioritized white, Euro-Christian immigrants from Western Europe (Guo & Guo, 2015; Kymlicka, 2015; Mackey, 2002; Siemiatycki, 2012). This explicitly racist policy led to the discrimination of non-white immigrants from 1867 to the mid 1960s, when Canadian immigration policy changed in response to shifting international migration patterns (Guo & Guo, 2015; Kymlicka, 2015; Li, 1999; Siemiatycki, 2012). Against the backdrop of a globalizing, transnational world, Canada instituted the “points system” in 1967 to screen immigrants based on their human capital, focusing on criteria such as education, work experience, and knowledge of French or English (Siemiatycki, 2012). This shift decreased the racist, Eurocentric nature of Canadian immigration and opened Canada to newcomers from around the world (e.g., Asia and the Middle East; Kymlicka, 2015; Leung, 2015). The points system, which has only undergone minor modifications since 1967, remains a central pillar of Canada’s immigration system, with a focus on attracting high-skilled and well-educated newcomers from around the world (Wong & Guo, 2018).

The Canadian government was also constructing official cultural policy during this time. In an attempt to satisfy competing national interests (e.g., English Canada, French Canada, longstanding ethnoracial minority groups), then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced in 1971 that Canada was a multicultural nation within a bilingual framework with two official languages and no official culture (Kymlicka, 2015). All Canadians were now entitled to observe their cultural background without discrimination (Mackey, 2002).

Multiculturalism has since been embedded into Canada's constitutional framework and national identity. In 1982, multiculturalism was recognized under Section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, becoming the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988. This Act reaffirmed multiculturalism as a central pillar of Canadian society and gave the policy a sense of direction by establishing a specific framework and federal institutions (e.g., Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship) to guide its progression (Mensah, 2010). Canadian multiculturalism represented a compromise offering ethnic minorities cultural equality, while also ensuring all Canadians that multiculturalism would advance individual freedom without compromising national unity or official language policy (Kymlicka, 2015; Mackey, 2002). Hence, a balance was arguably struck between ensuring political and language concessions to French Canadians and Quebec nationalism as well as delivering Canada a new national identity based on cultural diversity (Li, 1999). Multiculturalism also replaced Britain as a central symbol of Canada (Mackey, 2002). Relatedly, Canada's adoption of the points system and multiculturalism policy meant that immigrants began arriving from different nations and would no longer be expected to assimilate to a British standard of identity (Siemiatycki, 2012).

The points system and multiculturalism policy are two parts of Canada's wider integration system, and have helped transform Canada's demographic make-up, national identity, and how Canada is viewed internationally (Siemiatycki, 2012). As of 2016, 21.9% of the national population reported they were or had ever been a landed immigrant or permanent resident to Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017). Between 2011 and 2016, 1,212,075 new immigrants permanently settled in Canada, representing 3.5% of Canada's total population in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2017). In 2019, Canada admitted 341,180 new permanent residents (IRCC, 2020), followed by a decline to 184,606 in 2020 – mainly a result of the COVID-19

global pandemic (IRCC, 2021a). These numbers rebounded in 2021 with a record breaking 401,000 permanent residents entering the country, the largest number in Canadian history (IRCC, 2021b). Moving forward, the federal government is projecting to admit more than 400,000 migrants annually from 2022-2024 (IRCC, 2022). Thus, immigration – and meeting the needs of newcomers to Canada specifically – is an ongoing and important conversation.

Despite multiculturalism's pervasiveness throughout Canadian society, scholars have noted several critiques. For instance, Canadian multiculturalism policy is argued to be highly idealistic, with little specific direction for translating the policy into tangible action (Li, 1999). Multiculturalism policy also places English Canada's interests at the center of Canadian culture and society, thereby marginalizing prominent groups such as French Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and persons who are racialized (Guo & Guo, 2015). Bannerji (2000) and Mackey (2002) contend that these efforts are deliberate actions by the Canadian state to maintain white settler colonial political and ideological control. Critical perspectives of Canadian multiculturalism, race, and ethnicity overlap here as the majority of newcomers admitted to Canada are persons who are racialized (Statistics Canada, 2017); relatedly, such individuals are exposed to multi-layered forms of racism perpetrated by individual, collective, and systemic forces (e.g., racist policies), which are exacerbated by the superficial, symbolic acceptance offered through Canadian multiculturalism policy and ideology (Bannerji, 2000; Lightman et al., 2022; Mackey, 2002).

In the case of French Canada – and the province of Quebec in particular – they have rejected Canadian multiculturalism in favour of interculturalism, “a model of immigration, integration and intercultural relations to facilitate coexistence and social cohesion between the various cultural groups, recent immigrants and the recipient society” (Wences, 2016, p. 126).

Quebec's interculturalism is conceptualized as prioritizing local level interactions through facilitating dialogue and cultural exchange, though critics argue that the policy strives to promote newcomer assimilation into Quebec's francophone culture (Reitz, 2014; Weinstock, 2014).

1.6. Theoretical Underpinnings

Several theoretical perspectives informed this dissertation. Social constructionist perspectives of race and ethnicity represented the overarching theoretical underpinning through which I investigated newcomer sport in the Canadian context. The study of racial and ethnic identities has received extensive scholarly examination (e.g., Hill Collins & Solomos, 2010; Wong & Guo, 2018). I view racial and ethnic identities as fluid, dynamic, and socially constructed (Omi & Winant, 2018). However, this creates a conundrum when you consider that “essentialist categories of ‘race’ and ethnicity do have some level of resonance with lived experiences and this is something that we need to both address and interrogate rigorously” (Gunaratnam, 2003, p. 33). A common assumption many researchers who examine race and ethnicity challenge involves how race and ethnic studies is commonly positioned as the examination of communities who are racialized (e.g., BIPOC). This dynamic places whiteness at the center as the dominant, unspoken, and taken-for-granted racial category that all additional racial and ethnic groups are compared against (Ka Tat Tsang et al., 2022; King, 2005; Smalling, 2020). I adopt King and Springwood's (2001) definition of whiteness:

Whiteness is simultaneously a practice, a social space, a subjectivity, a spectacle, an erasure, an epistemology, a strategy, an historical formation, a technology, and a tactic. Of course, it is not monolithic, but in all of its manifestations, it is unified through privilege and the power to name, to represent, and to create opportunity and deny access. (p. 160)

While the majority of newcomers to Canada identify and/or are identified as individuals who are racialized, it is important to note that diverse, blurred, and contested identities make up this population (Durbin et al., 2021). Thus, within the context of Canadian multiculturalism, the multiple identities newcomers construct and negotiate daily is a central consideration of this dissertation project.

I also adopted specific theoretical perspectives in each data chapter. Green's (2005) normative theory of sport development represented the theoretical framework for *chapter two*. Agergaard's (2018) reconceptualization of sport-related integration theoretically grounded *chapter three*. Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships was the theoretical framework adopted in *chapter four*. I will briefly outline each theory in the following sub-sections. Further detail about each theoretical perspective is provided in the respective data chapters (*chapters two, three, and four*).

1.6.1. Normative theory of sport development

Green's (2005) normative theory of sport development illuminates an athlete's progression through a particular sport context focusing on three tasks: athlete recruitment, retention, and transitions. Using this theory, researchers explore how individual (e.g., personal preferences) or system-level factors (e.g., access to transportation) influence the introduction; motives, socialization, and commitment; as well as movement within the sport pyramid. My co-authors (William and Joan) and I employed this theory in *chapter two* as it offers a holistic framework for examining the interrelationships and interactions across each area. Our use of Green's theory represents a novel application within newcomer sport and introductory winter sport contexts.

1.6.2. Critical insights on sport-related integration

Integration is a prevalent political discourse, mainly in Western European nations, for managing the settlement of newcomers into their host societies (Agergaard, 2016, 2018; Agergaard & La Cour, 2012; Grzymala-Kazlowska & Phillimore, 2018). As such, integration has become a primary concept used by researchers across the Global North to theoretically and conceptually ground their newcomer sport scholarship (Adler Zwahlen et al., 2018; Agergaard, 2018; Agergaard & La Cour, 2012; Block & Gibbs, 2017; Doidge et al., 2020; Dowling, 2020; Elmoose-Østerlund et al., 2019; Flensner et al., 2021; Lenneis & Agergaard, 2018; Long et al., 2014; Middleton et al., 2020; Murad & Versey, 2020; Nowy et al., 2020; Park & Ok, 2017; Shen, 2017; Smith et al., 2019; Spaaij, 2012; Spaaij et al., 2019; Stura, 2019; Suto, 2013; Walseth, 2016).

I adopted Agergaard's (2018) reconceptualization of sport-related integration in this dissertation, which involves "multidimensional social relational processes that are bound up in power asymmetries, and evolve as changing trajectories" (p. 25). This reconceptualization is useful as its specificity and distinctiveness challenge prevailing political discourses in which integration becomes synonymous with one-way settlement processes such as *assimilation* – making newcomers and descendants of newcomers similar to the host population – and *segregation* – separating newcomers from the host society (e.g., geographically-distinct housing and ethnic sport clubs). Rather, *integration* is distinct in bringing together people from diverse backgrounds (newcomers and members from the host society) to create something new and recognize the complexity that results. A strength of this approach is its inclusion of both newcomers and descendants of newcomers, thereby recognizing that integration can represent a long process spanning generations, especially for newcomers who are racialized. Moreover,

sport-related integration is reconceptualized based on four guiding principles: (1) integration is a temporal (not static) process; (2) integration is a social relational process in that groups and individuals are mutually interdependent (commonly marked by power asymmetries between established groups and outsiders); (3) integration is a multi-level process involving the macro-level (relations supported by political and socio-economic structures), meso-level (relations between institutions and sub-groups), and micro-level (relations between individuals in sport settings); and (4) integration is contextually dependent, resulting in variable trajectories and outcomes. This reconceptualization equipped me with a more comprehensive and nuanced theoretical grounding to consider the complexity of newcomers' lived experiences in sport-related integration settings as well as the impacts of wider socio-political and socio-cultural forces (e.g., neoliberalism) on such settings.

1.6.3. Management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships

My co-author (William) and I implemented Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships as our conceptual framework in *chapter four*. The model offers researchers a detailed framework for establishing, sustaining, and evaluating intersectoral sport and physical activity collaborations. Parent and Harvey (2009) conceptualized the model and have since proposed additions after empirically testing it (see: Parent & Harvey, 2017). The model consists of a three-part feedback loop involving the partnership's formation (partnership antecedents), partnership maintenance (partnership management), and partnership appraisal (partnership evaluation). Various subcomponents exist within each of the three components, thereby reflecting the complexity of intersectoral partnerships. Please see *Table 1.1*. for a visual representation of the model, including proposed additions by Parent and Harvey (2017) in italics. We provide more detail for

all components and subcomponents in *chapter four*. Applying this model within a newcomer introductory winter sport programme context also represents a novel contribution.

Table 1.1. Parent and Harvey intersectoral partnership model

Antecedents	Management	Evaluation
Project purpose/goal Environmental (facilitator or barrier) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Funding availability</i> Nature of the partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner motives Partner complementarity and fit Partnership planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type of partnership Governance 	Attributes of the partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment Coordination Trust Organizational identity Organizational learning Mutuality Synergy/<i>momentum</i> Staffing <i>Fairness</i> <i>Local ownership</i> <i>Policies and procedures</i> <i>Challenges</i> <i>Costs of association</i> <i>Access to new resources</i> Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Information sharing Participation <i>Formal/informal forms of communication</i> <i>Internal/external forms of communication</i> Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure Conflict resolution Power balance Leadership 	Type of evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process Impact Outcome Formative Summative Determination of success/effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner satisfaction Project/programme outcome(s) <i>Project sustainability</i>

1.7. Study Design

In the following section, I briefly introduce two different partnerships created to undertake this dissertation research; my ontological and epistemological orientation; the

methodologies I used in this dissertation; the various data collection methods I employed; and my approach to data analysis, researcher reflexivity, and positionality. More specific detail on each topic can be found in *chapters two, three, and four*.

1.7.1. Partnerships

I was involved in two separate partnerships throughout the duration of this dissertation. The first partnership consisted of Skate Canada and Hockey Canada – national sport organizations responsible for ice skating and ice hockey respectively – and the University of Calgary’s (UCalgary) Faculty of Kinesiology. The WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP) represented the second partnership. Partners included WinSport: a community and elite winter sports facility in Calgary, Alberta; and Centre for Newcomers (CFN) and Calgary Immigrant Women’s Association (CIWA): two Calgary-based settlement services organizations. I will now introduce both partnerships, focusing concurrently on the role each partnership played in this dissertation as well as my contributions to both partnerships.

1.7.1.1. Skate Canada, Hockey Canada, and Faculty of Kinesiology (UCalgary)

The partnership involving Skate Canada, Hockey Canada, and UCalgary’s Faculty of Kinesiology represented the focus of *chapter two*. William established the partnership with Skate Canada and Hockey Canada in September 2015, which corresponded with me starting my PhD programme. Our aim was to better understand how introductory sport programmes that solely or primarily serve newcomer children to Canada operate and how they strive to meet the needs of their diverse participants. We placed greater focus on introductory winter sport programmes – learn-to-skate lessons in particular – as Skate Canada and Hockey Canada were primarily concerned with these forms of programming. To interrogate the above partnership aim, we conducted a pilot project where we interviewed 20 participants – administrators, instructors, and

parents of newcomer programme participants – from six introductory sport programmes between January to June 2016. This project was funded through a University Research Grants Committee Social Science and Humanities Subcommittee Partnership Seed Grant administered through the UCalgary – Office of the Vice-President, Research [1036206].

The long-term aim for this partnership was to apply for a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Development Grant to organize, implement, and evaluate inclusive, culturally-relevant learn-to-skate programmes at multiple sites across Canada. The overarching focus for the partnership was to create more welcoming learn-to-skate programmes for newcomers and ethnoracially diverse individuals. When the pilot project formally concluded in November 2017, the partnership with Skate Canada and Hockey Canada dissolved due to personnel changes in both organizations. Equipped with the findings from this pilot project, I then turned my attention to finding new partners who shared a common interest in building newcomer introductory winter sport programming.

1.7.1.2. WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP)

The WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP) represented the subject of interest in *chapters three and four*. The WNP is an intersectoral community partnership launched in September 2017 and based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The programme's purpose is to help newcomers integrate to Calgary and Canadian society through discovering snow and ice sports. The original partners were WinSport: a multi-sport facility specializing in winter sport programming, and Centre for Newcomers (CFN) and Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA). CIWA left the partnership following the WNP's first year (Spring 2018). The dissertation fieldwork lasted from September 2017 to August 2018, though I maintained an advisory role in the WNP until July 2020. COVID-19 forced the programme to be paused since

March 2020, though some elements of the WNP were re-started in Winter 2022. Planning is underway for a full re-launch in Fall/Winter 2022/2023. Capital Power – a North American power production company based in Alberta – started sponsoring the WNP in spring 2021. WinSport, CFN, and Capital Power are the WNP's three current community partners.

Planning for the WNP commenced in February 2017 when I met with several WinSport administrators to discuss developing newcomer winter sport programmes. Following several brainstorming meetings, work started on creating the WNP. Early in the planning process, we collectively decided to introduce local newcomer families to specific Canadian winter sports – ice skating, downhill skiing, and snowboarding – through enrolling newcomer participants in WinSport winter sport programming. Programme registration and rental equipment costs were funded by the WNP to promote inclusion, with WinSport, CFN, and CIWA working together to identify and register newcomer children, teens, and adults for the programming. Initial WNP funding was acquired from several local philanthropists, fundraising efforts from a local elementary school, and local and provincial grants. From January to April 2018, 200 newcomer participants enrolled in varied introductory programmes. To date, over 400 newcomers have participated in the WNP. My role in the partnership involved sharing insights from research during all phases of the programmes (e.g., planning, implementation, and evaluation), and conduct an evaluation of the WNP.

The WNP organizers' goal during the first season was to promote newcomer integration through introductory winter sport programming. Small groups of newcomers (two to three) were enrolled in existing ice skating, skiing, and snowboarding lessons with community members (typically five to seven) who registered on their own to foster cross-cultural interactions. WinSport discover programmes are geared to introducing individuals to new sports through

building foundational skills (WinSport, n.d.-a), hence making them the logical entry point for WNP newcomer participants. Typical introductory ice skating, skiing, and snowboarding programmes were seven to eight hours in length spread over several days or weeks. Newcomer youths and teens (aged 7 to 14) also participated in a March Break Olympic Camp, held shortly after the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and Paralympics, where participants were introduced to various Olympic and Paralympic winter sports including ice hockey, snowboarding, sledge hockey, and ski jumping.

WinSport represented the main partner organization in the WNP as all programming was held at WinSport facilities and 10 of the 13 core partnership stakeholders were affiliated with the organization. Given WinSport's central position in this dissertation – most notably, in *chapters three and four* – I offer further institutional context here. In 1961, the Paskapoo ski hill opened to the public in NW Calgary on land that is now owned by WinSport. After Calgary won the right to host the 1988 Winter Olympic Games, this site became the location of several Olympic facilities, most notably, the sliding track (for bobsleigh, luge, and skeleton). The Calgary Olympic Development Association (CODA), which was originally founded in 1956 to bring the Winter Olympics to Calgary, took over ownership of several 1988 Olympic legacy facilities, including the renamed Calgary Olympic Park. In 2009, CODA was rebranded as WinSport (WinSport, n.d.-c). WinSport remains a non-profit organization responsible for owning and operating Calgary Olympic Park with a mission to “provide programs and facilities that help people of all ages discover, develop and excel at sport and we inspire and activate human potential through the spirit of sport” (WinSport, n.d.-a). WinSport has grown into a full-year facility with a multitude of winter and summer sport opportunities spanning grassroots to high performance sport. While WinSport and Calgary Olympic Park are used interchangeably to

identify the specific winter sport facilities located in NW Calgary, I use the term WinSport throughout this dissertation for clarity.

1.7.2. Ontological and epistemological orientations

My understandings of reality and knowledge are grounded in relativist (ontology) as well as interpretivist and social constructionist (epistemology) perspectives. Relativists believe that multiple realities exist and are dependent on the individual (Lincoln et al., 2018) as well as being locally and specifically (co)constructed (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Broadly, interpretivists value human (social) action and construct multiple realities through their own lived experiences and interactions with others, with these realities being historically and culturally contingent (Lincoln et al., 2018). Namely, interpretivists acknowledge being shaped by their lived experiences that, in turn, influence the insights emerging from their research studies (Lincoln et al., 2018).

Social constructionist researchers, like interpretivists, believe that knowledge and reality are socially constructed, ever changing, and complex entities. Their primary considerations involve focusing on how reality is socially constructed and how these social constructions occur, primarily through interactions between individuals (Burr, 2015). Moreover, reality is considered a fluid, multi-layered concept in this school of thought (Alvesson & Saldberg, 2009). In sum, I locate myself, ontologically and epistemologically, in a perspective that views reality as multi-faceted, contextual, and framed by interaction, language, and discourse. Hence, qualitative methodologies represent the most appropriate toolkit to unpack multiple realities and diverse insights about phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

1.7.3. Methodology

I adopted two separate qualitative methodologies in this dissertation: (1) an interpretivist, qualitative research design (*chapter two*) and (2) a qualitative intrinsic case study design

(*chapters three and four*). My co-authors and I selected an interpretivist, qualitative research design in *chapter two* to elucidate the richness and depth of lived experiences shared by study participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Markula & Silk, 2011). This methodological approach enabled us to focus on specific questions as well as complex concepts and phenomena, while ensuring participants' voices were represented.

In *chapters three and four*, a qualitative intrinsic case study design was employed (Schwandt & Gates, 2018; Stake, 2005). "In the simplest sense, a case is an instance, incident, or unit of something and can be anything – a person, an organization, an event, a decision, an action, a location like a neighbourhood, or a nation-state" (Schwandt & Gates, 2018, p. 341). Thomas (2011) argues that identifying the subject and object in case study research is integral for making a project a case of something. The WNP represented the subject of the case study, whereas the object – representing the analytical frame "through which the subject is viewed and which the subject explicates" (Thomas, 2011, p. 511) – differed across *chapters three and four*. The object of *chapter three* involved the lived experiences of newcomers in introductory winter sport programming and the influence of winter sport participation on newcomer integration into Canadian society. The object of *chapter four* was the (in)efficacy of intersectoral community partnerships. Intrinsic case studies focus on the study of a case where the case itself is of primary interest in the research (Grandy, 2010; Stake, 2005). Researchers adopting qualitative case study designs typically use multiple research methods to unpack the nuance and meaning of the case, while examining it from various perspectives (Stake, 2005).

1.7.4. Qualitative methods

I received research ethics approval through the University of Calgary's Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board (REB17-1284) to complete the following qualitative methods in this

dissertation: in-depth, semi-structured interviews (*chapters two, three, and four*); participant observation (*chapters three and four*); and photo elicitation focus group (PEFG; *chapter three*). In-depth, semi-structured interviews are “...defined as an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena” (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 6). Interviewers generally employ a semi-structured interview guide consisting of both general questions/prompts and more specific questions/prompts to elucidate information related to the study purpose (Brinkmann, 2018). Please see *Appendices A and B* for copies of this dissertation in-depth, semi-structured interview guides. This approach affords the interviewer with the flexibility to embrace the knowledge-producing potential of dialogue, in part, through allowing the interviewee to take the conversation in directions that are meaningful to them (e.g., every question does not have to be asked or asked in the same way across the interviews). The interviewer is also able to direct the conversation to issues they deem important in relation to the present study through a semi-structured approach (Brinkmann, 2018). I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with programme administrators, programme instructors, newcomer programme participants, and parents of newcomer programme participants across *chapters two, three, and four*.

Photo elicitation methods involve the inclusion of photographs directly into interviews or focus groups (Croghan et al., 2008; Epstein et al., 2006; Harper, 2002). Having participants take photographs, then incorporate them into interviews or focus groups, provides participants with greater agency and promotes two-way dialogue between researcher(s) and participant(s) (Croghan et al., 2008; Harper, 2002; Woodgate et al., 2017). Photo elicitation methods offer varied benefits: building trust and rapport with participants, challenging participants to think about the study context in different ways, activating participants’ memories, evoking more

emotional and multi-layered responses from participants, and providing an additional data source to analyze (Croghan et al., 2008; Epstein et al., 2006; Gold, 2004). Photo elicitation methods are increasingly being used in research with children to promote conversation and reduce the rigid nature of traditional qualitative interviews that may intimidate younger participants (Cook & Hess, 2007; Croghan et al., 2008; Epstein et al., 2006).

I ran a PEFG during the March Break Olympic camp in March 2018, a pilot programme aimed at introducing local youth – including newcomer participants through the WNP – to the various winter sports (e.g., ice hockey, snowboarding, speed skating, ski jumping). A primary motivation for this camp was to offer a leveraging opportunity following the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. March Break camp participants were given the opportunity to opt-in to the PEFG, though it was made clear that participating in both the camp and PEFG were not required. I held an information session for those participants who opted-in to outline the study purpose, informed consent and assent procedures, and a camera orientation. Participants were then given digital cameras⁷ and instructed to photograph aspects of the camp that were personally meaningful. To protect participant safety, PEFG participants could only use their cameras before and after structured activities and during unstructured camp times (e.g., mealtimes). On the final day of the week-long camp, I collected the cameras from PEFG participants, developed the photographs, and held the PEFG. Participants were given copies of their photographs at the start of the PEFG and were invited to answer questions specific to their photographs (e.g., why do you take those particular photographs?) and more general questions about the camp, winter sports, and identity (e.g., did you feel welcomed during the programme?). Please see *Appendix C* for a copy of this dissertation PEFG interview guide.

⁷ PEFG participants were provided Polaroid iS048 Waterproof 16MP 4x Optical Zoom Digital Cameras for the duration of the March Break camp.

Participant observations were used to elicit a rich understanding of the WNP study context and augment the interview and PEF data. Namely, I performed observations during WNP collaboration meetings and across relevant WinSport programming. I shifted between participant-as-observer and observer-as-participant roles depending on what was required across specific study environments. For WNP partnership meetings, a participant-as-observer strategy was adopted meaning I was an active contributor during meetings. I adopted this immersive approach based on my role as a founding and central collaborator in the WNP. In comparison, I assumed a more neutral observer-as-participant role during the WNP programmes through watching from the periphery (e.g., at the bottom of the ski/snowboard hill or behind the boards in the ice skating rink) to both minimize potential disruptions and view programmes in their entirety (Manolchev & Foley, 2021). Employing an observer-as-participant role allowed me to move between programmes running at the same time in different areas of WinSport (e.g., indoor skating lessons to outdoor skiing lessons). While observing, I focused my attention on interactions between stakeholders (e.g., conversations between instructors and programme participants); peoples' body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice (e.g., during partnership meetings); as well as the built environment at WinSport (e.g., how people used WinSport's various facilities). I completed approximately 140 hours of observations during the study period and recorded hand-written notes in a journal immediately following each observation session.

1.7.5. Data analysis, positionality, and researcher reflexivity

1.7.5.1. Thematic analysis

Data across *chapters two, three, and four* were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2019) thematic analysis (TA) approach. In their 2006 conceptualization, Braun and Clarke

presented six heuristic phases for researchers to follow: (1) familiarizing yourself with your data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. Given the wide adoption of this approach – *Using thematic analysis in psychology* has been cited over 127,400 times – Braun and Clarke (2019) have since addressed some misconceptions and assumptions of their approach to TA. The authors now describe their approach as reflexive thematic analysis, and describe it accordingly:

Quality reflexive TA is not about following procedures “correctly” (or about “accurate” and “reliable” coding, or achieving consensus between coders), but about the researcher’s reflective and thoughtful engagement with their data and their reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p. 594, emphasis in original).

In this spirit, my applicable co-authors and I employed reflexive TA to analyze the data collected across this dissertation. We read all applicable study materials (i.e., interview transcripts, observation field notes, reflexive journal entries, photographs) multiple times to familiar ourselves with the content. Next, all materials were subject to an initial round of line-by-line coding employing in vivo and process coding strategies (Saldana, 2016). Subsequent rounds of coding – using an axial coding strategy – were completed to reassemble the previously deconstructed codes into meaningful units of analysis (Saldana, 2016). Preliminary thematic categories were then developed through successive iterations of reviewing previous rounds of coding, writing analytical memos, and reflecting on the relevant theoretical and conceptual literature. Following further refinement, these thematic categories became the themes and sub-themes as presented in *chapters two, three, and four*. I met regularly with William – and in the case of *chapter two*, Joan also – across all stages of the data analysis process to discuss the data

analysis outputs, challenge our individual and collective assumptions about the study content, and push my thinking in creative and different ways.

1.7.5.2. Researcher reflexivity and positionality

Reflexivity is a continuing mode of self-analysis by the researcher and is considered a form of quality control in qualitative research (Barrick, 2016; Berger, 2015; Bourke, 2014; Pillow, 2003). Self-analysis takes multiple forms including reflexive journaling where the researcher records their thoughts and feelings about their place in the research context (Berger, 2015). Reflexivity serves multiple purposes. First, reflexivity helps researchers better understand how they shape the creation of knowledge through their own self-location. A researcher's gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, nationality, (dis)ability, biases, beliefs, and personal experiences all influence the research process. These personal characteristics shape the questions researchers ask, how they interpret data, and the conclusions they reach (Berger, 2015; Pillow, 2003). Reflexivity also encourages researchers to scrutinize their own ideological frameworks, research tools, and practices to ensure they are conducting authentic and relevant research (Gunaratnam, 2003). Second, reflexivity helps bridge the researcher-participant gap. This occurs through researchers being self-aware of their position related to study participants and ensuring an ethical researcher-participant relationship (Berger, 2015; Bourke, 2014). Third, reflexivity fosters rigor in qualitative research, in part, as the researcher ponders how they shape the co-construction of knowledge with participants. This transparent, deeply reflective process helps ensure that qualitative research is accurate, credible, and trustworthy (Berger, 2015). Thus, reflexive research contributes to producing rigorous knowledge about our social world and informs the reader about how this knowledge is produced to create more rigorous, less distorted research (Pillow, 2003).

Qualitative researchers need to reflect on how their insider-outsider position shapes all aspects of their research. Positionality helps the researcher determine their place in the insider-outsider relationship. To determine one's positionality, researchers adopt self-reflexive practices. Researchers commonly use self-reflexivity to examine their position in a study and the connections they have to participants throughout all stages of the research process (Pillow, 2003). Three main types of research positionality exist: (1) when the researcher shares the experiences of study participants, (2) when the researcher moves from an outsider to an insider in the course of the study, and (3) when the researcher has no personal familiarity or experience with the research topic (Berger, 2015). Each type of positionality influences how researchers access the field, the researcher-participant relationship, and how the researcher's background influences the project.

It is common for the qualitative researcher's insider-outsider positionality to be dynamic and responsive to the study context. Navigating the insider-outsider hyphen is an insight shared by Gunaratnam (2003) and Humphrey (2007) concerning the realization that interactions between the researcher, participants, and study context are diverse and complex, requiring keen analysis by the researcher. This process encourages social scientists to abandon homogenous social categories and the longing to discover singular realities. Instead, researchers that navigate the insider-outsider hyphen strive to unsettle essentialist categories of difference throughout society, in part, by interrogating how societal structures, popular norms, and methodological practices contribute to othering processes (Gunaratnam, 2003).

Given my identity as a white, Canadian citizen by birth, I occupied a clear outsider position in this dissertation, especially when interacting with newcomer WNP and study participants. Yet, instances did emerge where I found myself navigating the insider-outsider

hyphen. One repeated prominent example occurred during WNP partnership meetings when my WinSport colleagues would rely on my judgement as a definitive expert on the needs of newcomers. I felt great discomfort being called on to speak for WNP newcomer participants and advocated for the inclusion of newcomer participant representatives during partnership meetings, though this request never materialized. I leaned heavily on my reflexive journaling and frequent meetings with William to work through the complexities of managing this and additional reflexive tensions. I am looking forward to delving further into these conundrums in the form of a reflexive, methodological journal article as my first piece of scholarly writing after this dissertation.

1.8. Outline of Remaining Chapters

The remainder of this dissertation is divided into four chapters. *Chapter two* offers a critical examination of Canadian introductory sport programmes for newcomers. This chapter has been published in *Leisure/Loisir*, the leading Canadian Leisure Studies journal (Volume 45, Issue 1, 2021) with my co-authors William and Joan. In *chapter three*, the focus shifts to the WNP where I interrogated the lived experiences of newcomers to Canada in the programme through a sole-authored manuscript. This chapter is under review in a sport sociology journal. The WNP is also the focus of *chapter four* where William and I examined the efficacy of the WNP. This chapter is under review in a sport management journal. To conclude this dissertation, *chapter five* provides some closing thoughts on the connections between the findings in *chapters two, three, and four*; future research directions; and some reflexive comments on conducting community-engaged research. The layout of this dissertation – an introduction chapter, three manuscripts, and a conclusion chapter – means there will be some repetition across the chapters (e.g., revisiting the same literature, theory, and methodology/methods). This is because *chapters*

two, *three*, and *four* are stand-alone manuscripts that are (or will be) published in scholarly journals. I have included the applicable references at the end of each data chapter, as well as a master reference list starting on page 215.

Chapter Two

Striving for Newcomer Inclusion: A Critical Analysis of Canadian Intro to Sport Programmes

The focus of *chapter two* involved critically interrogating *Intro to Sport* programmes that solely or primarily serve newcomers to Canada. Insights from this chapter informed the first two research questions guiding this dissertation: (1) What promising practices are being used for organizing and administering introductory sport programmes for newcomers to Canada? and (2) How are inclusive, welcoming introductory winter sport programmes built and administered by diverse community stakeholders? An interpretivist, qualitative research design was adopted involving 20 semi-structured interviews with *Intro to Sport* programme administrators, instructors, and parents of newcomer programme participants. This chapter was published in *Leisure/Loisir* and thus follows the journal's required stylistic guidelines.

Article reference:

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2.1. Abstract

Sport participation is popularly constructed as an effective means for welcoming newcomers into their new country of residence, despite these claims being critiqued by sport scholars. In this study, we critically interrogated *Intro to Sport* programmes as one approach for welcoming newcomers into the Canadian sport system using Green's (2005) normative theory of sport development to inform our work. Twenty qualitative interviews were conducted with programme administrators, instructors, and parents of newcomer programme participants representing six *Intro to Sport* programmes. Using thematic analysis, two overarching themes were determined: (1) toward inclusion: negotiating sport participation barriers and (2) sustainability. We explored how various sport participation barriers were managed towards promoting inclusion across the programmes as well as the pervasiveness of intersectoral community partnerships. We provided a nuanced discussion of the socio-cultural and contextual considerations surrounding *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers, insights that can inform sport development research and practice moving forward. We also offer suggestions to sport administrators involved in *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers and future research directions.

Keywords: newcomer; sport participation; sport development; winter sport; summer sport; qualitative research; integration

2.2. Background

It is widely acknowledged among sport administrators, policy makers, politicians, and academics in Global North nations that sport participation has the potential to enrich the lives of newcomers, specifically concerning their settlement and integration into the host society (Agergaard, 2018). Sport participation is thought to help newcomers build their social networks, experience social inclusion, learn the mother tongue of one's new country of residence, procure employment skills, and generally fit in (Frisby, 2011; Rich et al., 2015; Tirone, 2010). This claim, however, has been interrogated by sport scholars (Agergaard, 2018; Rich et al., 2015). For example, Agergaard (2018) problematized the contemporary implementation of integration as being neo-assimilationist in nature, while researchers have identified numerous participation barriers (e.g., limited financial resources, time and transportation constraints, language and cultural considerations, and complex sport bureaucracies) that hinder many newcomers from accessing the aforementioned benefits of mainstream sport participation (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Forde et al., 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Scholars have also explored the structure and delivery of newcomer sport and leisure participation opportunities (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Rich et al., 2015; Tirone, 2010; Tirone et al., 2010).

Sport organizations in Canada are facing increasing competition as growing numbers of sport, leisure, and physical activity entities are entering the market in search of access to people's shrinking leisure and physical activity time (Canadian Index of Wellbeing, 2016). To help address these considerations, many sport administrators are shifting how they approach the recruitment of new sport participants by implementing introductory sport programmes that incorporate sport-specific promising practices to recruit and retain participants (Barrick & Mair, 2020; Sport for Life, n.d.). While such programmes go by many names – learn-to programmes,

intro to sport programmes, or try-it lessons – we adopt the term *Intro to Sport* programmes throughout this paper for clarity.

For this study, the authors combined relevant academic knowledge with programme design and delivery expertise to explore the sport experiences of newcomers to Canada. We investigated existing mainstream *Intro to Sport* programmes solely or primarily serving newcomer children and youth to Canada,⁸ in part, as this topic represents a gap in the relevant academic literature. Given the diversity of sport in Canada, we were interested in: (1) programmes offered solely to newcomer children and youth; and (2) general programmes offered to the wider public, in which many participants identify as newcomer children and youth (perhaps due to geographic proximity, financial affordability, or reputation). As this study was exploratory in nature, we were interested in studying diverse programme structures (e.g., public, private, public-private partnerships, non-profit, intersectoral collaborations). This focus on children and youth reflects the predominance of sport programmes targeting these age groups in Canadian educational and sport systems (Thibault & Harvey, 2013).

Our aim for this study involved gaining a detailed understanding of *Intro to Sport* programmes solely or primarily serving newcomer children and youth to Canada informed by the following research questions: (1) How are *Intro to Sport* programmes structured to meet the needs of newcomer participants?; and (2) In what ways do programme administrators strive to meet the needs of newcomer participants? This study was grounded in sport development literature – namely, Green’s (2005) normative theory of sport development – to help interrogate the *Intro to Sport* programmes under examination. In the next section, we outline Canada’s history as an immigrant nation and the lasting influence of federal multiculturalism policy. We

⁸ One programme we examined focused on newcomer families, while primarily serving children and youth.

then summarize the relationship between sport, leisure, and immigration in Canada focusing on the participation barriers and administrative concerns facing many newcomers in sport and leisure contexts, as well as an overview of *Intro to Sport* programmes. An overview of sport development literature – focusing on Green’s (2005) theory – is then shared followed by our methods and procedures. We then present our results and discussions in an integrated format, followed by some concluding thoughts for researchers and sport administrators.

2.3. Canadian Immigration

As a settler colonial nation, immigration represents a central pillar of Canadian history, culture, and identity (Guo & Guo, 2015). Through subsequent waves of immigration, Canada’s population has grown into a multicultural population consisting of sizeable ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity. In 2017, Canada admitted 286,000 new permanent residents, with future immigration targets rising to 340,000 per year in 2020 (IRCC, 2018). Immigration has also captured widespread national media and popular attention, in particular during the Syrian refugee crisis (Tyyskä et al., 2017). Between November 2015 and January 2017, Canada admitted 40,081 Syrian refugees to assist with the ongoing humanitarian crisis (IRCC, n.d.-a) with the settlement and integration of this population receiving both media and academic interest (Tyyskä et al., 2017). Immigration is a prominent consideration within Canadian society and also contributes to Canada’s global reputation as a welcoming, inclusive nation (Guo & Guo, 2015).

2.4. Multiculturalism Policy in Canada

Multiculturalism takes many forms within Western nations – including a policy discourse and a concept for understanding interpersonal relations – and as such, lacks a universal definition. Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yudakul (2008) argue that multiculturalism can involve demographic descriptors, ideologies of celebrating diversity, government policies and

programmes, and specific normative political theories for governing diverse societies. In Canada, Mensah (2010) posits that multiculturalism may be conceptualized as a demographic reality, a political ideology, or a government policy structuring a competitive process seeking to manage ethnic and race relations in Canada. In this paper, we will focus on the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, a policy discourse that was adopted by the federal government starting in 1971.

Canadian multiculturalism involves the recognition and accommodation of persons who are racialized within national policy (Bloemraad et al., 2008; Li, 1999). The federal government adopted this policy in 1971 following recommendations by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. The mandate of the commission involved addressing language and cultural tensions between French and English Canada, as well as emerging concerns held by long-standing ethnic minority or racialized groups (e.g., Ukrainian-Canadians; Mensah, 2010). In an attempt to satisfy these competing interests, then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced in 1971 that Canada was a multicultural nation within a bilingual framework with two official languages and no official culture (Kymlicka, 2015; Mackey, 2002; Mensah, 2010). All Canadians were now entitled to observe their cultural background without discrimination and minority groups gained access to funding from various federal ministries, most notably the newly formed Ministry of Multiculturalism (Mackey, 2002).

Over the next 20 years, multiculturalism would become embedded into Canada's constitutional framework. In 1982, multiculturalism was recognized under Section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Under former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, Canadian multiculturalism policy became the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988. This Act reaffirmed multiculturalism as a central pillar of Canadian society and gave the policy a sense of

direction by establishing a specific framework and federal institutions (e.g., Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship) to guide its progression (Mensah, 2010).

Canadian multiculturalism represented a compromise offering ethnically diverse communities equality while also ensuring all Canadians that multiculturalism would advance individual freedom without compromising national unity or official language policy. Hence, a balance was struck between ensuring political and language concessions to French Canadians and Quebec nationalism and delivering Canada a new national identity based on cultural diversity (Li, 1999). Multiculturalism also replaced Britain as a central symbol of Canada (Mackey, 2002).

Within Canada, multiculturalism represents one part of the larger immigration and integration systems (Siemiatycki, 2012). Starting in 1967, Canada's immigration system shifted from admitting immigrants based on their country of origin (primarily from European nations) to a Points System whereby applicants would receive points based on their education, language proficiency, job training, and other related criteria. This shift decreased the racist, Eurocentric nature of Canadian immigration and opened Canada to newcomers from around the world (e.g., Asia and the Middle East; Kymlicka, 2015; Leung, 2015). The Points System and Canadian multiculturalism meant that immigrants began arriving from around the world and would no longer be expected to assimilate to a British standard of identity (Siemiatycki, 2012).

Immigrants are referred to by different terms depending on what immigration category they fit into (e.g., immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker). In this paper, we adopt the term "newcomer" to promote clarity and be inclusive of the diverse backgrounds and immigration categories that newcomers experience. Newcomers are individuals who self-identify as such and

are typically recognized as being new to their current country of residence by various social and political institutions (e.g., immigration, education, healthcare; Caidi & Allard, 2005).

2.5. Sport, Leisure, and Immigration in Canada

Sport in Canada is organized hierarchically with diverse local, regional, provincial, and national structures interacting to deliver organized sport opportunities to millions of Canadians (Thibault & Harvey, 2013). Nationally, the Government of Canada oversees federal sport policy – through *The Canadian Sport Policy 2012 (CSP 2012)* – and provides funding to various National Multisport Service Organizations (e.g., Canadian Olympic Committee, Special Olympics Canada, Sport for Life) and National Sport Organizations (e.g., Hockey Canada, Swimming Canada) that each oversee one sport. At the Provincial and Territorial level, various Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations represent the interests of individual sports (e.g., Ontario Curling Council, Cricket NB), while various multisport organizations (e.g., Alberta Sport Connection) focus on sport development more widely. Locally, diverse public and private entities offer high performance and grassroots sport programming in communities across Canada. Common examples include community sport clubs (e.g., curling clubs), municipal sport facilities and recreation centres (municipally owned and managed), and educational institutions (e.g., public and private schools). At each level, various ancillary partners (e.g., non-governmental organizations, funding bodies, private companies) also help to shape Canada's sport system (Thibault & Harvey, 2013).

Given the prominent place sport holds in Canadian society, as well as the increasing bureaucratization of the sport system, understanding how policy design and implementation shapes all levels of sport requires examination (Kidd, 2018; Thibault & Harvey, 2013). The *CSP 2012* positions inclusivity as a core policy principle. Offering accessible introduction to sport,

recreational sport, and sport for development opportunities for all Canadians also represent three primary policy goals. Within sport for development, The *CSP 2012* outlines “that both the number and diversity of Canadians participating in sport will increase over the timeframe of 2012-2022” (Canadian Heritage, 2012, p. 8). Newcomers to Canada represent one source of such diversity. Fostering collaborative opportunities are another priority outlined in the policy, which we will examine specifically in the results and discussion section of this paper. Despite greater emphasis being placed on inclusivity, introductory sport, and economic and social development opportunities within the *CSP 2012*, limited attention has been directed at the policy and programme implications for grassroots sport, specifically involving newcomers (Frisby, 2011).

The role that sport and leisure play in Canadian immigration is receiving growing academic interest (Curtin et al., 2018; Frisby, 2011; Rich et al., 2015; Stodolska, 2018; Tirone et al., 2010). Organizations that focus on sport participation and inclusion have also shifted focus to this issue with a view ostensibly to improve policy development and programmes offered (Gosai et al., 2018; ICC, 2014; Kelly & Millar, 2014). Sport and leisure participation are thought to positively shape newcomers’ health and wellbeing (physical, mental, and emotional), integration, social inclusion, and sense of community (ICC, 2014; Rich et al., 2015). Yet, newcomers report lower sport participation rates than the general Canadian population (ICC, 2014), and when newcomers participate in sport and leisure, they generally report various participation barriers (Campbell et al., 2016; Tirone et al., 2010). Researchers have also explored the challenges faced by sport and leisure administrators in meeting the diverse needs of newcomers (Forde et al., 2015; Frisby, 2011; Tirone et al., 2010). We engage with newcomer sport and leisure research in this section as our focus for this study involves community introductory sport programmes, which can be considered both sport and leisure activities. Furthermore, as the relevant newcomer

sport and leisure research holds many parallels, we combined both areas in the subsequent sections.

2.5.1. Newcomer sport and leisure participation barriers

Many newcomers report encountering diverse sport and leisure participation barriers including: limited financial resources, time and transportation constraints, language and cultural concerns, and struggling with navigating Canada's bureaucratic sport system (e.g., registration processes and renting or purchasing sports equipment). The financial realities facing many newcomer families (e.g., high unemployment/underemployment rates) coupled with the increasing costs of many Canadian sport and leisure opportunities makes such participation unattainable for many newcomers (Campbell et al., 2016; Mensah, 2010; Taylor & Doherty, 2005). Newcomers also report substantial time pressures, such as participating in language classes and job retraining initiatives, leaving little time to engage in sport and leisure activities (Curtin et al., 2018; Stodolska, 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). The location of sport and leisure facilities hinders newcomers' participation if facilities are not in close proximity to their homes or easily accessible via public transit as newcomers tend to have less access to personal automobiles (Tirone, 2010; Tirone et al., 2010).

Cultural and language differences between newcomers and established members of the local community also create barriers for newcomers. Specifically, newcomers tend to view Canadian sport and leisure as being far more purposeful, structured, individualistic, and selfish than they are used to and as such, may be hesitant to participate in mainstream environments (Curtin et al., 2018; Stodolska, 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Experiencing racism and ethnocentrism in leisure and sport spaces can also push newcomers away (Suto, 2013; Tirone, 2010). When newcomers lack the ability to communicate and understand one of Canada's two

official languages, their engagement in Canadian society, including sport and leisure settings is constrained as speaking and understanding French or English is essential at all stages of participation (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009; Stodolska, 2015).

Such cultural and language differences become exacerbated when newcomers encounter Canada's bureaucratic sport system. Relevant critiques centre on the system's complex rules and regulations, newcomers' limited knowledge of the system, and coaches and administrators lacking the necessary skills and resources to support newcomers (Curtin et al., 2018; Stodolska, 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Since many newcomers, especially those from Global South countries, are often used to less structured sport and leisure opportunities in their previous resident countries, navigating Canadian realities of registration systems, booking facilities, and signing liability waivers are unfamiliar to many, thereby contributing to lower participation rates among newcomers (Stodolska, 2015). Instead, many newcomers turn to their ethnoracial communities, in the form of ethnic sport clubs or community centres, to access safe, welcoming, and culturally-relevant sport and leisure programming (Tirone, 2010). Moreover, mainstream Canadian information channels (e.g., websites and leisure guides) tend to exclude many newcomers from important details about accessing sport and leisure spaces due to the aforementioned language and cultural barriers. Newcomers typically receive information about local sport and leisure opportunities from their social and ethnic networks (Tirone, 2010). Thus, a disconnect exists between how leisure and sport administrators communicate relevant information and how newcomers receive these same details. This disconnect results from the limited knowledge sport administrators possess about meeting the needs of newcomers (Stodolska, 2015; Tirone et al., 2010).

Researchers have also discovered that certain participation barriers may act as both a facilitator and barrier for newcomers to participate in sport and leisure (Golob & Giles, 2011). For instance, families and ethnoracial groups tend to offer newcomers safe, non-discriminatory spaces to do leisure activities aligned with the newcomer's cultural background. These entities can also constrain newcomers' sport and leisure participation by pressuring individuals and/or families to maintain their cultural activities instead of entering dominant cultural places and trying mainstream sports and leisure activities (Curtin et al., 2018; Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). When newcomers lack extensive social networks, especially early in their settlement journey in Canada, they report feelings of isolation, loneliness, and a reduced sense of belonging to their local community and nation (Curtin et al., 2018; Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). However, Campbell and colleagues (2016) identified a benefit of smaller social networks through their research with African-Canadian youths. Namely, the youths' small, informal support networks became important sources of friendship. Through the use of cell phones, the study participants reported becoming close with their peers and using these networks to begin participating in a range of mainstream sport and leisure activities, while also becoming friends with individuals who were born in Canada. Thus, newcomers can engage with phenomena that either facilitate or constrain their sport and leisure participation depending on one's context.

2.5.2. Administrative concerns for newcomer sport and leisure

Various administrative concerns exist across the newcomer sport and leisure literature. For example, mainstream sport and leisure organizations are considered ill-prepared to oversee the socially inclusive, welcoming programmes newcomers are searching for (Forde et al., 2015; Stodolska, 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Yet, Canadian sport and leisure administrators are tasked with offering equitable programming for all Canadians (Golob & Giles, 2011). While exceptions

do exist, such as Frisby's (2011) participatory action research project involving Chinese newcomer women and a British Columbian municipality, administrators – especially in municipal recreation departments – have remained focused on offering Euro-Canadian activities despite Canada's shifting demographics. Thus, meeting the increasing demand for culturally-specific sport and leisure programming has been increasingly left to individual ethnic enclaves and sport clubs (Tirone, 2010). Ethnic enclaves and sports clubs have been found to offer both ethnic-specific activities as well as mainstream Euro-Canadian activities to newcomers, thereby illustrating their central role in the sport and leisure opportunities for newcomers (Tirone, 2010). Broadly, questions remain in the literature about how best to meet the sport and leisure needs of newcomers including how to address known participation barriers, how to appropriately design *Intro to Sport* programmes that encourage newcomer participation, and what roles various community stakeholders should adopt.

2.5.3. *Intro to Sport programmes in Canada*

Modern *Intro to Sport* programmes are but one iteration of strategies employed to recruit new participants throughout Canadian sport history (Barrick & Mair, 2020). Modern iterations of *Intro to Sport* programmes in Canada have existed in certain sports (e.g., ice skating and swimming) for decades (Sport for Life, n.d.). *Intro to Sport* programmes typically involve individuals learning the basics of a sport from knowledgeable instructors (e.g., National Coaching Certification Program certified coaches) who follow pre-determined curricula. Programmes tend to focus on fostering safe, fun, and welcoming environments where individuals acquire a strong foundation in their sport (Skate Canada, n.d.). We are focusing on *Intro to Sport* programmes in this study as they are garnering increased attention among sports administrators across the Canadian sport system, while lacking substantial scholarly examination (Barrick &

Mair, 2020; Sport for Life, n.d.). Our interest in this paper are the relationships between newcomers to Canada, *Intro to Sport* programmes, and settlement processes. Through this paper, we aim to address this research gap by better understanding how *Intro to Sport* programmes operate and strive to meet the diverse needs of newcomer participants, while also providing recommendations to sport administrators working to offer or enhance welcoming, inclusive *Intro to Sport* programmes.

2.6. Interrogating Sport Development Research

Shilbury and colleagues (2008) position sport development as being fundamentally “about participation and promoting the opportunities and benefits of participation” (p. 217). Yet, sport development scholars have mainly focused on policy formation – including international comparative analyses (Green & Collins, 2008; Skille, 2011), the influence of political ideologies on sport policy (Andrews & Silk, 2012; Coalter, 2007), and elite sport considerations surrounding sustained international success (Andersen et al., 2015; Green & Houlihan, 2005).

In the Canadian sport policy context, sport development researchers have conducted international comparative analyses involving Canada and other western nations (Green, 2004; Green & Houlihan, 2005), while Thibault and Babiak (2005) as well as Thibault and Harvey (2013) tracked national sport policy changes over time. In particular, Thibault and Babiak (2005) found that over the past 15 years, Canada’s sport system shifted from a focus on directing resources to sport bureaucracies towards athlete-centred foci such as increased monthly funding assistance and the creation of dispute resolution platforms.

There also lies a distinction between development *through* sport and development *of* sport across the sport development literature. According to Shilbury and colleagues (2008), both approaches work to motivate individuals to become active, but their purpose or desired outcomes

tend to differ. Development *through* sport involves how sport may contribute to wider community wellness, while development *of* sport focuses internally on how sport organizations work to ensure sustainability within their respective sport contexts. In this study, we focused on interrogating development *of* sport, namely how administrators strove to meet the needs of newcomer participants.

There is a dearth of sport development literature focusing on newcomer participation in community sport programmes. Sport development researchers have addressed racism and ethno-racial discrimination within broader conversations of social inequality in sport (Hylton & Totten, 2013). Yet, nuanced examinations of the complexities facing newcomer participants – and subsequent implications for sport administrators – are missing from this body of literature. One notable exception involves Rich and colleagues' (2015) examination of how a community soccer tournament was designed to contribute positively to the social inclusion of local newcomers. Through grounding this paper in sport development literature, we aim to add a more nuanced discussion of the socio-cultural and contextual considerations for recruiting and retaining newcomers in *Intro to Sport* programmes. These insights will help sport administrators and researchers better understand how such programmes can be structured to meet the needs of newcomers. In particular, we adopted Green's (2005) normative theory of sport development as the starting point to build from in our results and discussion section.

2.6.1. Normative theory of sport development

Green's (2005) normative theory of sport development fosters a greater understanding of sport development across mass and elite levels of sport by examining an athlete's progression through their respective sport. Green's theory focuses on three areas: athlete recruitment, retention, and transitions. Athlete recruitment involves how new members are enlisted into sport

and is typically the result of encouragement from significant others (friends or family). Despite the pivotal role of significant others, the possibility to establish new relationships and role identities are influential to entering a new sport. At this stage, Green notes how access to the necessary infrastructure and smaller, local-level programmes are integral to recruiting participants.

Once athletes are recruited, sport administrators must work diligently to retain individuals beyond the initial experience. Motivation, socialization, and commitment are key considerations within athlete retention. For motivation, athletes must draw value from sport participation. Since many diverse factors encourage individuals to participate in a given sport, programmes must cater to the diverse motivations of athletes. For example, participants can be motivated by social outcomes of participation and/or skill development either simultaneously or independently. Socialization is important for helping individuals feel they belong in the sport subculture by bridging the gap between recruitment and commitment. Once an athlete feels they fit into their sport subculture, their expectations, perceptions of possible rewards, and values they attach to those rewards are likely to increase. Finally, the likelihood that an athlete will commit to their respective sport increases when they enjoy themselves and recognize opportunities to become involved in their sport's subculture. Effective sport programmes that result in high degrees of athlete commitment typically build skill acquisition and socializing directly into their structure (Barrick & Mair, 2020).

The last focus of the theory involves the transitions athletes encounter as they move up the sport development pyramid towards advanced levels of training and competition. To ensure effective transitions, programmes need to be linked vertically and athletes require support in locating and socializing into their new levels of involvement. Lim and colleagues (2011) argue

that transitions can involve commitment levels (e.g., recreational to elite) or life stages (e.g., youth to adult). Furthermore, all three areas of this theory are shaped by individual (e.g., personal preferences) or system-level factors (e.g., facility availability). According to Green (2005), understanding the “interrelationships and interactions among recruitment, motives, socialization, and commitment” (p. 236-237) are vital to better understanding and maintaining successful sport development programmes.

Green’s (2005) normative theory for sport development has been engaged with across various sport development research contexts including: elite sport (De Bosscher et al., 2010; Henriksen et al., 2010a, 2010b), conceptual investigations within sport management (Beaton et al., 2011; Doherty, 2013; Sotiriadou et al., 2008), sport events (Taks et al., 2014), youth sport (Vissek et al., 2015), and adult sport participation (Barrick & Mair, 2020; Lim et al., 2011). This framework has not yet been applied to the management of *Intro to Sport* programmes serving newcomers in the sport development literature. We posit that Green’s (2005) sport development theory can provide great value in better understanding these programmes when placed in conversation with diverse socio-cultural and contextual factors.

2.7. Methodology and Procedures

We adopted an interpretivist, qualitative research design for this study focusing on the richness and depth of lived experiences shared by study participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Markula & Silk, 2011). This approach enables researchers to focus on specific questions and complex concepts or phenomena, while ensuring the voices of participants are represented. Specifically, we used semi-structured interviews to explore the rich experiences of relevant programme stakeholders.

From January to June 2016, we recruited and interviewed participants from six *Intro to Sport* programmes that exclusively or primarily serve newcomers to Canada. Relevant programmes were first identified by the research team through our individual and collective knowledge of the Canadian sport system and our existing networks. Preliminary contact was then made with gatekeepers from each programme via email. Once gatekeepers agreed on behalf of the programme and organization(s) to participate in the study, we either visited the programmes in person or conducted phone interviews with various relevant stakeholders. Following each interview, the interviewers drew on the tenets of snowball sampling by asking participants: (a) are there other stakeholders from the programme we should speak with? and (b) are there other relevant programmes that we should connect with?

The six *Intro to Sport* programmes are located in five Canadian cities throughout the provinces of Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec. The programmes featured four different sports – ice skating, ice hockey, curling, and soccer – offering different sport perspectives. The six programmes were administered by individuals and organizations from a range of backgrounds including churches, settlement services organizations, local volunteers, community sport clubs, municipal recreation and leisure departments, and national sport organizations. Please see *Table 2.1* for demographic details of the six programmes. In the ensuing presentation of study findings, we will also share relevant demographic details where applicable to offer the reader appropriate context while protecting individual and organizational anonymity.

Table 2.1. Demographic details for study programmes

Programme	Location	Sport(s)	Collaborators
Programme 1	Ontario/Canada-wide	Curling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National sport organization - Community builder - Private company
Programme 2	Alberta	Ice skating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal recreation department - Local settlement services organization - National charity
Programme 3	Alberta	Soccer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local non-profit - Local church - Local volunteers - Various local, provincial, & national funders
Programme 4	Alberta	Ice skating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local figure skating club - Local settlement services organization
Programme 5	Alberta	Ice skating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal recreational department - Neighbourhood association - National charity
Programme 6	Quebec/Canada-wide	Ice skating; Ice hockey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National sport organization - Provincial sport organizations - Professional sport franchises

It is important to note that our research team was intersectoral in make-up with each co-author possessing different demographic characteristics and diverse connections and experiences within Canadian sport. All three authors are Canadian citizens and white with the first and second authors identifying as men and the third author identifying as a woman. The first and second authors also come from academia with the first author having extensive involvement in curling. The second author has been involved in research, service, and administration with various sports, most notably in figure skating. The third author was a sport administrator,

working in ice skating, at the time of this research. During data collection, none of the authors had direct experience administering *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers. The first author, however, has since become involved in an intersectoral collaboration running newcomer *Intro to Sport* ice skating, skiing, and snowboarding programmes in Western Canada. The first author incorporated insights from that project in the data analysis and manuscript preparation for this study through collective reflexive conversations outlined below.

Our experience across sectors and sports enabled the research team to recruit diverse programmes from varied sport contexts throughout Canada. Our intersectoral make-up also led each author to incorporate their lived experiences throughout the data collection, analysis, and representation phases of this project. However, we were also mindful throughout the research processes of how our homogenous citizenship statuses and similar ethnoracial identities may have influenced our interpretations. We also recognized our collective positionality being deeply embedded within the Canadian sport system. Hence, critically reflecting on our demographic backgrounds helped make us cognizant that we could not personally relate to the lived experiences and participation barriers many newcomers face. To address these realities, we collectively reflected on ideas or topics that may have challenged our own ideas about sport development, continually re-engaged with the relevant newcomer sport and leisure literature, and strove to stay as true as possible to the participants' words when interpreting and representing our study findings.

We received formal ethics approval to conduct this study through the Institutional Review Board at the lead and second authors' university. Overall, 20 interviews were conducted either in person or over the phone with eight programme administrators, nine instructors, and three parents of newcomer programme participants. All three parents self-identified as

newcomers as well as two of the 17 administrators and instructors interviewed. The remaining participants self-identified as naturalized or born Canadian citizens. We interrogate this demographic reality in our results and discussion section. The interviews ranged in length from 10 minutes to one and a half hours with the average interview length being 40 minutes. During the interviews, the research team asked participants questions about their involvement in the respective programme, programme strengths and areas for growth, as well as the value they perceive that newcomers receive from participation. The interviews were audio recorded with permission from each participant. In one case, written notes were taken in lieu of audio recording at the request of the participant.

Once the interviews were completed, the research team conducted a thematic analysis of the interview audio recordings (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019). Each author started by listening to the audio recordings individually, performing subsequent rounds of initial coding, followed by inputting the codes into a shared *Excel* spreadsheet. Examples of codes included: Canadianness, inclusive programming, participation barriers, accessibility, and collaborating. The research team then met several times via conference call to compare initial codes and refine them into axial codes, followed by collaboratively developing and refining the themes. These themes were constructed from close, continual engagement with the interviews and informed by relevant academic and professional literature. In the next section, we present our themes and discussion in an integrated format. We chose to include verbatim quotations from participants in the subsequent section to ensure their voices remain at the centre of the study, a core tenet of qualitative research (Markula & Silk, 2011).

2.8. Results and Discussion

Through the data analysis process, the authors developed two overarching themes from our individual and collective analysis of the interview materials. These themes are: (1) toward inclusion: negotiating sport participation barriers and (2) sustainability. While we present the themes in heuristic categories to promote clarity, we recognize that intersections exist across the themes. As such, we identify these intersections where applicable.

2.8.1. *Toward inclusion: Negotiating sport participation barriers*

Study participants noted numerous barriers to programme participation that were consistent with existing scholarly research (e.g., Campbell et al., 2016; Curtin et al., 2018; Tirone et al., 2010) and professional reports (e.g., Gosai et al., 2018; ICC, 2014). Participants also discussed approaches and suggestions for alleviating the barriers, many of which were noted as existent across the six programmes. In this section, the following four participation barriers are examined – cost to participants, navigating rules and regulations, considering programme location and transportation, and availability of facilities – as well as the aforementioned approaches and suggestions for each barrier.

A central thread running through this theme involved striving to foster inclusive programmes, largely based on idealized (even over-simplistic) understandings of inclusion:

Acceptance. We have an inviting and including philosophy. Any age, any creed or race, even any behaviour is welcome. We're patient. We don't kick somebody out just because they're struggling and they're acting out. We deal with them and we work through it. So, I think it's about relationships. It's about knowing people and letting them know us. Building trust. Building a reputation in the community. (Administrator)⁹

⁹ I italicized all participant quotes in *chapters two, three, and four* to promote clarity and readability.

Scholars have critiqued the effectiveness of this idealistic approach to inclusion as being too simplistic and failing to adequately address nuanced and complex socio-cultural, socio-economic, interpersonal, societal, and programming realities (Block & Gibbs, 2017; Cunningham, 2019; Dagkas, 2018; McDonald et al., 2019). In the following sub-themes, we adopt a similar critical lens surrounding inclusion to interrogate the multi-faceted ways participation barriers were identified and addressed – to varying degrees of success – across the six programmes.

2.8.1.1. Cost to participants

Programming and related costs, such as registration fees and equipment were identified as a factor that likely influences the enrollment of newcomers and their families into sport programmes. This idea resonated across all programmes but especially those that were more costly – ice hockey and ice skating:

[The programme partners] fund the programme so the kids don't actually pay any fees at all. And we subsidize the programme. So, our goal in offering the programme is really to break even ... we offer it at a completely reduced rate. (Administrator)

To address cost-related barriers, programmes adopted various strategies such as municipal fee assistance initiatives, providing participants with new or rental equipment free of charge, and offering no- or low-cost programme fee structures. With respect to the last point, an important debate emerged in our research. Some administrators were able to eliminate all programme costs with the aim of making their programmes as accessible as possible. For other programmes, the administrators' philosophies involved charging a nominal fee to encourage

programme registrants to commit to participation, while still maintaining programme accessibility (i.e., the costs were minimal):

There is a high need for newcomer programmes and programmes in general that are accessible, low cost, affordable, introductory learn-to-skate programmes. The numbers across the board speak to that, in terms of participation rates plus the waiting lists.
(Administrator)

Programme costs also involved challenges surrounding newcomers procuring the necessary equipment as well as instructors and administrators struggling to manage outfitting newcomer participants in the necessary sport equipment. These challenges were most apparent in the ice skating and ice hockey programmes. For instance, study participants (primarily instructors and administrators) articulated the challenges they faced properly equipping newcomer children during the first few weeks of their respective programmes:

[We] spend a lot of time sizing skates on the first day. Very few kids have their own skates and they are generally using borrowed skates. (Instructor)

Over time, the programmes have adopted various strategies to ease the transition of newcomers into their programmes, thereby devoting more time to on-ice instruction. Examples of these strategies include: hosting introductory sessions outlining the programme and logistics beforehand; employing an additional instructor(s) during the first few weeks of the programme to assist newcomers as they become comfortable with the sport (e.g., helping tie skates); and establishing and maintaining an equipment repository that newcomer participants can access throughout the programme.

These strategies were argued to be successful across the various ice sport programmes through limiting what was often referred to by interview participants as “the chaos” that comes with introducing large numbers of people – many of whom are unfamiliar with the sport being taught – to a new sport and its equipment. These low-cost approaches are beneficial for newcomer participants as they are not required to purchase relevant equipment to try a sport and require minimal financial investment by programme administrators beyond paying additional instructors at the beginning of programmes. Programme administrators also employed creative strategies for establishing equipment banks such as holding used equipment drives, soliciting monetary donations from various sources, and partnering with organizations that supply discounted or free equipment (i.e., skates and helmets) to marginalized populations. Furthermore, these low-cost approaches enabled newcomers to get on the ice faster and reportedly reduced anxieties for the instructors, newcomer parents, and children. Programme instructors and administrators also proposed the idea of producing short “how to” videos for programme and organization websites to further introduce newcomers to the respective sports (e.g., tips surrounding buying equipment).

A focus on reducing or eliminating programme costs (financial or otherwise) for newcomer participants was noted across the six programmes. This finding is consistent with academic research and practitioner knowledge that has advocated for low-cost alternatives for newcomer sport programmes (ICC, 2014; Livingston & Tirone, 2012). Within the leisure and sport literature, a tension exists between competing social liberal and neoliberal values involving supporting various marginalized communities, whether that be through financial or other means (e.g., leisure access policies or fee assistance programmes; Cureton & Frisby, 2011; Forde et al., 2015). For instance, Cureton and Frisby (2011), in their interviews and focus groups with

municipal recreation staff, discovered a nuanced relationship between the social liberal beliefs (e.g., recreation opportunities should be available to everyone) held by study participants and an emergent neoliberal shift in governance influencing their work (e.g., market-orientation, individual responsibility, and efficiency). These largely incompatible ideologies mainly resulted in tensions when it came to implementing leisure access policies (e.g., the extent to which policies reflected social liberal or neoliberal values).

A similar – although less stark – debate was noted in our study as social liberal and neoliberal values were reflected across the interviews. As there was support in our research for both low- and no-cost programmes, it appears that either approach may be appropriate depending on the context (e.g., the needs of the newcomer population being served) and the resources available to programme administrators. We return to fee assistance programmes and sustainability later in this paper given the intersecting nature of the participation barriers.

2.8.1.2. Navigating rules and regulations

The existence of sport bureaucracies has been identified in previous research (ICC, 2014; Livingston & Tirone, 2012) as a prominent barrier for newcomers accessing sport programmes. Multiple study participants similarly discussed the challenges newcomers face in navigating Canada's bureaucratic sport system. The following quote captures several of the concerns raised by interview participants:

I think it is intimidating as a newcomer as well ... if you're not familiar with the area, process of registration, language ... there are a lot of obstacles to overcome and so it's giving [newcomers] an opportunity to set them up for success and assisting them with the application and all that... (Instructor)

While extensive bureaucracies exist throughout the Canadian sport system, our research demonstrated that programme administrators are attempting to employ various approaches to aide newcomers in navigating these bureaucracies in order to access sport opportunities, with some approaches already having been implemented across the programmes. These solutions involved simplifying registration and fee assistance processes, offering translated materials, and engaging in community partnerships with entities who can best support newcomer populations navigate sport bureaucracies.

Fee assistance processes represent a common practice implemented by the municipal recreational programmes involved in this study. This process involves community members of lower socio-economic status registering for financial assistance (e.g., reduced programme registration fees) through their local municipal recreation department (Cureton & Frisby, 2011; Forde et al., 2015; Frisby, 2011). Since newcomers are typically settling into their new homes and procuring employment, they tend to qualify for such support. Once individuals are approved for fee assistance, they and their families are able to access, as just one example, municipal recreation programmes at drastically reduced rates. Study participants involved with municipal recreational programmes espoused the benefits of these programmes in providing participation opportunities to many newcomers, who because of many factors, may not be able to otherwise experience the benefits of sport and recreation. Furthermore, the fee assistance programmes we encountered focus on streamlining the process (e.g., providing applicants with one form) in an attempt to reduce the aforementioned bureaucracies. This finding aligns with efforts by newcomer women in Vancouver, British Columbia who advocated for more streamlined, accessible municipal recreation programming (Frisby, 2011).

Offering translated materials and engaging in community partnerships are two additional

methods for reducing the impact of extensive sport bureaucracies. Most of the programmes offer newcomers translated materials (e.g., registration forms and information pamphlets) in their mother tongue(s) to better support these individuals in navigating the applicable bureaucracies. We also discovered that engaging in community partnerships can address this concern through encouraging different local organizations to work together. For instance, a neighbourhood recreation programme could partner with a municipal recreation department to offer fee assistance opportunities to wider groups. We expand on the value of community partnerships later in this paper.

2.8.1.3. Considering programme location and transportation

In many Canadian communities, geographic realities present challenges for newcomers. For instance, programmes tend to be clustered in certain areas of communities. Thus, newcomers who do not reside in proximity to these programmes face a distinct participation barrier. Through our research, we learned that limited programme offerings and a lack of geographic distribution were two key barriers facing newcomers. Multiple study participants mentioned how some newcomer families have to endure a lengthy commute using public transit, to attend specific programmes:

Some families that participate in our programme sometime have to take multiple buses to get to the arena [in the north end of the city] from their homes in the south, which can take two or three hours in total. (Administrator)

The main solution in overcoming location and transportation barriers involved making the programmes as convenient as possible for newcomers:

The kids met Michael [pseudonym – programme creator and administrator] in the[ir own] neighbourhood and learned about the programme. The kids then asked Michael to talk to their moms about allowing them to participate. (Administrator)

This quote represents the origins of a specific community-based *Intro to Sport* programme with a goal of bringing sport to the neighbourhoods where many newcomers reside. This programme has yielded much success based on its longevity since 2010 and continued expansion to different sites throughout the major Canadian city where it is located. Hence, positioning sport programmes in close proximity represents one way to address this barrier.

However, there are circumstances where organizing sport programmes in specific neighbourhoods is not always possible (e.g., for programmes requiring indoor ice facilities). In an effort to address this, one programme implemented an innovative solution, a “fun bus,” to transport newcomer children to the relevant facility and back home:

We have used “fun buses” in the past to pick up participants [children and youth] from their neighbourhoods and drive them to the facility. This approach makes it easier for [primarily low income] newcomers to experience sport and recreation. (Administrator)

The municipal recreation department subsidized the bus, with support from a national sport not-for-profit organization. While the geographic and transportation barriers were addressed, instructors and administrators also discussed how this approach enabled them to establish rapport with the newcomer children as they travelled to the facility. This example illustrates how study participants recognized that their solutions to specific participation barriers

tended to lead to unanticipated positive consequences, thereby enriching the overall programme experiences for newcomer participants.

Geographic and transportation barriers represent a difficult challenge to overcome. Yet, the examples discussed above present ways to meet the needs of newcomers, while providing other ancillary benefits (e.g., rapport building) through sport programmes. These solutions build on the existing professional reports (Gosai et al., 2018; Kelly & Millar, 2014) and add to the growing body of academic research surrounding the multi-faceted understandings of newcomer participation barriers and potential solutions (Campbell et al., 2016; Curtin et al., 2018; Golob & Giles, 2011; Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). It is important to consider, however, that solutions requiring short-term grants or philanthropic funding do not address the structural concerns with offering community sport programmes to underrepresented populations (e.g., shortage of monetary resources and available programmes). Instead, the integrative potential of sport for newcomers must be better incorporated into policy as a means to build programme reach, quality, and outcomes (Nadeau et al., 2016; Quirke, 2015).

2.8.1.4. Availability of facilities

Building from the previous sub-theme, the chronic shortage of indoor facilities for ice sports represents a major problem for many Canadian organizations at all levels and the programmes they want to offer (Riehl et al., 2019). As such, it is unsurprising that programme administrators echoed this frustration regarding the organization of *Intro to Sport* ice hockey and ice-skating programmes for newcomer children. Specifically, administrators discussed how the lack of ice facilities, and relatedly, the cost of facility rentals are a major barrier to meeting the demand for newcomer programmes:

The lack of ice availability is our number one problem. We have substantial waiting lists for our learn-to-skate programmes. While we service over 2000 participants, there are 500 people on our waiting list. (Administrator)

Facility-related barriers represent a prominent challenge noted by programme administrators. Two proposed ideas involved creating community partnerships to address these facility shortages and thinking creatively about how best to utilize overbooked ice facilities. The administrators we talked to in this study, however, were still searching for tangible solutions to expand their newcomer programmes to meet the increasing demand.

The limited availability of indoor ice facilities is a chronic problem throughout Canadian sport (Riehl et al., 2019). Yet, we have illustrated through this sub-theme that a demand exists among newcomers to access Canadian ice sports, primarily ice hockey and ice skating. One proposal that was noticeably absent from the data involved using outdoor ice rinks. Although weather and climactic volatility risk disrupting the predictability of hosting *Intro to Sport* programmes outdoors (Orr & Inoue, 2019), such an approach would help address the facility shortage. The use of outdoor rinks may also minimize geography and transportation barriers. Situating outdoor ice rinks in or near the neighbourhoods where newcomers live would likely contribute to relieving pressure from Canada's chronically over-used ice hockey facilities. That no study participants discussed this option during the interviews may speak to just how entrenched sport administrators are within normative, sport-specific discourses (e.g., organized ice hockey programmes occur solely at indoor arenas).

Navigating varied participation barriers is a reality facing newcomer sport participants and an ongoing challenge for sport administrators overseeing *Intro to Sport* programmes for

newcomers. In this theme, we outlined four salient participation barriers study participants are negotiating. While we presented these barriers in four distinct, heuristic categories to promote clarity, we recognize the barriers do not exist in isolation. For example, when *Intro to Sport* programmes offer newcomer participants free sport equipment through an equipment bank, this helps to reduce the burden of programme costs, a reality facing many newcomer families (Campbell et al., 2016; Curtin et al., 2018; Tirone et al., 2010).

It is important to note here that newcomers were underrepresented in leadership positions across the study programmes. With the exception of one programme administrator and one instructor, all programme administrators and instructors were either naturalized or born Canadian citizens. Limited newcomer representation in positions of authority has been noted elsewhere (Tirone et al., 2010). Yet, this reality does call into question the extent to which the programmes studied here have reached the rich, deep inclusion advocated for across relevant sport and social science research (Omidvar & Richmond, 2005; Rich et al., 2015; Siemiatycki, 2012; Tirone et al., 2010). Despite this tension – and the related shortcomings we identified throughout the theme – striving towards inclusion was a primary motivator echoed by programme administrators and instructors in their approaches to managing the aforementioned participation barriers. More research is needed to better understand the motivations, mechanisms, and overall effectiveness of inclusion efforts in *Intro to Sport* programmes involving newcomers. Furthermore, it is incumbent on sport administrators and researchers to work towards better understanding the intersections between participation barriers to address their impact on newcomers, in part, by interrogating the root causes beyond the Canadian sport system into broader social institutions (e.g., social services, healthcare, education, and newcomer settlement services).

2.8.2. Sustainability

An overarching insight across the interviews was the centrality of sustainability as a key indicator of success for all six *Intro to Sport* programmes:

For a learn-to sport programme to work, it cannot be a one-time thing. You must be in it for the long haul to gain the trust of newcomer participants. (Administrator)

The above quote illustrates that sustainability must be a key consideration in offering *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers. Throughout the interviews, the idea that offering sustainable, long-term programmes was positioned as foundational to earning and maintaining the trust of newcomer children, their parents, and the wider ethnoracial community where applicable. Study participants noted that without the trust of newcomers, the chances of maintaining robust newcomer sport programmes diminish greatly. Thus, sustainability must be a foundational consideration throughout all stages of designing, implementing, operating, and evaluating *Intro to Sport* programmes serving newcomers. A programme only offered once, no matter how well intentioned, will come across as self-serving and disingenuous – as a way to increase membership in a sport organization, for example.

The importance of sustainability in programme design is espoused across the relevant professional newcomer sport literature (Gosai et al., 2018; ICC, 2014; Kelly & Millar, 2014). While conversations surrounding sustainability are mainly absent from the relevant Canadian newcomer academic literature (with the exception of Forde et al., 2015), critical examinations of the relationship between sport and sustainability exist across the wider sport sociology and sport management areas (e.g., Parent et al., 2015; Smith, 2009; Spaaij, 2009). These studies, broadly speaking, focus on the diverse actors and power dynamics (e.g., the legacy of neoliberalism and

austerity) influencing the ability of organizations and programmes to meet the needs of their target populations in a long-term capacity. Thus, questions involving the sustainability of *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers represent an area requiring future academic investigation.

2.8.2.1. Valuing intersectoral community partnerships

One approach adopted across the six *Intro to Sport* programmes to build capacity and work towards sustainability involved forming intersectoral community partnerships. Intersectoral community partnerships represent networks of diverse stakeholders – such as governmental agencies (e.g., municipal leisure departments), non-profit organizations (e.g., community sport clubs), and for-profit/commercial entities (e.g., financial institutions) – working together towards common aims. The prevalence of intersectoral partnerships has grown across Canadian sport, leisure, and settlement services contexts in recent decades, in part to address mounting economic, social, and political pressures (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; MacLean et al., 2011; Parent & Harvey, 2009; Thibault et al., 1999; Thibault & Harvey, 1997; Veronis, 2019).

Study participants repeatedly discussed how establishing and maintaining intersectoral community partnerships was integral to the success of their respective programmes. Broadly, the benefits of such partnerships were categorized into giving back and reducing costs through the sharing of resources.

2.8.2.1.1. Giving back. The following quotations illustrate how different community organizations were motivated to become involved with newcomers through the notion of giving back to their local communities:

[The settlement services organization] wanted to do a skating component and they reached out to us [a community skating club]. We discussed it as a committee – this was a few years

ago – and it was something we wanted to help out our community and welcome newcomers to Canada. (Administrator)

So, once Michael [programme creator and administrator] and I were connected, I think we were a better fit. Because I'm a church and, you know, churches don't want to be inward focused and all about themselves. They want to reach out to the community. So, this was an awesome opportunity to meet my community and to find out what their needs were, and see how the church could help. (Administrator)

In both quotations, the theme of community building was a central motivation for these stakeholders to become involved in providing sport opportunities to newcomers. Also, involvement of a settlement services organization and church in the above examples demonstrated how engaging newcomers in sport should not fall exclusively on sport organizations (MacLean et al., 2011). Rather, engaging in intersectoral collaborations offers opportunities to effectively meet the diverse needs of newcomers to Canada.

2.8.2.1.2. Reducing costs. Another benefit of intersectoral community partnerships involving multiple stakeholders is the reduction of costs through sharing resources. This quotation presents an example of resource sharing:

[We] partner with [a sports retailer] to encourage the use of helmets and help reduce costs. [The sports retailer] collects used equipment and donates it back to the community. We buy helmets for families that cannot afford it. When the children are older they can go to outdoor arenas as well [with the donated helmets]. (Administrator)

We came to learn that a major reason why these newcomer sport programmes were successful involved stakeholders from across sectors (e.g., individual champions, churches, settlement service organizations, sport clubs, and private companies) coming together to overcome logistical and financial challenges through pooling monetary and human resources. Considering the present economic, political, and social realities emerging from the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, it appears likely that intersectoral community partnerships will continue their growth across the sport, leisure, and settlement services sectors (among others), in part as a mechanism for maintaining and/or expanding the scope of *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Thibault et al., 1999; Veronis, 2019).

We also recognize that study participants positioned their involvement in intersectoral community partnerships as generally positive and constructive. This marks a departure from much of the existent intersectoral partnership and linkage literature involving sport and leisure, which has tended to elucidate challenges, problems, and short comings. Intersectoral partnerships explored at the organizational level are reported to be weak and suffer from various environmental (i.e., economic, political, and social), structural (e.g., unclear roles and responsibilities), and strategic deficits (e.g., competition vs. collaboration tensions; Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; MacLean et al., 2011; Thibault et al., 1999; Thibault & Harvey, 1997). Differences in scope and focus may help explain the incongruence between our study findings and the existing literature. In the existing literature, the researchers were interested in the nature of all partnerships and linkages held by stakeholders at the interorganizational level. In our study, participants were asked to share their impressions of the individual *Intro to Sport* programme partnership they were involved in, thereby adopting a more granular perspective. Moreover, the nature of partnerships and linkages across various leisure

and sport contexts were the focus in the above cited papers. Comparatively, our study addressed a more general understanding of how *Intro to Sport* programmes involving newcomers operate in the Canadian context. The importance of intersectoral community partnerships emerged during our interviews rather than being our main focus of inquiry. Thus, discrepancies in study scope and focus may account for these competing findings.

Through this study, we have identified the prominent position intersectoral community partnerships can play in *Intro to Sport* programmes involving newcomers. Our study also contributes to a call from Frisby and colleagues (2004) for researchers to examine case studies of successful and unsuccessful partnerships to illuminate the role of all partners in such relations. Moving forward, we encourage researchers to further this call by focusing on the efficacy of collaborations between organizations involved in newcomer sport, recreation, and leisure. Using relevant collaborative models, such as Parent and Harvey's (2009) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships, may yield important insights.

2.9. Concluding Remarks

We have sought here to better understand how Canadian *Intro to Sport* programmes solely or primarily serving newcomer children and youth operate and how programme stakeholders strive to meet the needs of their diverse participants. Twenty qualitative interviews were conducted with various administrators, instructors, and parents of newcomer programme participants from six different sport programmes (ice skating, ice hockey, curling, and soccer). We determined the following two central themes through our thematic analysis: (1) toward inclusion: negotiating sport participation and (2) sustainability. Each theme also consisted of several sub-themes. These themes and sub-themes illustrate how *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers operate and what key factors programme administrators and instructors consider in

meeting the needs of participants. While these programmes excel at reducing various participation barriers experienced by newcomers, considerations such as limited ice facilities need to be addressed to meet the growing sport participation demands for newcomers to Canada.

Green's (2005) normative theory of sport development represented the theoretical launching-off point for this study. While this theory helps sport administrators and researchers understand the various stages of an athlete's development, we argued that explicitly considering the socio-cultural and contextual factors related to newcomer sport participants is essential in creating and delivering accessible, inclusive, and sustainable *Intro to Sport* programmes. Moreover, Green's theory interrogates key considerations at the recruitment, retention, and transitions stages of athlete development. Yet, understanding the socio-cultural context surrounding these stages is also integral to meeting the needs of programme participants, especially for many newcomers who may be new to a respective sport as well as the wider sport system and culture (Tirone et al., 2010).

Our thematic discussion – including four prominent participation barriers – illustrates how sport administrators are negotiating the complexity of meeting newcomers' multi-faceted needs to offer high quality, inclusive sport programming. Insights from these themes offer key learnings that sport administrators and researchers can place into conversation with Green's (2005) sport development theory. For instance, at the athlete retention stage, Green posits that sport administrators must cater to the diverse motivations of athletes during programme design and delivery. Our findings indicate that with newcomers, sport administrators must also consider the wider socio-cultural context influencing newcomers' experiences (e.g., settlement and integration processes) as well as structural realities, which disproportionately impact newcomer access to sport (e.g., shortage of sport facilities, rising costs of programmes, and bureaucratic

sport systems). By making this point, we are not arguing that Green's theory was designed to ignore socio-cultural and contextual considerations. Rather, our research indicates that when sport administrators engage with diverse populations – in this case, newcomers to Canada – centering socio-cultural and contextual considerations within normative sport development practices is key in building accessible, inclusive, and sustainable *Intro to Sport* programmes. This is especially relevant at the recruitment and retention stages where the majority of newcomers in the sport system are at present (Tirone et al., 2010).

As the focus of this project involved understanding how *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers operate, we provide the following recommendations to sport administrators. Firstly, sport administrators should critically consider inclusion and sustainability principles from the outset in designing programmes and facilities involving newcomers. In line with the critical perspectives on inclusion we engaged with in the results (Block & Gibbs, 2017; Cunningham, 2019; Dagkas, 2018; McDonald et al., 2019), we encourage administrators to center the voices of newcomers in the design, implementation, and evaluation stages of sport programmes. These co-constructive practices will ensure the needs of newcomers are better met and guard against administrators making problematic assumptions about what newcomers want and need in sport programmes. Please see Frisby (2011) Rich and colleagues (2015) for examples of how newcomers can be directly involved in the planning of sport and physical activity programmes. Secondly, fostering intersectoral community partnerships are integral to ensuring the viability of newcomer *Intro to Sport* programmes, in part, through building capacity to address the known participation barriers facing many newcomers. We encourage sport administrators interested in developing newcomer sport programmes to consider involving community partners with experience supporting local newcomers (e.g., settlement service organizations and grassroots

ethnoracial) to strengthen programme success and sustainability. Thirdly, we call on sport administrators and collaborators to expand their efforts in seeking out innovative solutions to the shortage of sport facilities – especially indoor ice facilities – in order to offer more newcomers access to Canadian sport experiences that connect to ideas of Canadianness and integration into Canadian culture (ICC, 2014; Szto, 2016). Fourthly, administrators should consider their local context and programme rationale when determining whether to offer no- or low-cost programmes for newcomers, while generally working to ensure registration fees are as low as possible in order to be truly inclusive of everyone. Lastly, sport administrators should not feel the need to design *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers from scratch. Various academic literature (e.g., Curtin et al., 2018; Rich et al., 2015) and professional reports (e.g., Gosai et al., 2018; ICC, 2014; Kelly & Millar, 2014) provide relevant insights and case studies from across Canada to aid in creating effective *Intro to Sport* programmes for newcomers.

Based on our experiences in this study, we also offer the following recommendations to further develop research involving newcomers and sport participation. Researchers should engage newcomers in conversations about their lived experiences in *Intro to Sport* programmes to ensure newcomers' voices are more directly placed at the center of the research. Given the reality that intersectoral community partnerships seem to be common in offering newcomers *Intro to Sport* opportunities, more detailed examinations are required involving how such partnerships form and function (Parent & Harvey, 2009). We encourage scholars to engage with related disciplines to examine the participation barriers facing newcomer sport participants more deeply; for example, using sport geography scholarship (Hallmann et al., 2012; O'Reilly et al., 2015) to elucidate geographic and transportation participation barriers. Researchers should also consider how local, regional, national, and international contexts shape *Intro to Sport*

programmes by engaging in cross-cultural comparative studies (e.g., comparing Canada with other Western and/or non-Western nations). A natural progression for this research involves exploring how newcomers experience informal sport and leisure opportunities. This study focused primarily on winter sports. More explicit examinations involving newcomers and summer sports would be interesting to note how Canadian identity manifests itself in newcomers' lives in non-winter contexts (e.g., against the backdrop of growing popularity in basketball across Canada).

As Canada continues expanding its immigration targets (IRCC, 2018), the challenges of maintaining a cohesive, thriving, multicultural society within an increasingly globalized world represents a daunting task for all relevant stakeholders. A tension exists within contemporary immigration discourse surrounding using immigration to ensure continued economic viability for Western countries and their role in acting as leaders in ongoing immigrant and refugee resettlement. While Canada is striving to be a leader in both areas along with Western European nations like Germany, the challenge of effectively integrating a growing newcomer population into the host society to ensure long-term vitality and prosperity remains a work in progress (Hansen, 2014). Like other scholars and administrators (many of whom we cited through this paper), we believe that sport can play an important role, despite well-documented issues still requiring attention (e.g., racism, exclusion, bullying/harassment, lack of access/resources). We hope this study provides at least some insights for future research and/or programme development.

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Chapter Three

“It’s Just About Having Fun”? Exploring the Lived Experiences of Newcomers to Canada in Introductory Winter Sport Programmes

The focus of *chapter three* was exploring the lived experiences of newcomers to Canada in introductory winter sport programmes. The following two research questions were engaged with in this chapter: (3) How do newcomers to Canada experience introductory winter sport programmes? and (4) Do inclusive, welcoming introductory winter sport programmes influence the integration and identities of newcomers to Canada? I employed a qualitative intrinsic case study design using several methods – in-depth interviews, a photo elicitation focus group, and participant observations – to investigate the two research questions. At the time of completion of this dissertation, this chapter was under review in a sport sociology journal. Hence, this chapter follows the journal’s required stylistic guidelines.

Article reference:

Barrick, S. (Under review). “It’s just about having fun”? Exploring the lived experiences of newcomers to Canada in introductory winter sport programmes.

3.1. Abstract

This study examined the underexplored relationship between winter sport, newcomer participation, integration, and national identity. Winter sports are important socio-culturally in Canada; newcomers recognize this and express a willingness to try winter sports to feel “more Canadian”. Using a qualitative intrinsic case study design, I interrogated the lived experiences of newcomers to Canada in one introductory winter sport programme – the WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP). Study methods included qualitative in-depth interviews and a photo elicitation focus group with WNP participants, as well as participant observation of the programmes. This research was theoretically informed by social constructionist perspectives of race and ethnicity, as well as critical insights on sport-related integration. I developed three themes focusing on participants’ individual programme outcomes, the relationship between winter sport participation and newcomer integration, and future winter sport participation considerations. Results illustrate a community sport setting where study participants experienced diverse programme outcomes and drew varied meanings from participating in prominent Canadian winter sports. I raised several conundrums that emerged from the WNP such as troubling the centrality of simplistic, assimilationist conceptualizations of sport-related integration within the WNP. Despite their limitations, introductory winter sport programmes can offer newcomers varied benefits and are worthy of future inquiry.

Keywords: newcomer sport; winter sport; integration; qualitative; Canadian identity

3.2. Background

Managing immigration and the integration of newcomers into their host societies is a pressing global concern. As of June 2019, there were 272 million international immigrants, 51 million more than in 2010 (IOM, 2019). Starting 2021, 82.4 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced, including 20.7 million refugees (UNHCR, n.d.), numbers that will surely rise amid ongoing global events (e.g., COVID-19, global climate crisis). In Canada, a nation long reliant on immigration, the federal government is projecting to admit over 400,000 migrants annually from 2022-2024, the highest rates in Canadian history (IRCC, 2022). Canada represents a world-leading resettlement nation alongside the United States of America and Germany (IOM, 2019).

Amid these ongoing global and national migration patterns, sport participation represents a prominent focus for policy makers and practitioners in supporting newcomer integration (Agergaard, 2018; Jedwab & Holley, 2021). Researchers have studied the relationship between sport and immigration across global contexts with particular emphasis in Western Europe (Flensner et al., 2021; Stura, 2019), Australia, (Block & Gibbs, 2017; McDonald et al., 2019), and, most pertinent to this study, North America (Robinson et al., 2019; Wong & Dennie, 2021b). Varied sport contexts are explored in the relevant literature, though sports generally played outdoors in warm temperatures – herein referred to as “summer sports” – predominate. More specifically, soccer represents the sport of focus across much of the relevant literature. This is perhaps unsurprising given the globalizing force of soccer and the sport’s resonance in the lives of people worldwide, migrants included (Woodhouse & Conricode, 2017). In comparison, sports involving ice and snow – herein referred to as “winter sports” – have received scant attention in migrant sport research (Barrick et al., 2021). Three possible reasons may help

explain this dearth of research: (1) *geographic and climactic factors*: outdoor winter sports generally require cold temperatures, ice, and snow that is restricted to certain geographies (Orr, 2020), (2) *migrant demographic trends*: large proportions of migrants come from nations where winter sports are not common (e.g., India, Mexico; UNHCR, n.d.), and (3) *participation barriers*: the existence of well-known participation barriers in winter sports (e.g., cost, lack of access; Szto, 2021). Despite these realities, winter sports hold a central place individually and collectively in northern nations, of which Canada is a prime example (Allain, 2019).

This study was guided by a social constructionist worldview. An exploratory, interpretive qualitative case study of an intersectoral community partnership – the WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP) – was employed to interrogate: (1) the newcomer study participants’ lived experiences in introductory winter sport programmes and (2) the influence of winter sport participation on newcomer integration into Canadian society. Throughout this paper, I use the term *newcomer* for individuals who self-identify as an immigrant and have recently migrated to a new country. This term is inclusive of various immigration categories (e.g., asylum seeker, economic immigrant) and is a commonly-used designation in Canada (Kramers et al., 2021).

3.2.1. Newcomer sport research in Canada

Research exploring newcomer sport participation in Canada represents a burgeoning area of study (Barrick et al., 2021). For example, researchers have investigated social inclusion and exclusion within sport and leisure opportunities for newcomers (e.g., Frisby, 2011; Rich et al., 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Home, family, and traditional communities play important roles in the social inclusion of newcomers especially during their initial time in Canada when the risk of experiencing social exclusion is high (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). This reliance generally decreases over time as newcomers expand their social networks. Newcomers also navigate social inclusion

and exclusion within mainstream cultural spaces, such as sport facilities. Campbell and colleagues (2016) found African-Canadian youth in their study reported developing and maintaining friendships and social connections, working on language skills, and learning about Canadian culture through regularly attending community recreation centers. Frisby (2011) and Rich and colleagues (2015) argued that mainstream sport and leisure spaces – such as municipal leisure departments and community sport tournaments – can help promote newcomers’ social inclusion and sense of belonging to their local community when their voices are directly involved in designing programmes.

Participation barriers, commonly considered limitations preventing someone from participating in something (Allender et al., 2006), are another common focus in newcomer sport research. In the Canadian context, researchers have explored how participation barriers influence newcomer sport participation, most notably: limited financial resources (Campbell et al., 2016; Taylor & Doherty, 2005), limited available time (Curtin et al., 2018; Tirone et al., 2010), family and ethnoracial group influences (Curtin et al., 2018), difficulty navigating Canada’s bureaucratic sport system (Frisby, 2011; Tirone et al., 2010), language and cultural considerations (Campbell et al., 2016; Curtin et al., 2018), and limited social networks (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). In sum, various interconnected participation barriers obstruct newcomers to Canada from engaging in mainstream sport opportunities.

How sport programmes in Canada are designed for newcomers is another focus of research (Barrick et al., 2021; Kramers et al., 2021; Rich et al., 2015). Newcomers’ voices, however, have been largely absent from the planning, implementation, and evaluation of newcomer sport programmes (Barrick et al., 2021). One notable exception is Rich and colleagues’ (2015) analysis of the Community Cup soccer tournament. The authors found that

the participatory design of the tournament was positively received by newcomer study participants (e.g., offering opportunities to network and gain “Canadian” experiences). The authors concluded that sport programmes or events on their own will not create extensive social change, calling on researchers to shift focus “to the broader organizational and engagement practices that may allow many events to produce tangible and important social outcomes” (p. 139). Kramers and colleagues (2021), in their case study involving one founder/leader of a newcomer youth sport programme, reasoned that a complex set of factors (e.g., programme philosophy, internal/external challenges, the need to collaborate) were being continually (re)considered to intentionally promote physical activity and well-being in an inclusive, culturally-safe environment. Lastly, (Barrick et al., 2021) summarized various strategies introductory sport programme administrators have adopted to promote newcomer inclusion and programme sustainability. Thus, structuring effective newcomer sport programmes requires organizers to (re)negotiate complex, inter-related considerations.

3.2.2. Newcomers and winter sport in Canada

Winter sport holds a prominent position in Canadian identity, with ice hockey occupying central importance (Allain, 2019). Canada’s geographic and climactic positionality as a northern nation helps explain this prominence; yet, scholars also point to the nation’s long-standing preoccupation with conquering the northern environment – informed by Canada’s existence as a white, settler colonial nation – to explain why winter sports maintain strong cultural significance (Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Szto, 2021). Research has shown how newcomers are drawn to winter sports (e.g., ice hockey, ice skating, downhill skiing) because they strongly associate winter sports with “being Canadian” (ICC, 2014; Jedwab & Holley, 2021). It is at this intersection that *Canadian Ethnic Studies* recently published a special issue entitled: “Hockey in

Canada: Indigeneity, ethnic/racialized minorities and the nation.” Contributors illustrated how communities who are racialized – most notably Indigenous Peoples, persons who are racialized, and newcomers to Canada – have, and are making, important contributions to ice hockey despite being largely silenced by various cultural and institutional forces (Wong & Dennie, 2021a). It is important to note here that persons who are racialized are not synonymous with newcomers.

While many newcomers are persons who are racialized, Canada’s newcomer population is heterogeneous and possesses substantial diversity across identity categories. Relevant special issue contributions (Jedwab & Holley, 2021; Wong & Dennie, 2021b) demonstrate how the place of newcomers in ice hockey, and winter sport more broadly, is receiving greater scholarly attention. However, newcomers’ experiences in introductory winter sport programmes have yet to be investigated, thereby representing a notable research gap.

3.3. Theoretical Underpinnings

Social constructionist perspectives of race and ethnicity (Gunaratnam, 2003) and sport-related integration (Agergaard, 2018) served as theoretical influences for this study. I view racial and ethnic identities as fluid, dynamic, and socially constructed (Omi & Winant, 2018). That said, “essentialist categories of ‘race’ and ethnicity do have some level of resonance with lived experiences and this is something that we need to both address and interrogate rigorously” (Gunaratnam, 2003, p. 33). Within the context of Canada’s contested identity as a welcoming nation to immigrants (especially immigrants who are racialized; Bannerji, 2000; Leung, 2015; Mackey, 2002; Mensah, 2010), the complexity through which newcomers to Canada construct and negotiate their identity(ies) while participating in winter sport is a central consideration for this study.

Agergaard's (2018) reconceptualization of sport-related integration "...as multidimensional social relational processes that are bound up in power asymmetries, and evolve as changing trajectories" (p. 25) is instructive to this study. According to Agergaard (2018), sport-related integration means "that migrants and descendants are intertwined with persons, structures or simply knowledge in the receiving society in direct or indirect ways" (p. 20). This reconceptualization broadens our understanding of newcomer integration by considering the impacts of wider socio-political forces (e.g., neoliberalism), while drawing attention to long-standing shortcomings of how newcomer integration is conceptualized. Examples include turning attention to interactions between majority and minority populations (not solely focusing on newcomers), a general ignorance towards integration being a two-way process, and acknowledging newcomers' complex realities and backgrounds.

3.4. Study Design

3.4.1. Introducing the case

The WNP is an intersectoral community partnership involving representatives from the following organizations: WinSport, Centre for Newcomers (CFN), and Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA). The purpose of the WNP was to introduce newcomer preschoolers, youths, teens, and adults to the Canadian winter sports of ice skating, downhill skiing, and snowboarding while supporting their integration into Canadian society. Newcomer participants were recruited by CFN and CIWA settlement councillors and enrolled in existing WinSport introductory winter sport programmes alongside programme patrons from the general public. As an academic collaborator, I shared insights from the relevant research during collaboration meetings and evaluated year one of the WNP.

The WNP adopted several programme designs including two-day intensive lessons, weekly lessons, and a multi-sport March Break Winter Olympic/Paralympic camp. WinSport programmes are organized into age categories: preschool (aged 3 to 5), youth (aged 6 to 13), teen (aged 13 to 18), and adult (aged 19 years and older). To promote wide access, WNP organizers enrolled newcomer participants in programmes across the age categories. I adopted these same age divisions throughout this paper for consistency.

The WNP commenced in February 2017 with a meeting involving myself and several WinSport administrators to discuss newcomer sport programming options. Following several conversations, the concept for the WNP was developed. The original WNP organizers – consisting of myself and two WinSport senior administrators – recruited additional representatives from within WinSport with expertise in introductory sport programming, as well as CFN and CIWA – two settlement services organizations with access to local newcomer communities. Year one of the WNP ran from January to April 2018 with over 200 newcomers being introduced to ice skating, skiing, and snowboarding.

3.4.2. Methodology

The WNP newcomer participants marked the phenomenon of interest in this qualitative intrinsic case study. The object – or analytical frame – involved the relationship between sport participation and the lived experiences and integration of newcomers to Canada (Thomas, 2011). Multiple research methods were utilized between September 2017 and August 2018 to explore the nuance and complexity within the WNP (Stake, 2005). Methods included: qualitative in-depth interviews with WNP participants and parents; a photo elicitation focus group (PEFG) with WNP youth and teen participants; and participant observation of the WNP.

3.4.3. Methods

3.4.3.1. Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews were conducted with 10 WNP participants. Interview participants included youth, teen, and adult WNP participants, as well as parents of youth and teen participants. Participants ranged in age from 8 to 48 with their families experiencing diverse immigration journeys before settling in Canada. Please see *Table 3.1.* for additional interview participant demographic information.

Table 3.1. Interview participant demographics

Role(s) in WNP	Age Category	Immigration Status	Self-identified Ethnicity
Parent of teen learn-to-ski participant	Adult	Permanent Resident	Indian Canadian
Teen learn-to-ski participant	Teen	Permanent Resident	Indian Canadian
Parent of youth learn-to-snowboard participants	Adult	Permanent Resident	Korean Canadian
Youth learn-to-snowboard participant	Youth	Canadian Citizen	Korean Canadian
Youth learn-to-snowboard participant	Youth	Canadian Citizen	Korean Canadian
Parent of March Break camp participant and adult learn-to-ski participant	Adult	Canadian Citizen	Iranian Canadian
Adult learn-to-ski participant	Adult	Permanent Resident	Chinese Canadian
Parent of March Break camp participant	Adult	Permanent Resident	Qatari Canadian
March Break camp participant	Youth	Permanent Resident	Qatari Canadian

WNP participants were introduced to the study at the outset of each programme and interested interview participants were invited to arrange an interview with me in person, by phone or email. The interviews were held at a public location chosen by each participant and

lasted between 33 to 50 minutes with the average being 42 minutes. With participants' permission, interviews were audio recorded and verbatim transcribed. I used a semi-structured interview guide to ensure specific topics were addressed, while also enabling participants to discuss topics of personal importance. Interview questions touched on each participant's general and sport background, perceived strengths and weaknesses of the WNP, the relationship between winter sport and Canadian identity, and future sport participation intentions.

3.4.3.2. Photo elicitation focus group

Photo elicitation methods involve the use of photography to stimulate dialogue between participant(s) and interviewer(s) (Harper, 2002). PEFGs offer opportunities to democratize the research process as study participants become active collaborators through selecting and taking photographs, which they then discuss during subsequent focus groups (Croghan et al., 2008; Epstein et al., 2006). PEFGs can help achieve the following aims: build trust and rapport with participants, challenge participants to think about the study context in different ways, trigger participants' memory, evoke more emotional and multi-layered responses from participants, and provide an additional data source (Croghan et al., 2008; Epstein et al., 2006). Scholars have also adopted photo elicitation methods in research with children to promote dialogue and break down the rigid nature of traditional qualitative interviews that may intimidate younger participants (Cook & Hess, 2007; Croghan et al., 2008; Epstein et al., 2006).

Six WNP participants from the March Break Olympic camp took part in the PEFG. See *Table 3.2.* for details about each participant. During registration, information letters were provided to newcomers and their parents outlining the PEFG aims and procedures. Then, on the second day of camp, newcomers and their parents were invited to participate in an optional information session where the study purpose, informed consent and assent procedures, and a

camera orientation were conducted. For the next three days of the week-long camp, the six PEFG participants were given digital cameras and instructed to photograph aspects of the camp that were personally meaningful. To protect participant safety, PEFG participants were prohibited from using their cameras during structured camp activities but could take photographs before and after structured activities and during unstructured camp time (e.g., mealtimes). The cameras were collected on the final day to develop the photographs. Later that day, the six participants joined me for the PEFG lasting 48 minutes at the camp location. Each participant received physical copies of their photographs and were asked to select and describe their favourite photographs to the group. As participants described their photographs, I interspersed questions about the strengths and weaknesses of the camp, participants' perceptions about trying winter sports, and their future participation intentions. Participants were given copies of their photographs as a token of appreciation.

Table 3.2. PEFG participant demographics

Age Category	Immigration Status	Self-identified Ethnicity
Youth	Permanent Resident	Korean Canadian
Youth	Permanent Resident	Iranian Canadian
Youth	Temporary Resident	Chinese Canadian
Youth	Permanent Resident	Indian Canadian
Teen	Temporary Resident	Filipino Canadian
Youth	Temporary Resident	Filipino Canadian

3.4.3.3. Participant observation

I conducted participant observations across all WNP programmes to gain a rich understanding of the programme context and to augment the interview and PEF data. I adopted an observer-as-participant approach through watching the programmes from the perimeter to minimize disruptions and enable movement between simultaneous programmes across the WinSport campus. I completed approximately 140 hours of observations during WNP in which I focused on interactions between stakeholders, peoples' reactions during programmes (e.g., body language), and the organization of WinSport programmes. I recorded field notes in my research journal after each observation session.

3.4.4. Positionality, reflexivity, and trustworthiness

The extent to which a researcher articulates their existence in relation to the research is an important consideration in assessing the rigour of qualitative scholarship (Gunaratnam, 2003). Qualitative researchers commonly use positionality – a researcher's location within the study context (Barrick, 2016; Humphrey, 2007) – and reflexivity – a process of continual self-analysis to critically interrogate one's positionality (Berger, 2015) – to build trustworthiness in their research. As a white, Canadian citizen by birth, I occupied a clear outsider position (Gunaratnam, 2003; Humphrey, 2007) and maintained a reflexive journal to work through this and other considerations.

Beyond continually (re)examining my positionality, I adopted several additional measures to build trustworthiness. Accompanying my reflexive journaling, I also wrote memos throughout the data collection, analysis, and representation stages to investigate emergent considerations across the data and explore connections to relevant research. Feedback was also

solicited from WNP collaborators as well as interview and PEEG participants through providing summaries of study findings for review.

3.4.5. Data analysis

All study materials were analyzed thematically using *NVivo 11* qualitative data analysis software (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019). Several rounds of initial and axial coding were completed to deconstruct and reconstruct the data into meaningful units of analysis (Saldana, 2016). Examples of initial and axial coding included “Canadian” and “importance of family”. Preliminary thematic categories were compiled through an iterative process of reviewing codes, writing analytical memos, and reflecting on relevant research. I then refined the categories into the themes and sub-themes presented next.

3.5. Results

After analyzing all study materials, I developed three themes: (1) individual outcomes, (2) winter sport participation and newcomer integration, and (3) concerns about future winter sport participation. Sub-themes are incorporated in each theme to represent the complexity of participants’ lived experiences. I present the themes and sub-themes in heuristic categories to promote clarity, yet various intersections exist across the data. I will interrogate these intersections in the discussion. In line with my onto-epistemological and theoretical orientations, participants’ voices were given primacy in developing and representing the results through incorporating verbatim quotations and photos to respect and preserve the authenticity of participants’ voices. Participant observation fieldnotes and analytical memos provided valuable interpretive context in developing and refining the themes and sub-themes.

3.5.1. Individual outcomes

Study participants identified several prominent individual benefits from their involvement in the WNP. These benefits included: (1) having fun, (2) trying something new, and (3) developing skills and competencies.

3.5.1.1. Having fun

Collectively, study participants who participated in the WNP shared how much they enjoyed themselves. Youth and teen participants, in particular, voiced how much fun they had in the programmes. For instance, PEFG participants summarized their experiences as follows: *“I like to do and [the programme’s] fun to do”* (Youth participant), *“It’s just having fun”* (Youth participant), and *“Skiing: that was fun”* (Youth participant). Figure 3.1. shows an example of March Break Olympic camp participants enthralled in learning biathlon – a winter sport combining cross-country skiing and target shooting – which was considered one of the youth and teen participants’ favourites during the PEFG.



Figure 3.1. Enjoying learning biathlon

A parent of youth learn-to-snowboard programme participants also discussed how much their children enjoyed the opportunity:

I heard [the WNP], and we all happy about that. You don't know how happy you made them. Five times we can be in WinSport. (Parent)

The ability for study participants – especially youth and teen participants – to have fun while learning new winter sports was presented as vital to the WNP's success.

3.5.1.2. Trying something new

Across the programmes, study participants were appreciative of the opportunity to try a winter sport (or multiple winter sports in the case of the March Break Olympic camp), an opportunity they might not otherwise experience considering known newcomer sport participation barriers (e.g., cost, language barriers):

It gives me an opportunity to do something that I never did before and something that I wanted to do. It gives me the experience to do something new and get out of the box. (Teen participant)

Study participants deeply appreciated trying winter sports, and this was amplified by their recognition that winter sports and Canadian identity are inextricably linked, as well as their general unfamiliarity with winter weather. I will expand on these ideas in the next theme.

3.5.1.3. Developing skills and competencies

WNP participants reported how acquiring winter sport-specific skills resulted in newfound self-confidence. Youth and teen study participants expressed that developing new sport-specific skills made these sports “easier” or “not as hard”:

My favourite part is skiing because it's not that hard. And [Long pause] you can get better and you can be an Olympian. (Youth participant)

Meanwhile, study participants noted how becoming confident doing specific winter sports resulted in feelings of self-efficacy and excitement:

Ski down [the hill] and I can never imagine myself doing that again, so I'm so thrilled. I think, "Wow, I achieved this. And wow, so good." I can never imagine I could do that, so that's very exciting. And the first time I get onto the [chair]lift. And well that's exciting. (Adult participant and parent)

As the above quotations demonstrate, the development of sport-specific skills opened up opportunities for newcomer participants they may not have previously thought possible, such as enriching their self-worth and confidence.

Taken together – having fun, trying something new, and developing skills and competencies – represent intrapersonal outcomes that study participants valued from their WNP involvement. In the next theme, I move beyond the individual in exploring how participating in the WNP shaped study participants' – and their families' – engagement with their local community and Canadian society.

3.5.2. Winter sport participation and newcomer integration

Study participants discussed the value of learning to do Canadian winter sports for their integration into Canadian society – both for themselves and, where applicable, their children. Integration, as described by study participants, involved “fitting into” one's local community as well as wider Canadian society. To unpack the various ways that study participants encountered

integration during the WNP, three sub-themes are presented: (1) winter sport, Canadian identity, and integration; (2) fostering social connections; and (3) centering family participation.

3.5.2.1. Winter sport, Canadian identity, and integration

The relationship between winter sport, Canadian identity, and integration was well-understood by study participants. For example, several study participants noted how Canada's lengthy winter season helps explain the link between Canadian identity and winter sport:

And I think in Canada, skiing, snowboarding, and winter sports are very important to learn because of the culture and because of the weather. So, I think it was necessary to do. (Adult participant and parent)

Beyond simply identifying this relationship, study participants recognized the value of becoming involved in Canada's winter sport culture, most notably ice hockey. In one case, a parent noted:

And at the same time, as I told you, because the hockey here is most popular sport in Calgary or Canada. And there is a team and wherever, I would love [my son] to be involved so he have more friends, more things to be interested in with his friends. (Parent)

The lived experiences of study participants prior to immigrating to Canada also shaped their view of winter sport. In particular, study participants were eager to enroll in introductory winter sport programmes, in part, because the majority had emigrated to Canada from regions that do not experience a winter season like in Canada:

First and foremost, we don't have this type of environment and facilities in our native country. We are from India, so we don't have skiing there and skating and some of the programmes. (Parent)

3.5.2.2. Fostering social connections

Study participants were drawn to Canadian winter sports, in part, to support their ongoing integration efforts into Canadian society. The primary way integration was discussed by study participants involved expanding social networks, largely through making new friends with established Canadians or building applicable skills and confidence to be applied beyond the WNP. A common overarching sentiment shared by parents of youth and teen programme participants involved fostering integration opportunities for their children:

And I'm trying to make [my son] more involved with the sports here in the country and with the life here to involve him more in this community and in this culture. (Parent)

These integration opportunities were presented as enriching all aspects of study participants' daily lives, whether that be in school, work, leisure time, or socializing with neighbours. In the case of a teen learn-to-ski participant, they noted how partaking in the WNP enabled them to make new friends and generally expand their social network:

I got to know people who I didn't know before I got a broader network and then, I could get some help from them. They could get some help from me. So, it's a stronger community. A greater bond. (Teen participant)

It is important to note here that this is one of the few instances where a study participant noted how their involvement in an interaction with established Canadians may benefit everyone

involved, thereby supporting the call by critical social scientists for rich, multi-directional conceptualizations of integration (Agergaard, 2018).

Building from the previous quotation, for one youth learn-to-snowboard participant, their newfound knowledge and skills helped with making friends at school:

...I was in [school] and there's a twin that likes hockey, so we talked about hockey and then this year, there's another guy in my class and he does snowboarding, like we talk about snowboarding and stuff." (Youth participant)

Newcomer parents also recognized the value of their children enrolling in sport programmes to develop friends, especially beyond their existing peer groups:

I prefer [my son] to have communication with other friends whenever he go for sporting. That's a golden opportunity for him to network with other kids. We are trying to create new friends and maybe, you know, inside, or maybe outside the circle it's a good practice and I can say it's the best practice that we can learn here in Canada to have more relation with other people. (Parent)

Establishing and maintaining social connections was likewise an important consideration for adult study participants. For example, an adult learn-to-ski participant discussed how learning to ski helped strengthen their relationship with fellow parents:

I'm more confident and later I can also talk about skiing with my kid's friends' parents now. Previously I don't know much skiing, so we have nothing to talk. We just drop off the kids and say "hi." I left. (Adult participant and parent)

This study participant also shared how their family had a long-standing invitation from established Canadian neighbours to join a weekend ski trip to a nearby mountain resort. Before taking the learn-to-ski programme, the study participant would respond, “*no, I cannot. I simply cannot*” to their neighbour’s request. Following the programme, the participant reported:

And after [the adult learn-to-ski programme], I went to my neighbours – so, we three families went to the mountains. Though I’m shaking all over and cannot ski that much. Now I’m confident enough to join them. (Adult participant and parent)

As illustrated in the above quotations, learning to do winter sports afforded study participants opportunities to extend their networks beyond the WNP with classmates, parents, and neighbours, resulting in feeling better integrated in their local community and Canadian society.

Integration was also cultivated within the WNP programmes. Study participants valued making connections with fellow programme participants and instructors, whether the individuals were newcomers or Canadian citizens. For instance, an adult learn-to-ski participant shared their experience socializing with two fellow newcomer programme participants:

I think both of them very friendly. We did talk a little bit about our background, where do you come from and do you have kids and where do you work ... and things like that. And we encouraged each other when somebody fell, [we] will wait for her and say, “Okay, you can do it.” Ya, is pretty friendly communication. (Adult participant)

In another case, a parent of two siblings participating in a youth learn-to-snowboard programme described the value of their children interacting with an assumed Canadian-born instructor:

I always sense that when [my children] have a lesson, the instructor is Canadian-born. And then, [the instructor]'s very nice. And then, our kids are very happy to listen instructors. And [my children are] learning English and also skills. And then, they are enjoying communicate with instructors, the Canadians. (Parent)

During the PEFEG, youth and teen March Break Olympic camp participants also discussed the sense of community they cultivated with their fellow campers. This sentiment is reflected in *Figure 3.2*.



Figure 3.2. *Three friends in (ice hockey) uniform*

These three examples demonstrate how fostering integration played out in diverse ways across the research. Study participants prioritized interacting with established Canadians both in and beyond the WNP primarily to gain insight and experience navigating Canadian culture and society. Yet, study participants also appreciated becoming closer with fellow newcomers who could relate to their position and ongoing settlement journey. While diverse conceptualizations of integration are emerging in practice and scholarly research (e.g., Agergaard, 2018), integration

was overwhelmingly constructed in a relatively simplistic, unidirectional manner by study participants; there was limited consideration of the learnings that established Canadians can take from these interactions.

3.5.2.3. Centring family participation

In general, newcomer parents in this study ensured their children got the first opportunity to enroll in WNP programmes. At the same time, many of these same parents also recognized the value of entire newcomer families learning Canadian winter sports. A common belief held by newcomer parents was that Canadians tend to do winter sports as a family:

After I came to Canada, I found here in Canada people like to do – go out as a family. I hope that we could go out skiing as a family, not only the kids. So, as parents, we would like to also join. So yes, that's great! (Adult participant and parent)

Newcomer parents also expressed concern about being unfamiliar with what their children were learning in introductory winter sport programmes:

Here Canadians spend a lot of time with the family. So, when [one child] is skating, I want to do skate too because I don't want to waste sitting one or two hours when they are done. Now my son want to be hockey player. I want, you know, play a little help with him. Pass the puck to him or, you know, goalie. ... and [neither parent] can help. Is not good. (Parent)

Since newcomer parents in this study lack familiarity with winter sports – including being unable to physically participate in them – newcomer parents are both unable to assist their children

when programmes end and miss out on valuable family recreational sport opportunities, points which are emphasized in the following quotation:

You know, Canadian families, they are very good at stopping ... they can teach their own kids ... that's different than my family or immigrants. The parents cannot skate and then, I don't know, [my children] will never get better. I would definitely enrolled and then participate. (Parent)

Failing to introduce newcomer parents to the winter sports their children are learning thereby reduces the likelihood that newcomers – either individuals or families – will participate in winter sports beyond their introduction. Newcomer parents believed that this is not the case for Canadian families who are likely more familiar with Canadian winter sports.

Newcomer parents also described feeling isolated through having less access to introductory winter sport programmes than their children:

Previously, my son and his friends, they would like to go ski, so I drive for him there. I drop him, I went shopping, and I came back. I can never go together with him. (Adult participant and parent)

As it turned out, this parent eventually enrolled in an adult learn-to-ski lesson, which they shared with me in passing one day at WinSport. They reported no longer feeling as isolated now that they were learning to ski like their son.

In another instance, a parent questioned why they were unable to learn a winter sport given that they were already at WinSport watching their children participate in the WNP:

My son is going there and my daughter also going there, so just to participate with them and stop shooting videos of the kids. Why can't we also join? And it's good for health and it's spending time with the kids and with the sports is awesome activity, so it's better for me also to come far and participate in this programme. (Parent)

The various benefits this study participant raised helps illustrate how engaging newcomer families – not just newcomer children – in introductory winter sport programmes may lead to various positive short- and long-term outcomes.

3.5.3. What comes next? Concerns about future winter sport participation

Given the WNP's introductory nature, it is unsurprising that study participants shared their collective intentions and concerns about partaking in winter sports moving forward. These considerations were divided into: (1) future participation within WNP and (2) future participation beyond WNP.

3.5.3.1. Future participation with WNP

Study participants generally enjoyed their experiences in the WNP and as such, they were interested in either progressing through subsequent levels in the sport they had been introduced to (i.e., levels two through four) or trying additional programmes offered at WinSport. These perspectives are illustrated in the following quotation:

I'm already concerned because [my children are] enrolled in level one and then this coming Sunday, [my settlement services councillor] asked me, "There is more courses. But that is a level-one ski, level-one snowboarding." So, I said, "We already snowboarded level one, so we're going to try ski one." ... So, for us, it was good enough. But we think it would be not level two and three and four for newcomers. (Parent)

Across the interviews and PEFG, study participants discussed a longing for future participation opportunities, either within the same sport or trying a different winter sport. Yet, the parent's aforementioned confusion demonstrated how it was not always made clear to newcomer families what future participation options were available. Such confusion was present across several interviews and positioned as a prominent weakness of the WNP.

3.5.3.2. *Future participation beyond WNP*

Study participants also shared how they were turning their attention to future winter sport opportunities beyond the WNP. This included searching for second-hand ski equipment and mapping out future participation opportunities:

Ya, I want to [continue skiing]. I'm starting to ask people how to buy some second-hand ski equipment, so next year maybe we can go skiing. But we're renting. Renting's also expensive I found. (Adult participant and parent)

While study participants were exploring winter sport opportunities beyond the WNP, they were also aware that several participation barriers complicated these opportunities. As the above study participant noted, programme and equipment costs represented a prominent barrier limiting many newcomers from enrolling in winter sport programmes of their own volition prior to the WNP. Study participants also understood that these same financial barriers would remain in existence once their involvement in the WNP ended, thereby hindering future participation opportunities. While additional participation barriers were raised (e.g., time pressures and transportation), study participants tended to focus on the financial realities of doing winter sports as the primary consideration influencing their decision-making process.

A conundrum was thus noted surrounding how study participants – newcomer parents more specifically – balanced their tenuous fiscal realities with wanting to provide their children with additional opportunities to experience winter sports beyond the WNP:

It would be [difficult to enroll my children in future winter sport programmes] if we don't have a fund and then we cannot get free lesson [and] still have to try [to offer my children more opportunities] because I saw how much [my children] enjoyed it. (Parent)

Study participants generally reported positive experiences in the WNP. Yet, without continued financial support beyond their initial WNP involvement, many study participants recognized that it would be difficult to continue their winter sport journeys. For parents, the reality of letting down their children – who in many cases fell in love with winter sport – was cause of much consternation. For programme administrators, this conundrum presents several ethical considerations surrounding programme sustainability that will be explored next.

3.6. Discussion

I presented the following three themes to illuminate the lived experiences of newcomers involved in introductory winter sport programming: (1) individual outcomes, (2) winter sport participation and newcomer integration, and (3) what comes next? concerns about future winter sport participation. Insights from these themes offer greater understanding for why newcomers to Canada are drawn to winter sports, varied outcomes newcomers experience from trying a winter sport, and ethical and programming considerations for future participation. I noted a similar trend as previous research (ICC, 2014; Jedwab & Holley, 2021) that newcomer study participants strongly associated winter sport with Canadian identity, and this relationship was a motivation for their enrolling in the WNP. However, study results offer important nuance for what

specifically about the relationship between winter sport and Canadian identity resonated with study participants, especially as it relates to newcomer integration. Study participants shared how meeting people outside of their immediate social networks – especially Canadian citizens – or building skills and experiences to use beyond the WNP were valuable outcomes. Using one's newfound knowledge of winter sports to become closer with classmates, establish friendships with other parents, and feeling comfortable enough joining neighbours on a skiing vacation were prominent examples of how study participants viewed winter sport participation as useful in becoming more Canadian.

I return to the theoretical underpinnings of this study – Agergaard's (2018) reconceptualization of sport-related integration and social constructionist perspectives of race and ethnicity – to critically assess the study outcomes and situate them within the wider socio-cultural context. The ways study participants described how the WNP – and sport participation more broadly – contributed to feeling more connected to their local community and Canadian society reflects simplistic, uni-directional understandings about integration. In fact, much of what participants discussed was arguably assimilationist in nature with newcomers being encouraged to, either consciously or unconsciously, adopt supposed Canadian ways of being through participating in certain sports (e.g., ice skating) in certain ways (e.g., joining organized sport programming) reflecting the pervasiveness of settler colonial, Eurocentric conceptualizations in Western societies (Chatterjee, 2019).

Agergaard's (2018) model enables sport-related integration to be viewed through multiple levels: the macro, meso, and micro. While this paper focused on the micro-level (the WNP), expanded multi-level critiques involving the meso- (i.e., the interrelationships between WNP collaborator organizations) and macro-levels (e.g., multiculturalism policy in Canada) may offer

greater clarity for how integration plays out in Canadian winter sport contexts. Relatedly, the centering of white, English-speaking people by study participants (e.g., assuming white, English-speaking instructors are Canadian) connects to longstanding critiques of how Canadian identity has been structured around English-Canadian interests (e.g., Bannerji, 2000; Mackey, 2002). As I outlined earlier, Canada's immigration and sport systems have been largely shaped by settler colonial, Eurocentric forces that work to marginalize non-white identities through various assimilationist techniques (Bannerji, 2000; Frisby, 2011; Mackey, 2002). The manner in which study participants discussed the relationship between winter sport, Canadian identity, and integration in simplistic, assimilationist ways may demonstrate just how pervasive settler colonial, Eurocentric forces are within newcomer sport. Herein lies an opportunity for additional concepts – e.g., interculturalism: “connecting across cultural differences through processes that promote inclusion and mutual learning to create something new” (Frisby, 2014, p. 354) – to be applied in deepening newcomer sport policy and programming.

The place of family within newcomer winter sport participation stood out in this study. Several study participants expressed a desire to join the WNP as a family, based largely on a belief that all Canadian families do winter sports together. In reality, sport in Canada is quite individualistic with few participation opportunities available to families (Misener, 2020). Furthermore, participation rates in winter sports are stagnating while more accessible summer sports like soccer, basketball, and cricket are rising. This trend is fueled by growing immigration rates (Jedwab & Holley, 2021). The belief in widespread family participation is a myth. This myth is perpetuated by nostalgic idealizations of Canada as a winter sport country which are fueled by mediated and popular narratives that winter sport participation and viewing brings all Canadians together as an imagined community (Allain, 2019; Anderson, 2016).

Several structural issues exist impeding many newcomers from extending their sport participation beyond introductory programming. One issue involves newcomer parents being unable to support their children's future winter sport participation without also being introduced to those same winter sports. More broadly, study participants of all ages expressed concerns over their future winter sport participation, both within and after their time in the WNP. Study participants overwhelmingly had positive experiences in the WNP and were considering future winter sport participation opportunities when interviewed. Study participants wanted to advance through the levels in their particular sport, try another winter sport through the WNP, and/or explore participation opportunities beyond the WNP. This collective interest raises related questions for newcomer sport administrators: (1) What policies, programmes, and supports must be developed to support newcomers once introductory sport opportunities conclude? and (2) Is it morally responsible to offer introductory sport opportunities for newcomers without the appropriate policies, programmes, and supports in place to promote sustainable, long-term participation? Despite the WNP organizers' best efforts, we were unable to adequately address the first question. My hope in raising these questions is to illuminate the moral conundrum facing those involved in newcomer sport programming (i.e., instructors, administrators, policy makers, funders), and urge researchers and activists to take action towards social change.

3.7. Conclusion

In this exploratory, interpretive study of the WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP), I investigated: (1) the newcomer study participants' lived experiences in the WNP programmes and (2) the influence of winter sport participation on newcomer integration into Canadian society. Using a qualitative case study design, I developed three themes focusing on the participants' individual programme outcomes, the relationship between winter sport participation

and newcomer integration, and future winter sport participation considerations. The insights presented in these themes and corresponding sub-themes depict a community sport setting in which study participants experienced diverse programme outcomes and drew varied meanings from participating in prominent Canadian winter sports.

The qualitative, in-depth nature of this single case study means that the findings are not representative of all WNP participants, and study insights may be considered across diverse settings, though local contextual factors be contemplated. I hope this study offers insights for future researchers interested in newcomer sport participation, winter sport, sport-related integration, and their relationship to national identity. I encourage researchers to consider several future research directions. First, conduct longitudinal analyses of newcomer introductory winter sport programmes assessing how integration and the nature of participation change over time. Second, design case studies exploring the meanings newcomers ascribe to winter sports in locations where such sports hold national significance (e.g., Nordic skiing in Norway). Third, explore the differences in how newcomers and sport stakeholders (e.g., instructors, administrators, policy makers, funders) conceptualize integration. Studying the lived experiences of newcomers in Canadian winter sports offers important insights for how newcomers to northern nations settle and integrate into their new homes – information that academics, policy makers, and programmers should carefully consider moving forward.

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Chapter Four

“It’s All About Making a Difference”: Interrogating a Newcomer Sport Intersectoral Community Partnership

In *chapter four*, we critically interrogated the (in)efficacy of the WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP) in providing introductory winter sport programming for newcomers to Canada. The following two research questions were the focus of this chapter: (1) What promising practices are being used for organizing and administering introductory sport programmes for newcomers to Canada? and (2) How are inclusive, welcoming introductory winter sport programmes built and administered by diverse community stakeholders? We used a qualitative intrinsic case study design – employing in-depth interviews and participant observation – to investigate the research questions. At the time of completion of this dissertation, this chapter was under review in a sport management journal and thus follows the journal’s required stylistic guidelines.

Article reference:

Barrick, S. & Bridel, W. (Under review). “It’s all about making a difference”: Interrogating a newcomer intersectoral community partnership.

4.1. Abstract

Understanding the mechanisms of newcomer sport intersectoral community partnerships is essential in cultivating safe and welcoming opportunities for all newcomers. In this paper, we present findings from a qualitative intrinsic case study analysis of one newcomer sport intersectoral community partnership: The WinSport Newcomer Programme (WNP) based in Calgary, Canada. The aim of our study was to critically interrogate the (in)efficacy of the WNP in providing introductory winter sport programming for newcomers to Canada. Data from qualitative interviews with 19 WNP administrators, and field notes from participant observations of relevant programming were analyzed thematically to develop the following three themes: (1) collaborator motives, (2) linkages within and between collaborators, and (3) collaboration shortcomings. We adopted Parent and Harvey's management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships as our conceptual framework to investigate the partnership antecedents, management, and evaluation. Study findings indicate that the WNP represents a maturing intersectoral community partnership that has excelled at introducing newcomers to quintessential Canadian winter sports. Yet, various weaknesses are obstructing the collaboration's effectiveness. We provide recommendations for future research directions and tangible strategies for practitioners interested in developing newcomer sport programming.

Keywords: immigration; newcomer sport; winter sport; inclusion; qualitative; partnership

4.2. Background

Community sport organizations are increasingly employing intersectoral community partnerships to address various opportunities (e.g., expand programming) and threats (e.g., austerity; Parent & Harvey, 2017). At their core, intersectoral community partnerships rely on relevant collaborators from across sectors (e.g., public, private) working together towards achieving mutually-beneficial objectives (Parent & Harvey, 2009). These objectives may include meeting administrative needs and responding to external threats (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Forde et al., 2015). The COVID-19 global pandemic and corresponding public health restrictions represents the most urgent external threat (Doherty et al., 2022). Other examples include ongoing pressures facing public-sector sport and recreation organizations to expand service offerings amidst austerity measures (Frisby et al., 2004; Parnell et al., 2019), as well as increasing external constraints on peoples' sport and physical activity participation (Canadian Heritage, 2014).

The shift to intersectoral community partnerships has emerged, in part, from the growing influence of neoliberal ideologies (Frisby et al., 2004). Public and non-profit sport organizations are thus adopting commercial, private sector traits such as privatization, fiscal restraint, individual responsibility, and rationalization across their programmes and services (Golob & Giles, 2015; Thibault et al., 1999; Tyyskä et al., 2017). These traits are viewed by many as antithetical to the core purpose of public and non-profit sport organizations: sport and recreation for all (Frisby et al., 2004; Thibault et al., 2003). One way that community sport organizations – which are largely non-profit and volunteer-run (Misener & Doherty, 2009) – are navigating this tension and responding to expanding neoliberal discourses involves partnering with similar organizations within and outside sport. Common rationale include pooling human and financial

resources to maintain or expand organizational capacity (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; Thibault & Kikulis, 2003).

Within sport and leisure management research, scholars have explored the components and dynamics of intersectoral community partnerships across various environments (e.g., Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; Marlier et al., 2015; Parent & Harvey, 2017). For instance, Thibault and colleagues (1999) found senior managers of municipal leisure services departments sought out new partnerships to combat environmental pressures (economic, political, social) that threatened the existence of ongoing programmes and services. Frisby and colleagues (2004), in a study of leisure services departments and intersectoral collaborations, argued how various managerial structures (i.e., lack of planning and policy guidelines, unclear roles and reporting channels, insufficient human resources) and managerial processes (e.g., insufficient training, lack of evaluation) resulted in various collaboration inefficiencies. Similar challenges exist within community sport, namely structural deficits surrounding the formation and sustainability of intersectoral community partnerships and strategic concerns about the commensurability of partner missions and objectives (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; MacLean et al., 2011).

Current research illustrates the complexity of intersectoral community partnerships across sport and leisure contexts, pointing to various structural, strategic, and environmental considerations hampering the effectiveness of relevant collaborations. We adopted Parent and Harvey's (2009; 2017) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships as our conceptual framework to interrogate this complexity within an intersectoral community partnership delivering newcomer introductory winter sport programming.

4.3. Conceptual Framework

Parent and Harvey's (2009) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships provides stakeholders – primarily community-oriented organizations – with a detailed framework for establishing, sustaining, and evaluating intersectoral sport and physical activity collaborations. Their model consists of a three-part feedback loop involving the formation of the partnership (partnership antecedents), the partnership's maintenance (partnership management), and assessing the partnership (partnership evaluation). Various subcomponents are nested within each component, thereby capturing the complexity of intersectoral partnerships. An in-depth explanation of each model component and sub-component, as well as their intersections, is beyond the scope of this paper. Please see *Table 1.1. (in chapter one)* for a visual representation combining Parent and Harvey's original model (2009) and proposed additions by the same authors (Parent & Harvey, 2017), which guided our data analysis and interpretation. The proposed model additions are italicized in the table.

Partnership antecedents are the pre-existing factors that influence the structure of intersectoral partnerships. Antecedents include: the purpose of the partnership project, the environment (including funding availability), the nature of each partner's organization, the partners' motives, partner complementarity and fit, partnership planning, types of partnership, and governance. For example, selecting the proper partners is key to ensuring a successful partnership. The intended scope of the partnerships and number of partners influence what partners are selected. In sport and physical activity community-based partnerships, Parent and Harvey (2009) contend that the type of partnership can look different based on the degree of decision-making power afforded to each partner and the relationships between partners.

Attributes of the partnership, communication, and decision making all shape the management of partnerships. The attributes of community-based partnerships focus on commitment, coordination, trust, organizational identity and learning, mutuality, synergy/momentum, staffing, fairness, local ownership, policies and procedures, challenges, costs of association, and access to new resources. For instance, effective partnerships occur when the various partners coordinate their activities and efforts around the central partnership objectives. Communication is also important for managing partnerships and involves quality, information sharing, participation, and formal/informal as well as internal/external forms of communication. Quality communication consists of timely, accurate, adequate, complete, and credible information sharing to ensure that partnership objectives are met. Structure, power balance, leadership, and ability to resolve conflict all shape the decision-making capabilities within partnerships. Determining and subsequently following appropriate decision-making structures is important in maximizing the potential of partnerships.

The final component of Parent and Harvey's model is partnership evaluation. Determining the degree of collaboration success or effectiveness is vital in this component with focus paid to partner satisfaction, project/programme outcome(s), and project sustainability. Evaluation type also contributes to the success and effectiveness of partnerships. Relevant evaluations take five forms: process, impact, outcome, formative, and summative. Summative evaluations should be conducted at the conclusion of the project or programme, focusing on the results of the partnership. However, evaluations are rarely completed in relevant partnerships, in part, due to the lack of available human and financial resources in community-based partnerships.

Parent and Harvey's (2009) model has been used in various community sport (Bruening et al., 2015; Gipson et al., 2018; Marlier et al., 2020; Marlier et al., 2015; Parent & Harvey, 2017) and physical activity promotion contexts (Lucidarme et al., 2014). The following components were deemed essential to successful intersectoral partnerships across the research: partner motives, fit, and complementarity; access to appropriate resources (financial and human); and strong interpersonal connections across stakeholders. Moreover, examining intersectoral partnerships from nuanced, multi-level perspectives was also found to be important in uncovering existent complexities (Bruening et al., 2015; Lucidarme et al., 2014; Marlier et al., 2015).

A growing body of research has examined the value of Parent and Harvey's (2009) model within community sport (Bruening et al., 2015; Gipson et al., 2018; Marlier et al., 2020; Marlier et al., 2015; Parent & Harvey, 2017) and physical activity promotion contexts (Lucidarme et al., 2014). For instance, Parent and Harvey (2017) assessed a community-based youth sport for development programme and proposed the following additions to their original model: funding availability in the environment subcomponent (antecedents); synergy/momentum, fairness, local ownership, policies and procedures, challenges, costs of association, and access to new resources within the attributes subcomponent (management); formal/informal and internal/external forms of communication within the communication subcomponent (management); and project sustainability within the determination of success/effectiveness subcomponent (evaluation).

We adopted Parent and Harvey's (2009; 2017) community-based partnership management model as it offers a comprehensive framework for elucidating the complexity of intersectoral community sport partnerships. Moreover, we are responding to the authors' call to evaluate the model's effectiveness across diverse contexts, particularly within Canada (Parent &

Harvey, 2017). Applying this model within a newcomer introductory winter sport programme context also represents a novel contribution.

4.4. Newcomer Sport in Canada

Research examining the role of sport in the lives of newcomers to Canada represents a growing topic in sport and immigration literature. Scholars have investigated the role sport can play in newcomer settlement (Quirke, 2015), focusing on access to cross-cultural, acculturative opportunities (Rich et al., 2015; Smart et al., 2020); establishing and extending meaningful relationships (Gallant & Tirone, 2017; Hurly, 2019); fostering newcomer well-being (Hurly & Walker, 2019); and interrogating how newcomer sport and leisure opportunities are structured (Barrick et al., 2021; Forde et al., 2015; Kramers et al., 2021; Rich et al., 2015). Researchers argue these sport participation benefits often do not reach newcomers, in part, resulting from intersecting individual, organizational, policy, and socio-cultural constraints (e.g., impacts of institutional racism; Barrick et al., 2021). Moreover, community sport participation is increasingly positioned by policy makers, sport administrators, and non-governmental stakeholders as effective in promoting the integration of newcomers into their new host societies (Agergaard, 2018). Sport scholars have critiqued this claim arguing how the mechanisms of achieving newcomer integration through sport participation are poorly understood and measured (Agergaard, 2018; Spaaij, 2012). In this study, we contributed to the following two research gaps: (1) a dearth of newcomer sport research focusing on mainstream Canadian winter sports, and (2) no critical examination of how intersectoral community partnerships function in newcomer sport contexts. Relatedly, our study aim was to critically interrogate how an intersectoral community partnership operated in providing introductory winter sport programming for newcomers to Canada.

For the remainder of the paper, we will introduce the qualitative intrinsic case study, outline the methodology/methods and data analysis processes, and present the results and discussion. We will end with some concluding remarks about the utility of Parent and Harvey's (2009; 2017) model in relation to newcomer sport, along with relevant research and policy recommendations.

4.5. Study Design

4.5.1. Introducing the case

The WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP) is an intersectoral community partnership based in Calgary, Canada that utilizes the collective expertise of its collaborators “in helping people discover snow and ice sports to integrate newcomers to Calgary” (WinSport, n.d.-b). Stakeholders from three local organizations – WinSport, Centre for Newcomers (CFN), and Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA) – launched the WNP in September 2017. Planning for the WNP commenced in February 2017 when the lead author first met with WinSport administrators to discuss developing newcomer sport programmes.

The WNP's guiding purpose is to introduce local newcomer families to Canadian winter sports – ice skating, downhill skiing, and snowboarding – through enrolling newcomer participants in WinSport introductory programmes. In the WNP's first year, 200 newcomer participants – ranging from children to adults – enrolled in varied introductory programmes from January to April 2018. Each partner organization was brought into the collaboration for specific purposes. In short, WinSport offered introductory winter sport programming expertise and fundraising capacity, and CFN and CIWA – two Calgary-based settlement services organizations – provided access to newcomer families. The lead author shared insights from research during the planning phase; they also conducted an evaluation of the WNP.

Outlining WinSport's origins, vision, and structure is prudent as it represented the primary organization in the WNP with 10 of 13 core stakeholders involved in launching the partnership, all programmes occurred at WinSport, and WinSport administrators oversaw partnership fundraising efforts. WinSport – previously known as the Calgary Olympic Development Association (CODA) – was founded in 1956 as a non-profit organization to support Calgary's efforts to host the Winter Olympics. Following the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics, CODA was charged with continuing the Games' legacy, including owning and operating Calgary Olympic Park (where the WNP programming was held). In 2009, CODA rebranded itself as WinSport. The organization's mission is "to inspire and activate human potential through the spirit of sport" (WinSport, n.d.-a) through elite and grassroots sport programmes and services. This is achieved through numerous discover, develop, and excel initiatives across various sports. As the scope of the present study involved the introduction of newcomers to Canadian winter sports, further explanation of the "discover" pillar is warranted.

Beyond introducing newcomers to winter sport, the WNP collaborators also strove to support the integration of newcomers into Canadian society. Small numbers of newcomers (two to three) participated in existing introductory ice skating, skiing, and snowboarding lessons with members of the public who registered on their own to foster cross-cultural interactions. Typical programmes had five to 10 participants led by one instructor. WinSport discover programmes are organized into levels with level one programmes being for new participants to a given sport. Considering the WNP's introductory focus, the overwhelming majority of newcomer participants were enrolled in level one programmes. The programmes were seven to eight hours in length spread over several days or weeks depending on the participants' ages and abilities. Newcomer youths and teens (aged 7 to 14) also participated in a March Break Olympic Camp, held shortly

after the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and Paralympics, where participants were introduced to various Olympic and Paralympic winter sports including snowboarding, sledge hockey, and ski jumping. To promote access, all programme fees and equipment rental costs were supported by the WNP. Requisite funding was acquired from several local philanthropists, fundraising efforts from a local elementary school, and local and provincial grants.

4.5.2. Methodology

Guided by a social constructionist worldview, we employed an exploratory, interpretive qualitative intrinsic case study design to investigate the WNP. Identifying the subject and object in case study research is essential for making a project a case “of” something (Thomas, 2011). The WNP was the subject of our case study, whereas the object – representing the analytical frame “through which the subject is viewed and which the subject explicates” (Thomas, 2011, p. 511) – involved the efficacy of intersectoral community partnerships.

4.5.3. Methods

Qualitative case studies typically involve multiple methods to unpack the nuance and meaning of the phenomenon, while examining it from various perspectives (Schwandt & Gates, 2018; Stake, 2005). We conducted qualitative, semi-structured interviews with WNP stakeholders, and participant observations of programmes and partnership meetings in this study. Data for this study was collected by the lead author between September 2017 and August 2018.

4.5.3.1. Qualitative interviews

The lead author conducted interviews with 19 study participants in total: 13 WNP administrators, three funding partners, two programme instructors, and one settlement councillor. Of the 13 administrators interviewed, 10 were affiliated with WinSport and three represented the

two settlement services collaborators. Additional participant demographic information is included in *Table 4.1.* below. Interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to one hour and forty minutes with the average length being 58 minutes. In two instances, study participants requested to be interviewed in pairs, which was accommodated.

The lead author used a semi-structured interview guide to ensure specific topics were addressed, while offering study participants flexibility to raise ideas they deemed relevant. Topics covered in the interviews included: study participants' introduction to the WNP, strengths and weaknesses of the WNP, and areas of growth for the partnership. The interviews were completed at locations chosen by the participants, audio recorded, and verbatim transcribed by a third-party organization (*Rev.com*) following each interview.

Table 4.1. Study participant demographics

WNP Role	Canadian Citizenship Status
WinSport Administrator	Permanent Resident
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
WinSport Administrator	Citizen
Settlement Services Administrator	Permanent Resident
Settlement Services Administrator	Permanent Resident
Settlement Services Administrator	Permanent Resident
Settlement Councillor	Permanent Resident
WinSport Instructor	Citizen
WinSport Instructor	Citizen
Funder	Citizen
Funder	Citizen
Funder	Citizen

4.5.1.2. Participant observations

The lead author performed observations during collaboration meetings and WNP programmes. Observations were incorporated to gain a rich understanding of the study context. The lead author adjusted their observation strategy depending on the setting. For collaboration meetings, a participant-as-observer strategy was adopted as the lead author was an active WNP contributor. In comparison, the lead author assumed a more neutral observer-as-participant role during the WNP programmes through watching from the sidelines to both minimize potential disruptions and view programmes in their entirety. The lead author strove to gain a comprehensive understanding of the WNP by focusing on interactions between stakeholders (e.g., instructors and programme participants); peoples' body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice (e.g., during collaboration meetings); and the built environment at WinSport (e.g., how people used WinSport facilities). In total, the lead author completed 140 hours of observations and recorded field notes immediately following each observation session.

4.5.1.4. Data analysis

Once all data was compiled, the lead author analyzed the data thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019) using *NVivo 11* qualitative data analysis software. The lead author read all study materials (i.e., transcripts, observation field notes, reflexive journal entries, and collaboration documents) multiple times to familiarize themselves with the content. All materials then underwent an initial round of line-by-line coding employing in vivo and process coding strategies (Saldana, 2016). Examples of initial codes included “winter sport” and “collaboration weaknesses”. The lead author then completed a second round of coding – employing an axial coding strategy – to reassemble the previously deconstructed codes into meaningful units of analysis (Saldana, 2016). Examples of axial codes included “connecting winter sport and

Canadian identity” and “interpreting collaborator motives”. Through successive iterations of coding, writing analytical memos, and reflecting on the relevant theoretical and conceptual literature, the lead author amassed preliminary thematic categories. These categories were then refined into the themes and sub-themes presented in the findings section. Across all the stages of the data analysis process, the co-authors met regularly to discuss codes, memos, and thematic categories to challenge our collective assumptions and refine our thinking.

4.6. Findings

We developed three themes in our analysis of/across the collaboration’s antecedents, management, and evaluation. These themes are: (1) collaborator motives, (2) linkages within and between collaborators, and (3) collaboration shortcomings. Within each thematic argument, we will present several sub-themes, in part, to illustrate the intricacy of the WNP. While the results are presented in three heuristic categories to promote clarity, connections exist across the themes. We will address these connections in the discussion.

4.6.1. Collaborator motives

Study participants reported several individual and organizational motives influencing their intentions to participate in the WNP. Some motives were more global or altruistic in nature, reaching across the collaborator organizations. For example, many study participants discussed their belief in the relationship between winter sport and Canadian identity, thus becoming involved in the WNP to extend these participation opportunities to newcomers. This relationship between Canadian identity and specific winter sports (e.g., ice skating, ice hockey, skiing, and snowboarding), as well as the value for newcomers in learning these winter sports, is illustrated in the following quote:

...as a non-Canadian, when I came here, if you did not know how to talk about hockey or you didn't ski or you couldn't skate, you were an immediate outsider. ... Everyone skated, everyone watched hockey, everyone knew a great deal about winter and sports because you either hibernated or you came in and did something. So, I would say, yes, I think winter sports are very Canadian. (WinSport administrator)

For this sport administrator – who immigrated to Canada several decades ago – an inextricable connection exists between winter sports and Canadian culture. By not accessing winter sports, newcomers were thought to risk being ostracized from mainstream Canadian society, especially during winter.

Several participants argued that facilitating introductory winter sport opportunities for newcomers could help mitigate the risk of othering, instead creating opportunities to build community and foster integration:

By welcoming in these newcomers, you know, helping them understand the Canadian culture, the Canadian values, and what sport plays in that. And in that case, it's not so much about the sport of skiing. It's bringing them into the community. It's introducing them to sport. But more importantly, it's integrating them into Calgary and our community. (WinSport administrator)

The utility of achieving these lofty community building and integration goals through sport programming has been critiqued across the existent literature (Rich et al., 2015; Spracklen et al., 2015), a point we will return to in the discussion.

Representatives from both settlement services organizations shared similar community building and integration motives. For example, settlement services administrators were guided by tangible concerns emerging from their lived experiences and interactions with newcomers:

I think part of it is integration. Because once [newcomers] come to Canada, everybody talks about ice hockey, everybody talks about skiing or skating. But a lot of [newcomers] there's been zero opportunity to participate in this kind of sport where they're coming from. (Settlement services administrator)

We thought it would be an excellent opportunity for our clients to benefit from this WinSport opportunity because it's one thing to know there's a place like this where you can skate, ski, or snowboard. But then there's also the financial aspect to it, which a lot of our clients struggle with. A lot of them are low income and to be able to pay for a sport like this wasn't exactly cheap. (Settlement services administrator)

These insights demonstrate how settlement services administrators were attuned to the complex socio-cultural, socio-economic, and demographic factors shaping the lives of newcomers. These insights drew settlement services administrators to the WNP, and enriched the development and efficacy of the partnership, from recruiting newcomer participants to addressing partnership shortcomings.

Study participants also noted how specific organizational motives influenced the formation of the WNP. In this section, we focus exclusively on WinSport as they were responsible for initiating and guiding the collaboration through the duration of the study. Study participants discussed how WinSport's involvement in the WNP helped advance specific

organizational outcomes. Chief among those was a business rationale of attracting new users – in this case, newcomers – to WinSport’s facilities:

I’m gonna guess most of these newcomers that will participate in [the WNP], it’s probably the first time many of them even saw snow, let alone had a pair of skis on. So, from [WinSport’s] perspective, is it introducing prospective new guests or users to our facilities? Absolutely. (WinSport administrator)

To achieve the aim of attracting new users, WinSport administrators built relationships with local settlement services administrators to learn from experts in newcomer service provision about how to offer inclusive, welcoming sport spaces:

Getting those two [settlement services] organizations involved, it helps [strengthen WNP funding applications], but it also helps WinSport realize what holes we have in our system as far as bringing newcomers in. And every time we meet with the two organizations, we learn something new we’re lacking or where [the settlement services organizations] can’t fulfill. (WinSport administrator)

As this quote demonstrates, the ability for WinSport administrators to recruit collaborators from the settlement services sector helped strengthen all facets of the WNP. Moreover, ongoing dialogues with collaborators from across the WNP partner organizations helped WinSport administrators adjust their operations in ways that cultivated more welcoming programmes and spaces. One example involved the streamlining of programme registration processes – whereby representatives from WinSport, CIWA, and CFN worked together to support newcomers as they registered for introductory winter sport lessons. Emerging from the WNP, WinSport is now

piloting revised registration processes (e.g., streamlined materials) aimed at improving the experience of all facility guests, not simply newcomers.

Through their work in the WNP, WinSport administrators also sought ways to establish sustainable, long-term connections with Calgary's local newcomer communities. The motive behind these efforts involved ensuring the future viability of WinSport as a community sport hub within Calgary's changing demographics, in part, through laying the foundation for future philanthropic networks:

But my hope is, now that we're reaching out to this newcomer community, that they feel connected to us. And when they become the next round of engineers in the petroleum industry, or they become the next round of teachers, or whatever they become in their life, there's a place this facility has in their heart with their experience. Because it's only through an experience you can deliver where [newcomers] sit there and go, "That was an amazing thing [WinSport] did for me. Thank you." "And here's my payment back to you. Because I want to give it to future generations." (WinSport administrator)

While this motive was more forward thinking in nature, it reflects a connection between the WNP and larger community-building and organizational vitality efforts being considered by senior administrators at WinSport.

4.6.2. Linkages within and between collaborators

Study participants had much to share about the nature of the WNP. Two prominent levels of collaboration were discussed: linkages within WinSport's various departments and linkages across the WNP partner organizations. As we outlined in the case study description, WinSport was the primary partner organization in the WNP with 10 of the partnership's 13 prominent

contributors being WinSport administrators – ranging from junior (e.g., managers) to senior leadership roles (e.g., directors) and representing four departments. Thus, investigating how these WinSport administrators collaborated with one another is warranted. Representatives from the two settlement services organizations and lead author on this paper held peripheral positions within the partnership. Yet, these collaborators also played important roles in the WNP.

4.6.2.1. Linkages within WinSport departments

Various WinSport administrators noted how the organization was undergoing a period of transition internally to prioritize collaboration out of necessity due to the expansive nature of WinSport's physical campus and large workforce:

There's too much space. It's too big, the campus is huge, there's thousands of people that use it. You can't – nothing is alone here. But having said that, this is probably one of the [projects] since I've been here that has the most to do with Guest Services, Marketing, Sport, Communications, you know, Fundraising. It just goes into about eight different areas. (WinSport administrator)

Encouraging collaboration across departments was positioned as a relatively new phenomenon, one that was strengthened through WinSport's involvement in the WNP.

Study participants explained how WinSport's contribution to the WNP was organized around a central structure. At the center were several administrators from the Marketing, Communications, and Sponsorships department, as well as Guest Services:

... we [Guest Services] kind of acted as like the central hub because there were so many people involved [in the WNP]. We were the ones who were kind of talking to Marketing about the [materials] that were being sent out to the [settlement services] organizations

and then booking [the newcomers] in and then sending the confirmations out to the individuals [newcomer participants]. And then, if there was an issue with the individual, we had to like resolve that. (WinSport administrator)

While WinSport's Guest Services department oversaw the collaboration's day-to-day operations (e.g., registering newcomers into programmes), an administrator from the Marketing, Communications, and Sponsorships department was responsible for managing the WNP's development. This administrator conceptualized the WNP, positioned the collaboration within WinSport's organizational business plan, and curated the collaboration (e.g., overseeing collaboration meetings). This centralized organizational structure was largely supported by study participants; yet, the above-mentioned administrator from Marketing, Communications, and Sponsorship identified a concern regarding the WNP's future sustainability:

And I think the hardest part for me is like personally, I'm the torchbearer for this thing. And my fear is ... and you never know, tomorrow the organization could say, "We really like you, but it's time for us to break up." My question is, "Have we built enough legs in this programme to keep it going?" (WinSport administrator)

Study participants also valued much of how the WNP was designed, describing the reliance on senior-level WinSport administrators as an organizational strength:

I would say the strength is [the WNP] really is handled by the most experienced and the most involved people [at WinSport]. It's upper management that's reserving these spots, reaching out to [the newcomers], making sure they get booked in. So, right from the get-go although communication might seem like it's broken up at times, [the WNP] is getting

the stronger staff that are assisting them 'cause our programmes are very hard to navigate quite honestly 'cause there's so many options. (WinSport administrator)

Involving experienced, senior-level WinSport administrators was positioned by study participants as essential to managing the complexity of the WNP (e.g., coordinating registration processes with two settlement services organizations, restructuring internal processes to better support newcomer participants, and ensuring alignment across relevant WinSport departments).

4.6.2.2. Linkages between WNP partner organizations

How administrators worked together across the three partner organizations to achieve collaboration aims and navigate the WNP's complexity was an important dimension for study participants, as captured in the following quote:

I mean everybody has a certain piece that is important to them or certain information in [WNP materials] that they use, and so making sure all the T's were crossed and the I's were dotted. And then obviously communicating to the organizations that these are the spots we have available. And then trying to align making sure they were getting filled and they weren't being double allocated. And then working with Guest Services and making sure [newcomer participants were registered]. (WinSport administrator)

From the outset of conceptualizing the WNP, WinSport administrators recognized the need to collaborate with specific community partners to address organizational shortcomings in welcoming newcomers to the facility:

[A central consideration] is understanding what you're good at and not good at.

[WinSport] is good at delivering lessons. We're not good at finding these [newcomer] communities. So, who is good at finding those things? (WinSport administrator)

The ability for WinSport to recruit settlement services and research expertise was considered a primary success of the WNP:

[WinSport] wouldn't be able to [introduce newcomers to winter sports] without identifying those community partners that could select the [newcomers] to enter this programme, right? It's kind of aligning and discovering the players in the community that can make these things happen, or are doing it anyways as part of their business, and we can align with them. I think that's been a huge strength, just working with the right groups and finding the right people that would benefit from it. (WinSport administrator)

For study participants affiliated with CIWA or CFN, collaboration marked a guiding principle for ensuring their newcomer clients were effectively supported in accessing their new local community:

So, working closely with, say for example, the academia, other community organizations, stakeholders to ensure there's a community approach to things. And that is why we love what we do and it's definitely very rewarding. (Settlement services administrator)

The WNP represented one such partnership in which settlement services administrators were overwhelmingly positive in their assessment of both the partnership's organization and its impact on the local newcomer community:

It's been a very rewarding partnership. The collaboration has been excellent, very mutual respect on both ends. ... [The WNP collaborators] are so accommodating even for meeting times. Everybody's quick to say, "Hey, if you can't meet, we can schedule it another time." I have nothing to say but positives. All positive. (Settlement services administrator)

I think it's just the empowerment concept. Like the whole helping the [newcomer] clients. That for us is more than anything else is the biggest. Because I know [a WinSport administrator] always sends me the in-kind value of what they've given to the client. And every time I see that amount, I'm totally blown away because there is no way any of them would have been able to afford that. (Settlement services administrator)

These insights illustrate a collective appreciation for being involved in the WNP – especially for the contributions made by WinSport – that was shared by the settlement services administrators. Despite evidence of positivity and appreciation in the interviews, study participants also commented on collaboration shortcomings, a paradox we explore next.

4.6.3. Collaboration shortcomings

Study participants discussed the challenges of managing the multifaceted WNP, which is made clear in the following quotation:

We had a lot of meetings internally with different [WinSport] departments and maybe made some assumptions of how things should function or would function for different groups, whether it's creating paperwork or processes that would work for everybody. Because of the length of time [the WNP] all kind of came together, some of those

assumptions were made, and it was just “move forward and fix it as we go.” So, I think now, going into Year Two, we can look back on processes we put in place, or paperwork we were using, or email communication, and being able to tweak it and fix it to make it that much more smooth for everybody involved, right? (WinSport administrator)

Several collaboration shortcomings became clear through interviews and observations made by the lead author. They included: recognizing collaborator power imbalances, balancing priorities, managing communication challenges, negotiating time pressures, acknowledging programme attendance realities, and neglecting collaboration evaluation. Linking back to Parent and Harvey’s (2009; 2017) model, the shortcomings largely relate to the management of this collaboration, while also addressing its evaluation.

4.6.3.1. Recognizing collaborator power imbalances

The relationship between collaborators, and the differing influence they wielded in the WNP, is related to several of the other collaboration shortcomings that follow in this theme. Study participants from across the WNP espoused the value of bringing together stakeholders to discuss partnership improvements, thereby enriching the experiences of newcomer programme participants:

[WinSport administrators] are coming together more and making sure all [WNP] parties are at the table. Because everybody looks at things differently. So, I think it’s important everybody gets together at a table and have those conversations. Then we can actually really delve in and make sure things are getting done. (WinSport administrator)

It became clear while conducting fieldwork that WinSport administrators were guiding the collaboration. Moreover, the underlying sentiment from the above quotation that all collaborators were equally involved in the decision-making process was not realized. Peripheral partners were invited into the decision-making process at specific times – their access largely curated by WinSport administrators – thereby reinforcing their peripheral status. This tension was noted by the lead author in their field journal:

Reflections from today's WinSport meeting (November 15th, 2018):

Overall, I see this partnership maturing, while maintaining some residue from the past holding the partnership back. Namely, WinSport continues to leave its collaborators out of these planning meetings. This partnership is clearly driven by WinSport as they control the financial resources and have the most personnel actively involved in the partnership. This idea does beg the question of what is being missed or falling through this structure of this particular intersectoral collaboration?

This power dynamic contributed in varying degrees to each additional shortcoming outlined in this theme, connections we will address in the discussion.

4.6.3.2. Balancing priorities

Study participants also noted a general expectation across their job responsibilities, both in sport administration and settlement services, of being required to take on more responsibilities with fewer resources. This necessitated both the need to collaborate and concerns about being unable to invest the necessary time and energy to foster effective collaborations:

That's a reality. But I'm managing [the WNP] off the side of my desk. [A fellow WinSport administrator's] managing it off the side of her desk. Everyone's managing off the side of her desk. (WinSport administrator)

And we've gone back to our partner organizations to be able to identify where some of the communication breakdowns happened. And of course, this is one portion of the work they're doing on a regular basis, right? So, it's not the main focus of anyone's role, to be able to identify these families and fit them in this way, or to meet our deadlines for programme starts and that kind of thing. (WinSport administrator)

These sentiments illustrate how WNP partners were aware of the challenges facing their colleagues, and as the second quote addresses, made strides to manage these realities. Despite these efforts, an outcome of the WNP being managed “off the side of everyone's desks” involved communication breakdowns between collaborators.

4.6.3.3. Managing communication challenges

The WNP's complexity, involving three partner organizations working to introduce 200 newcomers to winter sport programming, created a multitude of communication challenges. One WinSport administrator offered their opinion for why communication challenges were common across the collaboration:

This was a group of people around a table from multiple departments within WinSport, working through the sport administration side and the Guest Services side, who would then communicate to our partner organizations, who would then communicate to the families, or to the parents, and then it was the kids that were actually in the programme. That many degrees of removal of communication, there are some things that can break down. (WinSport administrator)

Settlement services administrators and councillors, who had direct contact with newcomer programme participants before, during, and after the programmes shared their frustrations with not having the necessary WNP information to appropriately support clients:

Basically there was an email forwarded from the department manager. And then, there was a registration- pre-registration form. And then, just brief introduction of the project. That's how I was informed. ... That was one of the challenges I experienced. I didn't have [WNP] information with me. I couldn't tell [the newcomer clients], "Oh ya, this is the schedule." ... Because for me to give correct information, I need to know the procedure. Then I don't confuse [the newcomer clients]. (Settlement councillor)

To help alleviate this concern, study participants from both CIWA and CFN requested additional WNP information. This was deemed vital for the settlement councillors as they were the ones who registered and routinely fielded questions from newcomer clients:

Before we register our clients, if you could give us the schedule. We can make floor plans about the schedule. If they want to apply for the specific spot. After the registration process is done, then if you could let us know if- which clients was registered for that spot if there were other people who applied, right? (Settlement councillor)

Communication between collaborators was also hindered by WinSport administrators lacking knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of personnel from both settlement services organizations who were relied upon to assist in registering newcomer programme participants in a timely and accurate manner:

That's when we relied on the [settlement services] organizations to send the confirmation to the families. And I don't know what the workload looks like [for CIWA and CFN]; maybe it's better if we'd send them all the confirmations and they have consistent communication contact information for the families. I don't know how much time they have on their plates either, right? So, I don't want to be like, "Here's all the work, now you go for it." (WinSport administrator)

Improving communication channels and sharing collaboration information across partners was positioned as essential in strengthening the WNP through ensuring all personnel had the appropriate information to perform their roles effectively. Ensuring all relevant staff have accurate information and the ability to vocalize their perspectives may help WNP collaborators guard against making assumptions about what newcomers want moving forward.

4.6.3.4. Negotiating time pressures

In line with the balancing priorities sub-theme, study participants reported struggling with completing WNP responsibilities in a timely manner along with their other responsibilities. When asked how registration for the first round of WNP programming went, one WinSport administrator responded:

Not well. [Laughs]. I remember I was only involved in the pre-planning stages. I think I did all the reducing [programme attendance] caps to get ready for [registration]. But then I think we hadn't really set up a very good timeline, or we had set up a good timeline, but it wasn't necessarily followed through on. (WinSport administrator)

Similar time pressures were noted by settlement services administrators. These pressures were exacerbated by the numerous steps that went into recruiting newcomer clients for the WNP programmes:

And that's when we say like, "I would really appreciate for example like two weeks' notice or like three weeks' notice." Sometimes you've got very short notice. And recruiting people isn't easy. Calling people isn't easy. Sometimes I do it on my own. When I'm home I know all these newcomers that comes to the Centre and they're clients, "Hey, we got [available spots] if you're interested. Just send me all the names of your children. I will be helping you filling the forms." It's lots of work. (Settlement services administrator)

Additional time and effort were also required in helping newcomer programme participants address various participation barriers. For instance, navigating language barriers was a common reality expressed by settlement services personnel:

Clients have huge barriers going on. Language is a big one. If they're not able to understand you, we've had that several times. You can call all you want, the client is just going to tell you, "Okay, okay." But they don't understand you. So, if we had more time to be able to- I feel very awkward when we're sending all the information like three days or four days after it's due, just because we haven't heard back from everyone yet. (Settlement services administrator)

4.6.3.5. Acknowledging programme attendance realities

A common concern raised by study participants, especially those overseeing the programmes, involved recognizing and managing low programme attendance numbers among newcomer participants. As one WinSport administrator stated: *“I would say ya, the biggest challenge was just the consistency of [newcomers] showing up, if they showed up, and when they did show up typically.”* This trend impacted how WNP programmes were run:

When [newcomer participants] are late for a lesson or they do miss a lesson, they’re missing integral pieces, like very important pieces leading to their success in the sport. And for us, it’s hard because you get a class split. For them, it’s hard because they don’t have all the tools they need to succeed. (WinSport administrator)

In cases where large numbers of newcomers did not attend programmes, WNP collaborators were forced to review partnership processes to determine the reasons behind the lower attendance numbers and implement solutions.

Settlement services personnel noted their ongoing efforts in encouraging newcomers to attend WNP programmes, for instance, through calling clients to remind them of upcoming programmes and field questions:

And that’s the thing, you call them, you recruit the clients, but you don’t know technically who went. Sometimes I call those people after. I was like, “Did you go?” “Oh ya, we did. It was nice. It was fun.” ... I remember our last intake was like 75 spots between the ski, snowboarding, and skating. (Settlement services administrator)

This quote demonstrates the haphazard nature of recruiting, registering, and following up with newcomer programme participants. Yet, each settlement services administrator interviewed for this study shared a willingness to implement structured pre- and post-programme check-ins with newcomer clients to increase participation rates, enrich newcomer programme experiences (through fielding questions), and receive programme feedback, including whether the clients attended the programme or not.

4.6.3.6. Neglecting collaboration evaluation

The evaluation stage is pivotal for the future success of any community-based partnership. Yet, evaluating collaborations typically is an afterthought given the competing priorities – many of which we outlined in this theme – facing administrators across sectors (Parent & Harvey, 2009). For the WNP, WinSport administrators were cognizant of evaluating their actions internally during the planning and early implementation phases:

We all met kind of the Marketing team, the different representatives from the departments whose programmes were being run and then, ... we established what hadn't gone well in terms of the first round. (WinSport administrator)

While this quotation illustrates a willingness by the WinSport administrators to engage in formative and process evaluations during early iterations of the WNP, the absence of representatives from CIWA, CFN, and the lead author once again illustrates the existence of primary and peripheral entities within the collaboration. An outcome of the WNP's evaluation strategy is shared in the following quote:

[WinSport administrators] did a lot of initial communication, but we probably could have kept that going and tweaked it and fixed it throughout the process to correct things. So,

I'm sure we'll be regrouping on what do we need to change in that internal process for Year Two. And then, the communication just with our [settlement services] partners to be able to identify the dates, and the reasons, and the ages for the different lessons was a little bit of an education piece, and just a timing piece. (WinSport administrator)

The absence of a formalized evaluation structure actively involving all partners hindered the WNP's ability to systematically identify collaboration shortcomings as well as develop and implement solutions to enrich the experiences of newcomer programme participants. Moreover, despite the implementation of evaluative efforts throughout the collaboration's first year, no formal internal or collaboration-wide summative review occurred at year's end.

4.7. Discussion

Through this paper, we presented the following three thematic categories as evidence of the (in)efficacy of the WNP: *collaborator motives*, *linkages within and between collaborators*, and *collaboration shortcomings*. These results possess various connections to Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) conceptual framework, as well as to the wider sport management and newcomer sport literature. In line with previous studies that have adopted this conceptual framework, we focused on the most relevant components and sub-components to our case study (Bruening et al., 2015; Gipson et al., 2018; Marlier et al., 2015). For instance, our collaborator motives theme aligns with many sub-components from Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) partnership antecedent component; most notably, the project purpose/goal and nature of the partners (partner motives).

In the *collaborator motives* theme, study participants focused on explaining the individual and organizational motives shaping their personal and collective involvement in the

WNP. A predominant individual motive involved the link between winter sport and Canadian identity. Winter sport involvement is generally positioned as quintessentially Canadian, and a central part of the national cultural and sporting imaginaries (Dennie, 2021). The narrative that specific winter sports are quintessentially Canadian (i.e., ice hockey, ice skating, and downhill skiing), and newcomer integration will be enriched through participation in these sports, has been noted and critiqued elsewhere (Bains & Szto, 2020; Barrick et al., 2021). The pervasiveness of this narrative is important in making sense of why administrators from diverse sport, physical activity, and settlement services contexts are increasingly developing introductory winter sport programming for newcomers to Canada – despite the well-known existence of numerous participation barriers (Barrick et al., 2021).

WinSport administrators raised various organizational motives for being involved in the WNP. These motives represented a recognition that Calgary’s demographic shift towards an increasingly multi-ethnic population in recent years (Statistics Canada, 2017) compelled WinSport to prioritize diversity and inclusion efforts in being seen as a viable option for marginalized communities (e.g., racialized communities). While economic factors (e.g., recruiting more facility users) influenced such motives – in conjunction with community building and philanthropic aims – study participants explained how tangible efforts in reducing participation barriers for newcomers (e.g., streamlining registration processes) benefit all facility users. These findings contribute to the expanding body of literature exploring how sport managers are grappling with the opportunities and challenges of building equity, diversity, and inclusion into their programmes, facilities, and policies (e.g., Spaaij et al., 2020).

The second and third themes – *linkages within and between collaborators* and *collaboration shortcomings* – can be mapped across all three of Parent and Harvey’s (2009,

2017) framework components (e.g., antecedents – nature of the partners; management – attributes of the partnership; evaluation – determination of success/effectiveness). Collectively, the two themes illustrate how three organizations (WinSport, CFN, and CIWA) are navigating the impacts of neoliberalism and new public management ideologies, which force public-sector organizations to adopt private sector, for-profit dynamics towards reducing costs however possible (Golob & Giles, 2015; Tyyskä et al., 2017). A consequence from the wide adoption of these ideologies is that community organizations are being forced to find new ways to maintain existing programming and services with fewer resources (Parnell et al., 2019).

This reality became clear when WinSport administrators discussed how the organization was increasingly prioritizing collaboration – across departments and with community organizations – in part, to be seen as increasing WinSport’s community impact. Yet, uncontrolled growth of intersectoral community partnerships – without also expanding financial and human resources capacities – results in unmanageable workloads for individual employees. This tension was apparent in the *collaboration shortcomings* theme when study participants discussed the struggle they faced balancing their collaboration responsibilities and other job duties, as the WNP represented something everyone was doing “off the side of their desks.” All shortcomings presented in this theme were exacerbated by the reality that each administrator involved in the WNP struggled devoting the necessary time to avoid repeated collaboration deficiencies (e.g., ongoing communication challenges). Relatedly, Parent and Harvey (2017) argued that dedicated project managers – solely responsible for overseeing intersectoral community partnerships – were integral to the success of intersectoral collaborations. Involving a dedicated project manager in future WNP partnership iterations would mark an improvement.

Another important finding from this study involves the power relationships between the partner organizations, and the impact of the WNP's centralized administrative structure. WinSport's position as the primary collaborator is unsurprising as WinSport figures prominently in the partnership name, 10 of the 13 WNP administrators were WinSport employees, all WNP programming occurred at WinSport's facilities, and all partnership fundraising was overseen by WinSport. Two levels of the partnership thus emerged. The first level involved WinSport administrators who met regularly to discuss the WNP, troubleshoot issues, and make future plans. The second level consisted of peripheral partnership representatives – the lead author and CFN and CIWA administrators – who were contacted by relevant WinSport administrators to complete specific tasks or invited to periodic WNP meetings where strategic conversations were held. This trend resulted in productive (e.g., building inter-organizational collaboration at WinSport) and counterproductive (e.g., communication challenges across WNP organizations) outcomes. As we discussed in the *neglecting collaboration evaluation* sub-theme, partnership meetings involving all primary- and secondary-level partners were rare and valuable opportunities to evaluate the WNP's efficacy were missed as a result. This example demonstrates how the inclusive, collaborative partnership dynamic espoused by some study participants went unfulfilled. Moreover, this finding provides important context about how the power dynamics between intersectoral community partners function, which is particularly relevant and worthy of future examination across all three components of Harvey and Parent's (2009; 2017) framework: antecedents (e.g., nature of the partners: partner complementarity and fit), management (e.g., decision-making: structure, power balance, leadership), and evaluation (e.g., determination of success/effectiveness: partner satisfaction).

Relatedly, sustainability represents a primary consideration in community sport administration and research (Spaaij, 2009). Concerns about the WNP's future were raised by several study participants, which is pertinent given the relatively high employee turnover rates in non-profit community organizations (Yildiz, 2018). Since August 2018, one partner organization (CIWA) left the WNP and several founding WNP administrators left their respective partner organizations. Despite this turnover, the WNP continued until March 2020 when COVID-19 halted all programming. Planning is underway to re-launch the WNP once WinSport facility operations return to full capacity. The WNP's longevity, despite employee turnover and COVID-19 disruptions, demonstrates the core partners' (now WinSport and CFN) commitment to the partnership's future. Future research should examine the individual, organizational, and environmental factors that contribute to the sustainability of intersectoral community partnerships, such as the WNP.

4.8. Conclusion

In this qualitative case study, we examined the (in)efficacy of the WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP), an intersectoral community partnership aiming to introduce newcomers to winter sport programming. We adopted Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships as our conceptual framework to interrogate our three themes: collaborator motive, linkages within and between collaborators, and collaboration shortcomings. The WNP represents a maturing intersectoral community partnership whose stakeholders have excelled at establishing a series of procedures for introducing newcomers to quintessential Canadian winter sports. Yet, various weaknesses are obstructing the collaboration's effectiveness from maximizing the individual and community

impact. Examples include ongoing communication challenges, time pressures, and the need to expand all forms of collaboration evaluation.

This study represents the first empirical research using Parent and Harvey's model in a newcomer community sport context, and responds to calls for expanded multi-level applications of the model across diverse settings (Bruening et al., 2015; Parent & Harvey, 2009). Better understanding the mechanisms of collaborative newcomer sport and leisure programming using robust conceptual models is essential in cultivating safe, welcoming, and accessible opportunities for all newcomers. This need will remain pressing as Western nations, like Canada, expand immigration targets (IRCC, 2020) and community sport and settlement services organizations continue programming amidst ongoing austerity measures (Parnell et al., 2019).

Areas for future research include longitudinal analyses of how intersectoral community partnerships evolve over time. Although data for this project was collected prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic, studies investigating how collaborators navigated the resultant disruption(s), as well as the management of the re-opening of sport across much of the world, are warranted. Further investigations exploring the unique socio-cultural considerations facing intersectoral community partnerships supporting newcomers will add nuance to the scholarly and practitioner knowledges.

To provide stakeholders working in newcomer sport – or similar community contexts – with tangible ways to apply the arguments outlined in this paper, we conclude with the following recommendations:

1. Stakeholders should practice intentionality at every stage of building, managing, and evaluating intersectoral partnerships to improve efficacy.

2. Stakeholders should conduct strategic planning efforts (e.g., SWOT analysis) to determine what they require in partners (e.g., what strengths do you offer and what contributions do you require from prospective partners?).
3. Stakeholders should ensure voices from the community(ties) you are striving to work with are directly involved from the outset of intersectoral partnerships. This is crucial when working with communities facing systemic oppression.
4. Stakeholders should develop, refine, and evaluate internal and external communication plans that consider the needs of all collaborators, as well as potential and confirmed participants (e.g., what language(s) communications are delivered in).
5. Stakeholders should build all forms of evaluation (e.g., process, impact, outcome, formative, and summative) directly into the structure of their intersectoral partnerships to ensure evaluation is not neglected in favour of other considerations.

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Chapter Five: Discussion and Concluding Thoughts

5.1. Dissertation Summary

My purpose in this dissertation was to explore the realities of designing and implementing introductory sport programmes (focused primarily on winter sport programming) as well as the lived experiences of newcomer programme participants. To guide my work, I created the following four research questions:

- (1) What promising practices are being used for organizing and administering introductory sport programmes for newcomers to Canada?
- (2) How are inclusive, welcoming introductory winter sport programmes built and administered by diverse community stakeholders?
- (3) How do newcomers to Canada experience introductory winter sport programmes?
- (4) Do inclusive, welcoming introductory winter sport programmes influence the integration and identities of newcomers to Canada?

The impetus for this dissertation emerged from ongoing global immigration trends in which large numbers of newcomers primarily from Global South countries are immigrating to Global North countries for the promise of greater economic, educational, political, and/or socio-cultural opportunities (Odeh, 2010). Global North countries, like Canada, have welcomed large numbers of newcomers from across the world, in part, to address demographic trends (e.g., aging population, declining birth rates) and economic opportunities (e.g., expanded workforce; Odeh, 2010; Segal, 2019). Resultant demographic shifts (i.e., greater ethnoracial and cultural diversity, especially in Canadian urban centers) have prompted Canadian policy makers to devote increasing attention to the integration of newcomers into Canadian society (Kymlicka, 2015; Mackey, 2002; Mensah, 2010; Siemiatycki, 2012). The adoption of official multiculturalism policy in 1971 – enshrining every Canadian’s ability to practice their own cultural background

into law – represents one way the state has strived to offer newcomers a prominent place in Canadian society (Banting & Kymlicka, 2010; Kymlicka, 2015; Leung, 2015; Mackey, 2002).

Striving to integrate newcomers through sport participation is becoming more prevalent across the Canadian sport system (Frisby et al., 2013; ICC, 2014; Kramers et al., 2021). In *chapter one*, I summarized the intersecting ways researchers have studied social inclusion and exclusion within newcomer sport, various newcomer sport participation barriers, and how newcomer sport programmes are designed (e.g., valuing intersectoral community partnerships). Critical insights on sport-related integration (Agergaard, 2018) and social constructionist perspectives of race and ethnicity (Gunaratnam, 2003) represented the theoretical grounding for this dissertation. In sum, these theoretical perspectives offered relevant socio-cultural and theoretical groundings to interpret the ways that winter sport participation shapes the lives and integration of newcomers to Canada. I adopted two methodological approaches – (1) an interpretivist, qualitative research design and (2) a qualitative intrinsic case study design – to examine the richness and depth of newcomer introductory winter sport programmes and the lived experiences of newcomer programme participants. Qualitative methods used included in-depth, semi-structured interviews; participant observation; and a photo elicitation focus group (PEFG). Using Braun and Clarke’s (2006, 2019) reflexive thematic analysis approach, my co-authors and I constructed a set of themes across the three data chapters (*chapters two, three, and four*), which I will summarize next.

5.1.1. Chapter two summary

In *chapter two*, my co-authors (William and Joan) and I considered how introductory sport programmes across Canada are structured to meet the needs of newcomer participants. We investigated six introductory sport programmes from Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec which

offered varied sport programming opportunities primarily and/or exclusively serving newcomers. Green's (2005) normative theory of sport development – with a focus on athlete recruitment, retention, and transitions – served as the theoretical underpinning for this chapter. Interviews with 20 study participants – programme administrators, instructors, and parents of newcomer programme participants – led to the development of two interconnected themes: (1) toward inclusion: negotiating sport participation and (2) sustainability.

Within the first theme, study participants noted the many participation barriers they face in operating introductory sport programming involving newcomers, and where applicable, approaches and suggestions for alleviating the barriers. Specific participation barriers discussed included: costs to participants, navigating rules and regulations, considering programme location and transportation, and availability of facilities. Innovative solutions were proposed in many cases addressing multiple participation barriers simultaneously. For instance, participants from one municipal recreation programme discussed their use of “fun buses.” These buses transported children (including newcomer children) from their neighbourhoods to the applicable sport facilities and back, while offering programme instructors, who also travelled on the buses, opportunities to build rapport with the children. Transportation and programme access, financial costs, and sense of belonging concerns were addressed through implementing fun buses. Moreover, some barriers were presented as wicked problems with no obvious solution facing programme administrators, such as limited access to indoor ice sport facilities, an issue facing the entire Canadian sport system, not just newcomer sport programming (Riehl et al., 2019).

Within the second theme, interview participants discussed the centrality of sustainability as a primary component of success for all six introductory sport programmes. The main way interview participants framed sustainability was through valuing intersectoral community

partnerships in both giving back to their local community in various ways and reducing costs in offering inclusive, accessible programming. We concluded by arguing that further research into how intersectoral community partnerships involving newcomer introductory winter sport programming function is needed, a call that we take up in *chapter four*.

Findings from *chapter two* were disseminated through a final report to original intersectoral community partners (i.e., Skate Canada, Hockey Canada, University of Calgary: Office for the Vice-President – Research), a scholarly journal article in *Leisure/Loisir* (published in 2021, volume 45, issue 1, pages 1-31, DOI: 10.1080/14927713.2021.1872406), and two conference presentations (2017 Canadian Congress of Leisure Research, 2017 Alberta Recreation and Parks Association Conference). Findings from *chapter two* were also incorporated into designing the WinSport Newcomers Programme (WNP), the focus of *chapters three and four*.

5.1.2. Chapter three summary

In *chapter three*, I examined the lived experiences of newcomers to Canada in the WNP's introductory winter sport programmes using a qualitative intrinsic case study design. Given the WNP's inclusive approach to recruitment, newcomer children, teens, and adults (adult programme participants and parents of children and teen programme participants) were the participants in this study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 WNP participants, 6 participants partook in a PEFG, and I performed approximately 140 hours of participant observation during relevant programming.

I presented study findings offering an expanded understanding of newcomer participants' individual programme outcomes, the relationship between winter sport participation and newcomer integration, as well as future winter sport participation considerations. Notable

individual participation outcomes involved having fun, trying something new, and developing skills and competencies. Study participants also spoke extensively about how participating in the WNP, and winter sport more generally, enriched their integration into Canadian society. Many study participants viewed winter sport participation, Canadian identity, and their own integration as intimately connected, offering a nuanced description of this relationship as compared to previous research. Fostering social connections through the WNP was also constructed as a priority, as was the need to center family participation within newcomer sport programming. While these priorities were not fully realized in the WNP iteration under investigation in this dissertation, study participants made clear that both priorities need to be considered in improving introductory winter sport programming for themselves, their families, and future newcomers. Lastly, several study participants were worried about their future winter sport participation options. Such uncertainty was split between concern over future participation opportunities both within and beyond the WNP.

Findings from *chapter three* demonstrate the values and varied experiences newcomer study participants drew from their WNP involvement. Winter sport participation can strengthen newcomers' sense of belonging to their local community and Canadian society, although this claim requires further scholarly examination. Several prominent participation barriers also remained despite intentional programme design efforts (e.g., lack of sustainable winter sport participation opportunities beyond existing introductory programming). Findings from *chapter three* were disseminated through a final report to the original WNP collaborators (i.e., WinSport, CFN, CIWA), a knowledge translation blog entry through the Sport Information Resource Centre (<https://sirc.ca/blog/engage-newcomers-in-sport/>), and five conference presentations (2018 Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise conference, 2018 North American Society for the

Sociology of Sport conference, 2019 Canada West Ski Areas Association spring conference, 2019 UCalgary Mobilizing Knowledge on Newcomers symposium, 2021 Canadian Congress on Leisure Research). The contents of *chapter three* are under review in a sport sociology journal.

5.1.3. *Chapter four summary*

The WNP was also the subject of inquiry in *chapter four* with William and I critically interrogating the (in)efficacy of the WNP as an intersectoral community partnership involving WinSport, Centre for Newcomers (CFN), and Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA). As with *chapter three*, we adopted a qualitative intrinsic case study design and collected data through semi-structured interviews with WNP administrators as well as participant observations of relevant programming and collaboration meetings. This chapter was conceptually informed by Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships. The following three themes were constructed from our analysis: collaborator motives, linkages within and between collaborators, and collaboration shortcomings. Collaborator motives ranged from global or altruistic in nature (e.g., offering newcomers opportunities to experience Canadian culture) to meeting internal and external facing organizational motives (e.g., building synergy across an organization or strengthening bonds to the local community). The various linkages WNP partners fostered, both within and between partner organizations, were another area of focus. Collaboration was viewed as integral by WinSport study participants as building and implementing the WNP required WinSport departments to work together, thereby facilitating a culture of collaboration across the organization. Intentional collaboration between partner organizations was also valued for augmenting service gaps (e.g., CFN and CIWA providing newcomer recruitment support) to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes (e.g., introducing newcomers to winter sports). Lastly,

study participants reflected on the following collaboration shortcomings: recognizing collaborator power imbalances, balancing priorities, managing communication challenges, negotiating time pressures, acknowledging programme attendance realities, and neglecting collaboration evaluation.

Findings from *chapter four* illustrate the WNP's position as a promising intersectoral community partnership focused on introducing newcomers to quintessential Canadian winter sports. Yet, several weaknesses were evident that obstructed the WNP's ability to evolve to best meet the needs of local newcomer communities. I have disseminated findings from *chapter four* through a final report to the original WNP partners (i.e., WinSport, CFN, CIWA), a knowledge translation blog entry through the Sport Information Resource Centre (<https://sirc.ca/blog/engage-newcomers-in-sport/>), and two conference presentations (2019 Canada West Ski Areas Association spring conference; 2021 Canadian Congress on Leisure Research). The contents of *chapter four* are presently under review in a sport management journal.

5.2. Connections across the Data Chapters

I designed this dissertation so that the three data chapters – *chapters two, three, and four* – would inform one another. Each data chapter explores newcomer introductory sport programming from related, yet separate perspectives, and exist as independent studies offering various contributions to scholarly and newcomer sport knowledge. The exploration of introductory sport programmes across Canada (*chapter two*) provided key insights that were incorporated into designing the WNP intersectoral community partnership. The WNP was the subject of *chapters three and four*. My focus in *chapter three* was the newcomer programme

participants' lived experiences. In *chapter four*, I examined the (in)efficacy of the WNP from the perspective of relevant collaborators.

Several prominent findings presented in *chapter two* shaped the WNP, and by extension, *chapters three* and *four*. The ways sport administrators navigated long-standing participation barriers (e.g., cost, transportation, access to equipment) in their newcomer sport programmes offered exemplars when designing the WNP. For instance, I advocated during preliminary WNP planning meetings that offering newcomers introductory sport experiences over a series of days or weeks (not one-time participatory events) would increase the possibility of facilitating skill development and social integration opportunities. This argument emerged from learnings in *chapter two*. The argument was well-received by my WinSport colleagues, and it helped shift the WNP from a series of one-time participatory opportunities for hundreds of newcomers to a more focused initiative with small numbers of newcomer participants (two to three) being added to existing introductory lessons. Additional examples included funding WNP participants' programme registration and rental equipment costs (e.g., downhill skis, helmet, goggles) to promote access. Similar strategies were adopted by the introductory sport programmes studied in *chapter two*.

It also became clear through working on *chapter two* that the voices of newcomers are generally underutilized in sport research. It is common in newcomer sport research for sport administrators, coaches, teachers – and to a lesser extent, parents – to speak on behalf of newcomers. While the voices of newcomers are receiving greater attention in sport research (e.g., Curtin et al., 2018; Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Frisby, 2011; Rich et al., 2015; Taylor & Doherty, 2005; Tirone et al., 2010), more explicitly involving newcomers within planning and researching newcomer sport programming is key to promoting individual and collective agency,

as well as ensuring relevant programming and research is reflective of and responsive to newcomers' needs. It became apparent through reviewing the relevant newcomer sport literature and conducting qualitative interviews for *chapter two* that newcomers' voices were largely absent from planning and researching newcomer winter sport programming. This learning galvanized my drive to involve newcomers within my qualitative case study. Most notably, I adopted a PEFG with newcomer Olympic/Paralympic camp youth participants in *chapter three* to promote their engagement and agency (e.g., through selecting which of their photographs to discuss at the outset of the PEFG). Insights from newcomer study participants in *chapter three* provide a launching-off point for future participatory, community-engaged research in newcomer winter sport programming and related topics.

Intersectoral community partnerships were positioned by study participants in *chapter two* as integral to the success of their newcomer sport programmes. Partnership motives included giving back to one's local community (e.g., offering underrepresented communities sport participation opportunities) and reducing costs (e.g., pooling resources and/or facilities across several community organizations). When I presented this finding during preliminary WNP planning meetings, WinSport administrators similarly recognized the importance of building community partnerships across sectors, especially with settlement service providers.

Consequently, CFN and CIWA were contacted and invited to join the WNP, making the WNP a truly intersectoral community partnership spanning the sport, immigration/settlement services, and higher education sectors. This development, as part of the WNP's larger evolution, led me to prioritize studying the (in)efficacy of the WNP as an intersectoral community partnership in *chapter four*, with the analysis informed by Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) management model for community-based partnerships in sport and physical activity.

The different ways that intersectoral community partnerships were positioned by participants in *chapter two* vs. *four* is also worthy of comment. As we noted in *chapter two*, study participants overwhelmingly framed partnerships in positive ways, pointing to them as integral mechanisms for ensuring programming success and sustainability. These insights do not align with the existent sport and leisure partnership literature, which has generally concluded that relevant partnerships are weak and suffer from various environmental, structural, and strategic deficits (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; MacLean et al., 2011; Thibault et al., 1999; Thibault & Harvey, 1997). Explanations for this misalignment include that study participants in *chapter two* were adopting a granular perspective by focusing on one specific partnership that they viewed favorably (and not all partnerships held by their respective organizations) and that interview questions were general in nature and did not ask study participants to reflect deeply on partnerships. Rather, study participants raised the value of partnerships when discussing the strengths of their respective programmes.

A more nuanced, layered analysis of intersectoral community partnerships was offered by study participants in *chapter four*. In particular, study participants from the WNP shared their critical reflections on the partnership's (in)efficacy marking a departure from how such partnerships were positioned in *chapter two*. While study participants shared benefits from the WNP (e.g., the partnership encouraging WinSport administrators to work across departments), they also discussed the organizational and structural challenges creating partnership shortcomings (e.g., difficulty balancing job priorities). The results from *chapter four* offer a more balanced investigation of the WNP, which echoes many of the shortcomings from the wider intersectoral community partnership literature (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; MacLean et al., 2011; Thibault et al., 1999; Thibault & Harvey, 1997) and the studies

which applied Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) conceptual framework (Bruening et al., 2015; Gipson et al., 2018; Lucidarme et al., 2014; Marlier et al., 2015, 2020; Parent & Harvey, 2017). Despite study participants in *chapters two* and *four* holding somewhat differing views of intersectoral community partnerships, their prominent role in the administration of newcomer sport programming across Canada is clear.

Several other notable trends were present across *chapters two, three, and four*. For instance, participants in each chapter clearly articulated their collective belief that winter sports are quintessentially Canadian and inextricably entwined with national identity. This was the case when speaking with programme administrators and instructors (*chapters two and four*) as well as with newcomer participants (*chapter three*). This trend is likely unsurprising as my focus in this dissertation involved studying the relationship between newcomers to Canada and winter sport participation. However, the fact that no study participants challenged the relationship in a meaningful way indicates, at least in this dissertation, that this narrative or myth – i.e., connecting winter sport to Canadian identity – has deep roots.

As I discussed elsewhere in this dissertation, sport scholars have written extensively on the central place of winter sports, especially ice hockey, within Canada's cultural and sporting imaginaries (e.g., Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Wong & Dennie, 2021a, 2021b), while also challenging this position amid changing demographics (e.g., increasing immigration levels from Global South countries; Jedwab & Holley, 2021; Wong & Dennie, 2021b) and socio-cultural shifts (e.g., greater focus on anti-racism and combatting discrimination; Bains & Szto, 2020; Szto, 2021). As became evident through completing this dissertation, the constructed relationship between winter sport and Canadian identity appears strong for individuals from diverse backgrounds and roles within Canadian sport. This trend is notable given that mass participation

in winter sports – most notably, ice hockey – is being eclipsed by more accessible (e.g., cost, access to programmes and facilities) sports such as swimming and basketball (Javier, 2018; Jedwab & Holley, 2021). It is prudent that sport researchers continue asking critical questions about the changing role(s) of winter sports in relation to Canadian identity, especially amid the aforementioned demographic and socio-cultural shifts. Prospective questions include: (1) What is the likelihood that winter sports will decline in national prominence in the future? (2) In what ways will Canadian identity be reshaped *if* or *as* the profile of winter sports diminishes? and (3) What role(s) can re-oriented winter sports (e.g., detached from hegemonic, exclusionary conceptualizations of national identity) play in local and national identity (re)formation in the future? Any future exploration involving winter sports needs to also consider their place within the ongoing global climate emergency (Orr & Inoue, 2019; Orr, 2020). Exploring these and related questions may open exciting possibilities for contributing to building truly inclusive, welcoming sport spaces that better represent Canada’s ever diversifying population.

Relatedly, study participants also positioned their understandings of sport-related integration in largely simplistic, uni-directional, and assimilationist ways across *chapters two, three, and four*. I return to Aggergaard’s (2018) reconceptualization of sport-related integration to inform this discussion. As with the relationship between winter sports and Canadian identity, study participants from diverse backgrounds (e.g., newcomer programme participants, WNP administrators) framed sport-related integration as introducing newcomers to Canadian activities – in this case, winter sports – to help them fit into their new communities and country. There was almost no discussion across my fieldwork challenging this depiction or raising substantive strategies encouraging more established Canadians (e.g., Canadian citizens) to learn from newcomers in truly cross-cultural ways.

Agergaard's re-conceptualization provides researchers with a framework for understanding the complexity of newcomers' experiences acculturating into a new home through a set of temporal, social relational, multilevel/multidirectional, and variable processes. I found no indication in my fieldwork of study participants sharing rich understandings of integration or challenging related taken-for-granted assumptions. As such, I argue that training relevant newcomer sport stakeholders about the complexity of newcomers' lived experiences and migration journeys, the structural and environmental barriers obstructing newcomer participation, as well as core tenets of cross-cultural engagement, may foster programming that is more responsive to the needs of newcomer participants. Adopting participatory programming and research designs (e.g., community-based participatory action research), which actively involve newcomers at every stage of programming (e.g., design, implementation, and evaluation) is also key in ensuring newcomer agency and reducing paternalistic forces (e.g., established Canadians in authority positions making decisions for newcomers). Agergaard's reconceptualization of sport-related integration, or related models (e.g., Berry's (1992) acculturation processes), offer researchers and relevant sport programming stakeholders – ideally working collaboratively – with appropriate frameworks for building sport programmes that more fully consider the diverse needs of newcomers.

The final connection between *chapters two, three, and four* that I will address involves the challenge of offering inclusive, barrier-free newcomer sport programming. As I progressed through my fieldwork, I began to realize the level of complexity existing within newcomer community sport programmes. Recognizing and managing a multitude of participation barriers – existing at the individual, organizational, structural, and societal levels – is a common consideration for administrators across sport contexts (O'Brien et al., 2022). As outlined in

chapters two, three, and *four*, these efforts become increasingly complex in newcomer sport contexts based on the need to attend to the socio-cultural context surrounding newcomers and their lived experiences both within and beyond sport. I also learned through my involvement in the WNP that even when an intersectoral community partnership prioritizes reducing common newcomer sport participation barriers (e.g., reducing costs, streamlining registration processes, providing access to rental equipment), these efforts are difficult to implement and do not necessarily have the intended impact (e.g., fostering barrier-free programming). In *chapter four*, several study participants discussed how they were disheartened by the poor attendance numbers across the WNP despite substantial administrative efforts to reduce key participation barriers. It became clear through year one of the WNP that additional participation barriers became priorities (e.g., offering targeted transportation options), and that gaps in how collaborators interacted (e.g., lack of communication) were impeding partnership success.

I also witnessed through my fieldwork how organizations involved in newcomer community sport programming (e.g., sport facilities, municipal recreation departments, settlement services organizations) are facing ever-growing organizational capacity constraints (e.g., human resources and financial). These capacity constraints (e.g., contributing to the WNP outside of core job responsibilities) were shown – most notably in *chapter four* – to be a primary rationale study participants offered justifying WNP shortcomings. This trend points to a larger issue within community organizations facing ongoing threats from neoliberal ideologies and policies. Wide-adoption of neoliberal policies across the public sector in Canada is forcing community organizations to seek out intersectoral partners to achieve existing or new programming amid declining funding (Golob & Giles, 2015; Parnell et al., 2019; Tyyskä et al., 2017). However, as was argued in *chapter four*, uncontrolled growth of intersectoral community

partnerships – in the absence of corresponding increases to financial and human resource capacities – creates an untenable situation for individual employees and organizations to manage. In the absence of large-scale, structural adjustments to how organizations primarily responsible for newcomer sport programming are resourced, the future sustainability of such organizations – especially the diversity and inclusion programming they employ – appears in question.

5.3. Contributions of this Dissertation

This dissertation makes several important contributions to research. The most noteworthy contribution is the novel focus on the relationship between winter sport participation and the lived experiences, identities, and integration of newcomers into their host society. Newcomer sport research has largely focused on sports with mass global appeal that are generally played outdoors such as (and most notably) soccer (e.g., McDonald et al., 2019; Rich et al., 2015; Spaaij, 2012; Stone, 2018; Ungruhe & Agergaard, 2020). Yet, winter sport participation holds a significant place in sporting and cultural identities of Northern nations (e.g., Russia, Sweden, Norway; McDowell, 2021). This is also the case for Canada, with research identifying the link between Canadian identity, winter sport, and newcomer settlement (ICC, 2014; Jedwab & Holley, 2021; Wong & Dennie, 2021b). Through this dissertation, my co-authors and I extended this research by focusing on the introductory sport experiences of newcomers to Canada across several newcomer sport programmes. Results from *chapters two, three, and four* provide a rich description of the meaning newcomers ascribe to quintessential Canadian winter sports in their lives and settlement journeys, as well as how varied stakeholders offer newcomers introductory winter sport programming through intersectoral community partnerships.

A second important contribution is how newcomer parents (study participants in *chapter three*) prioritized family-centered winter sport programming. Newcomer parents discussed how

they wanted to participate with their children in relevant winter sports, noting how difficult it was to support their children's participation following the introductory programming without also being taught how to ice skate, downhill ski, or snowboard. Family-centered participation represents an important contextual reality that sport administrators need to consider when designing inclusive winter sport programming for newcomers that also promotes ongoing participation.

Chapters two and four offer insight into how sport administrators are navigating known participation barriers facing newcomers in introductory winter sport programming. Study participants in *chapter two* identified several innovative approaches to addressing participation barriers such as the above-mentioned use of fun buses or adopting sport equipment banks. In *chapter four*, I presented a detailed account of how administrators overseeing one introductory newcomer sport initiative – the WNP – strove to address known participation barriers to varying levels of success. Main learnings from these chapters augment existing newcomer sport and participation barrier literature (e.g., Block & Gibbs, 2017; Curtin et al., 2018; Golob & Giles, 2011; Tirone et al., 2010) by demonstrating the varied challenges facing intersectoral community partnerships for creating barrier-free newcomer sport opportunities. Exorbitant programme and equipment costs, limited transportation access, and additional related participation barriers represent structural issues that extend beyond the scope of individual sport programmes. Through this dissertation, it has become clear that navigating participation barriers are a time-consuming problem facing newcomer sport programme administrators requiring concerted system-level, structural intervention.

Chapters one, three, and four offer researchers with methodological guidance for building and working within intersectoral community partnerships. In these chapters, I also

directed my attention to how I negotiated my different roles as a researcher and collaborator through reflexive journaling, which I undertook following all partnership meetings. Attention was also directed at how I negotiated my different roles as a researcher and collaborator through reflexive journaling following all partnership meetings. Amid the groundswell of interest in community based, participatory, and action research approaches across health and social science research (e.g., Rich & Misener, 2020; Smith et al., 2022; Wilson et al., 2018), the steps I took in co-developing the WNP may prove useful to scholars conducting similar research within newcomer sport, intersectoral community sport partnerships, or related areas.

Chapter four represents the first time Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) management model for sport and physical activity community-based partnerships has been implemented within the context of introductory sport for newcomers. This model offers researchers a comprehensive framework for interpreting the complexity of intersectoral community sport partnerships. Our use of the model is also a response to Parent and Harvey's (2017) call to assess the model's effectiveness across diverse contexts, particularly within Canada. Results from *chapter four* demonstrate the utility of Parent and Harvey's (2009, 2017) model in articulating and critically examining the antecedent, management, and evaluation phases of intersectoral community sport partnerships. Our application of the partnership model provides a guide for future researchers interested in employing it within newcomer sport, community sport, or similar areas.

5.4. Project Considerations

There are several project considerations – including specific limitations – that readers of this dissertation should be aware of when engaging with the results and conclusions from each data chapter (*chapters two, three, and four*) and *chapter five*. These considerations focus on the

changing nature of the community partnerships throughout the dissertation process, as well as specific methodological and study design decisions. I will then present several future research directions that offer opportunities to extend the learnings from this dissertation.

As I presented in *chapter one*, two separate community partnerships were engaged with in this dissertation research. In phase one, William and I worked with Skate Canada and Hockey Canada on a pilot project to gather promising practices for organizing and administering introductory winter sport programming involving newcomers. Findings from this pilot project were presented in *chapter two*. The long-term goal for this partnership was to organize and evaluate inclusive, culturally relevant learn-to-skate programming at multiple sites across Canada. At the conclusion of the pilot project, the partnership with Skate Canada and Hockey Canada dissolved due to personnel changes in both organizations. My focus then shifted to finding new partners who were interested in building newcomer introductory winter sport programming. After reaching out to several community sport leaders nation-wide, I opted to work with WinSport in Calgary, Alberta. During phase two, CFN and CIWA – two Calgary-based settlement service organizations – were invited to join the WNP, forming the intersectoral community partnership that was the focus of *chapters three* and *four*.

I provide this context here because the nature of each partnership influenced the focus of the study aims in *chapter two* vs. *chapters three* and *four*. Skate Canada – the primary partner at the outset of my research – excels at offering learn-to-skate programming nationally. Thus, my co-authors and I made a concerted effort to include several learn-to-skate programmes within our sample for *chapter two*. Given WinSport's focus on winter sports more broadly, the WNP's scope expanded to introductory ice skating, downhill skiing, and snowboarding. While the focus of *chapters two, three, and four* all involved introductory winter sport programming, the

emphasis on certain sports over others across the chapters (e.g., representation of learn-to-skate programmes and absence of downhill skiing and snowboarding programmes in *chapter two*) reflects differing priorities across the two community partnerships.

Another relevant project consideration involved my dual roles as researcher and partnership collaborator. Starting in spring 2017, I attended all WNP partnership meetings actively contributing my perspective during all discussions. I drew on my knowledge of the newcomer sport and leisure literature, findings from *chapter two* of this dissertation, and preliminary results from observation, interview, and PEEFG data (*chapters three and four*) to inform my contributions. However, my involvement undoubtedly shaped the WNP's direction – for example – through advocating for sustained newcomer introductory winter sport opportunities instead of one-time events.

My direct involvement offered strengths and weaknesses. For instance, I was able to draw on learnings from existing newcomer sport research during partnership meetings to inform our discussions. As the WNP progressed, I also relayed preliminary results from my fieldwork on early programme developments during partnership meetings to inform real-time programme changes (e.g., streamlining aspects of the registration process partway through Year One of the WNP). Such responsive, iterative evaluation processes are not generally a feature of intersectoral community sport partnerships (Parent & Harvey, 2009).

However, my presence in the WNP may have also contributed to the partnership going in directions that diverge from similar newcomer sport programmes in Canada (e.g., programmes that do not have direct access to PhD student researchers). While I am not comfortable speculating on what these alternative directions may be given the plethora of possible options,

readers and future researchers should carefully consider the impacts of my involvement as a direct WNP collaborator when interpreting the results presented in this dissertation.

The in-depth nature of qualitative case study research means that study findings are contextually, culturally, and historically situated within the unique characteristics of the study location(s) (Schwandt & Gates, 2018; Stake, 2005; Thomas, 2011). This means that one should not interpret the results from *chapters two, three, or four* as being representative of all newcomer sport programmes. While results from each data chapter may inform programme and policy design in additional settings, the unique local context must also be carefully considered.

Another important consideration comprises whose voices are (under)represented in this dissertation. Convenience or purposive sampling techniques are widely adopted by qualitative researchers given their focus on rich, deep description and interpretation of complex phenomena (Gill, 2020; Moser & Korstjens, 2018; Robinson, 2014). Convenience sampling is when potential participants volunteer to participate in research whereas purposive sampling involves the researcher(s) intentionally selecting individuals who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon being investigated (Gill, 2020; Robinson, 2014). Convenience sampling techniques were used to recruit programme administrators and instructors in *chapters two and four*. WNP participants, and parents of WNP participants, were recruited using purposive sampling in *chapter three*.

I want to draw the reader's attention to several implications of using convenience and purposive sampling techniques in this dissertation. I adopted purposive sampling in *chapter four* through asking specific WNP administrators (from WinSport, CFN, and CIWA) to participate in interviews via email invitations, which all relevant WNP administrators accepted. Through this sampling approach, I gained an in-depth understanding of the WNP from varied individual and organizational perspectives. However, I may have missed relevant perspectives (e.g., individual

WinSport instructors, CIWA and CFN settlement services personnel, and members of the wider sport and newcomer communities) who could have further enriched this study topic. For example, relevant individuals may not have been aware of this dissertation research, or I may not have known who they were or how they could have contributed to my research. I encourage researchers conducting similar studies to involve as many voices as possible in their work (within the limits of qualitative research conventions) – representing diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and perspectives – in the spirit of creating comprehensive, nuanced, and representative qualitative research.

Through using convenience sampling during my fieldwork for *chapters three* and *four*, I came to learn that only individual newcomer study participants (youth, teens, and parents) who were having positive experiences in the WNP were volunteering to partake in my research. This is a common dynamic within qualitative research employing convenience sampling techniques (Robinson, 2014), one that has major implications on how the results presented in this dissertation should be interpreted and assessed. I did try to recruit individuals who had negative experiences during the WNP through inviting settlement councillors from CIWA and CFN to connect me with relevant programme participants and parents of programme participants. These efforts resulted in interviewing one newcomer parent who registered their child for the WNP, but never received confirmation from the administrators. This interview was helpful in enriching my understandings of the WNP's shortcomings, which informed both my interpretations of the newcomer participants' programme experiences (*chapter three*) and the management of the WNP (*chapter four*). In sum, the findings in *chapter three* illustrate the lived experiences of newcomer study participants who viewed the WNP positively. While such perspectives are important, I encourage future researchers to devote more energy to collecting viewpoints of

individuals who had negative programme experiences or avoided programme opportunities altogether.

All data for this dissertation were collected through cross-sectional studies. Fieldwork for *chapter two* was completed from January to June 2016. Fieldwork for *chapters three* and *four* occurred from September 2017 to August 2018. While findings across these chapters demonstrate rich descriptions and analyses of the phenomena of interest, future longitudinal or comparative studies would offer insight into how the relationship between newcomers' winter sport participation and newcomer integration evolves over time (e.g., how did the COVID-19 global pandemic impact newcomers' winter sport participation trajectories?) Comparative studies – such as examining two introductory winter sport programmes in different parts of Canada or across separate countries – may identify similar and unique contextual traits across programme settings.

5.5. Future Research Directions

I organized this section into a general discussion of several future research directions, followed by briefly outlining two specific research projects representing important extensions of these dissertation findings. While various community leaders from WinSport, CFN, and CIWA were actively involved in the WNP's development and research design, there is value in instituting community-based participatory action research designs in future iterations of the programming or in similar programme contexts. Such designs would center the voices of newcomers in the research and programme design process, while creating exciting opportunities for mutual learning between WNP administrators and newcomer participants. Designing and evaluating introductory winter sport programming specifically for newcomer families represents an opportunity to assess the value of such an approach. Moreover, qualitative case study methods

should be employed in additional sport contexts that are culturally significant throughout Canada and the rest of the world to explore how newcomers interact with varied sports as part of their integration processes. Possible examples include Nordic skiing in Norway and Kabaddi (a contact team sport akin to rugby or dodgeball) in India. Using interculturalism, which can be broadly defined as “connecting across cultural differences through processes that promote inclusion and mutual learning to create something new” (Frisby, 2014, p. 354), to theoretically inform future newcomer sport research offers possibilities to address some of the long-standing assimilationist and uni-directional critiques of sport-related integration (Agergaard, 2018) and multiculturalism (Bannerji, 2000; Frisby, 2014; Hansen, 2014; Mackey, 2002). Relatedly, there is a need for further theoretically-informed research critically exploring the relationship(s) between sport, immigration, identity, integration, and multiculturalism.

One specific future research project involves incorporating findings developed through *chapters two, three, and four* into designing and administering additional newcomer sport programmes. More precisely, learnings from this dissertation could be incorporated into co-constructing and co-evaluating (with relevant collaborators) training resources for prospective administrators and instructors to explore the effectiveness of targeted training resources on designing and administering welcoming, inclusive newcomer winter sport programmes. Such training resources could be delivered through in-person, virtual, or blended formats (e.g., train-the-trainer format). Trainers would be introduced to relevant topics such as: diversity, equity, and inclusion; anti-racism; Canada’s history and contemporary reality as an immigrant nation; the lived experiences of newcomers to Canada (through first-person stories); and promising practices for actively involving newcomer individuals and communities in programme design as well as building effective intersectoral community partnerships. Community-based participatory action

research and/or integrated knowledge translation would offer appropriate research designs to ensure the active engagement of varied stakeholders (including newcomers), while promoting the translation of relevant newcomer sport research to community settings. I foresee this project being competitive for Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Connection or Partnership Engage Grants, and possibly marking the foundation for a future multi-year and multi-collaborator SSHRC Partnership Development Grant.

A second future research project consists of returning to the WNP to assess the individual and collective impacts of this intersectoral partnership since its launch in 2018. The research team would conduct qualitative, semi-structured interviews with WNP stakeholders (administrators, instructors, and collaborators) as well as former and current newcomer participants. Interview questions would focus on the direct and indirect impacts of the WNP on individuals (e.g., program stakeholders or newcomer participants), organizations (e.g., programme and policy (re)design), and the relationships between partner organizations (e.g., building strong partnerships or not). It would be prudent to extend learnings from this dissertation by including interview questions addressing how the WNP's existence has influenced newcomer integration, attitudes towards intersectoral community partnerships, and efforts to create inclusive, welcoming spaces for newcomers at WinSport and partner organizations. This project would be relevant for a SSHRC Insight Grant.

5.6. Thinking Reflexively

I used Pillow's (2003) conceptualization of reflexivity as a methodological tool to inform my approach to thinking reflexively throughout this research. Pillow advocated for qualitative researchers to move beyond confessional forms of reflexivity towards reflexivities of discomfort, or "practices of confounding disruption" (2003, p. 192) where the focus shifts from representing

people better to being accountable to people's struggles for self-representation and self-determination. I strove to embody this disruptive reflexive practice through all aspects of my involvement in the WNP whether that was during partnership meetings, while observing programmes, during interviews or the PEFG, or when analyzing the data and writing study results. In practice, this involved striving to continuously balance the voices of newcomer study participants, being a thoughtful colleague during WNP partnership meetings, and demonstrating critical reflection as a researcher. This was a difficult balance to strike with the tension becoming apparent across many of my reflexive journal entries, such as the following entry.

Transportation to and from WinSport – February 3rd, 2018:

As long as my doctoral research has involved WinSport as a partner, I have been curious about the transportation options available to Calgary residents. WinSport is located in the Northwest quadrant of the city along the Trans-Canada highway leading cars out of Calgary to the Rocky Mountains. WinSport is geographically isolated from much of Calgary – especially the city's Northeast and Southeast quadrants – which possess high levels of ethnocultural diversity and individuals from lower socio-economic statuses, including many newcomers. The easiest way to access WinSport is by car.

There are also few public transit options available. I have seen city buses dropping off and picking up people from WinSport. While talking with several newcomer parents during their childrens' programmes, they informed me that the public transit options are neither plentiful, nor reliable. Apparently, the bus(es) run directly to the city's downtown terminus. If someone wants/needs to travel to WinSport via bus, they likely need to take multiple buses and/or multiple forms of public transit (e.g., bus and

train). This reality represents a stark participation barrier for many Calgarians, including newcomers.

Despite initial conversations about offering transportation to WNP participants (e.g., using the WinSport-owned bus), these ideas were abandoned by the partners.

Unfortunately, I was not privy to these conversations and will have to learn more about the decision-making process from individual partners during my one-on-one interviews.

This entry illustrates several recurrent themes running through my reflexive journaling. First, I aimed to include the perspectives of newcomers in every entry I made to ensure their voices – or my interpretations of their voices – were prominent throughout my work. Second, WNP participants were forced to endure various structural participation barriers – in this example, difficulty accessing WinSport via public transit – to reap the positive benefits of the programming. Third, despite the best efforts of everyone involved in planning the WNP to address known participation barriers, certain barriers were not addressed during the partnership's first year. Explanations for this trend connect back to the WNP's shortcomings outlined in *chapter four*. Lastly, the final paragraph from the above entry illustrates a challenge I faced throughout this project: my positionality as someone external to WinSport resulted in me being a peripheral member of the WNP along with representatives from CIWA and CFN. The existence of core and periphery partners within the WNP created various challenges for the partnership's effectiveness. I look forward to expanding on these insights – and my use of Pillow's (2003) conceptualization of reflexivity – in a forthcoming methodological article produced for a relevant scholarly journal (e.g., *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*).

5.7. Final Thoughts

I was motivated to write this dissertation based on my belief that welcoming, inclusive sport participation opportunities can transform individuals and communities for the better. As a lifelong sport participant growing up in Southern Ontario, winter sport participation and fandom occupied a prominent place in my life and how I engaged with my community and Canadian identity. More specifically, curling is the main winter sport that I continue to be involved in as a washed-up competitive curler, recreational participant, instructor, fan, and volunteer. I can trace my passion for diversity and inclusion in and through sport to my high school years. While attending Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute in Kitchener, Ontario – a high school renowned locally for its ethnoracially diverse student population – I noticed how I was surrounded by classmates from so many ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. Yet, during my evenings at the Kitchener-Waterloo Granite Club (a community curling facility), I was struck by how different and overwhelmingly white that space was. This dichotomy sparked curiosity in the intersections between race and ethnicity, winter sport participation, and national identity.

Through this dissertation, I have added to the body of knowledge about newcomer sport participation, namely how newcomers experience introductory winter sport programmes and how these programmes are designed within intersectoral community partnerships. It is my hope that this research will inform future research and programme development across newcomer sport contexts. Actively involving newcomers at all stages of programme design, implementation, and evaluation, along with leaders from across the Canadian sport system and related sectors (e.g., settlement services) serving as active co-conspirators, are necessary steps to fostering structural and social change.

I am already applying the skills, experiences, and knowledge I gained from this research to the next stage of my academic career. Since July 2020, I have held the position of Assistant Professor at Cape Breton University (Sydney, NS) in the Department of Experiential Studies of Community and Sport. I regularly use the WNP as a teaching case study in my sport management courses and guest lectures. However, it is in my ongoing research where I see my dissertation experience having the greatest impact. I am working with Drs. Heather Mair (University of Waterloo), Richard Norman (Toronto Metropolitan University), and Kristi Allain (St. Thomas University) on a community-engaged, public sociology research agenda engaging stakeholders from across the sport of curling to build a network of leaders driven to “change the face of curling” by focusing on broadening diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) throughout the sport. The lessons I am taking from this dissertation – centering the voices of marginalized communities from the start, prioritizing building strong intersectoral community partnerships, and embracing the complexity of fostering social change – are already proving invaluable as we embark on this collective journey towards exciting future possibilities in and through sport.

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Appendix A

Program Participant Interview Guide (Interview)

Introduction

- a. Purpose of the study
- b. Overview and collection of signed consent form
- c. Information on the recording of the interview and transcripts
- d. Collect personal information (gender, age, level of education, immigration status, country of origin, and years living in Canada)

Main Questions & Probes

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?
 - a. How long have you lived in Calgary?
 - b. Do you have any siblings?
2. What did you do during the program?
 - a. How were the different sports and activities?
 - b. What about the program did you enjoy?
 - c. Were there parts you did not enjoy?
3. Did you talk with your instructor(s) and peers?
 - a. If yes, what did you talk about?
 - b. If not, why do you think this didn't happen?
4. Did you feel welcome in the program?
 - a. If yes, why did you feel welcome? If not, why did you not feel welcome?
 - b. What could be done to make you feel more welcome?
5. How could the program be better for children/youth/teens/adults?
 - a. What would you change or add?
 - b. What would you keep the same?
6. Now that you have tried different winter sports, do you want to keep playing any of them?
 - a. If yes, which sport(s) do you want to keep playing? Why?
 - b. If no, why do you not want to play winter sports anymore?
7. What other sports or activities do you do?
 - a. Where do you do these activities?
 - b. Why do you participate in these sports?
 - c. Can you talk a little bit about how the programs are set-up?

Concluding Questions

- a. Additional information participant may wish to add
- b. Next steps

Appendix B

Parent and Guardian Interview Guide

Introduction

- a. Purpose of the study
- b. Overview and collection of signed consent form
- c. Information on the recording of the interview and transcripts
- d. Collect personal information (gender, age, level of education, immigration status, country of origin, and years living in Canada)

Main Questions & Probes

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself and your family?
 - a. How long have you lived in Calgary?
2. Can you describe your involvement in the WinSport Welcomes Newcomers introductory winter sport program?
 - a. How many of your children were enrolled?
 - b. What programs were they enrolled in?
3. Why did you enroll your child/children in the program?
 - a. Can you discuss the enrollment process?
 - b. Was it a simple process?
 - c. Were there challenges registering your child/children? If yes, what were the challenges?
4. What did you and your child/children do during the program?
 - a. What did you do while your child/children were doing the program?
 - b. What about the program did you enjoy?
 - c. Were there parts you did not enjoy? Please explain.
5. Did you and your child/children feel welcome in the program?
 - a. If yes, why did you feel welcome? If not, why did you not feel welcome?
 - b. What could be done to make you feel more welcome?
6. Did you talk to the program instructors?
 - a. If yes, were the conversations positive or negative? Please explain.
 - b. If no, what factors prevented you from talking with the program instructors?
7. How could the program be better for children/youth/teens/adults?
 - a. What would you change or add?
 - b. What would you keep the same?

8. Now that your child/children have tried different winter sports, do you want them to keep doing any of them?
 - a. If yes, which sport(s) do you want your child/children to keep doing? Why?
 - b. If no, why do you not want your child/children to do winter sports anymore?
9. What other sports or activities do you and your family do?
 - a. Where do you do these activities?
 - b. Why do you participate in these sports?
 - c. Can you talk a little bit about how the programs are set-up?

Concluding Questions

- a. Additional information participant may wish to add
- b. Next steps

Appendix C

Program Participant Interview Guide (Photo Elicitation Focus Group)

Guiding question for photographs: What is your experience in the “WinSport Newcomers Programme” introductory winter sport programme?

Introduction

- a. Purpose of the study
- b. Overview and collection of signed consent forms
- c. Information on the recording of the focus group and transcripts
- d. Outline structure, confidentiality, and expectations (e.g., one person speaks at a time)
- e. Collect personal information (gender, age, level of education, immigration status, country of origin, and years living in Canada)

Main Questions & Probes

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?
 - a. How long have you lived in Calgary?
 - b. Do you have any siblings?
2. Can you tell me about these photographs?
 - a. What is going on in these photographs?
 - b. Why did you take these photographs?
 - c. Why did you pick these photographs for our chat and not the others?
 - d. Did you want to take other photographs? If yes, what did you want to photograph?
3. What did you do during the program?
 - a. How were the different sports and activities?
 - b. What about the program did you enjoy?
 - c. Were there parts you did not enjoy?
4. Did you feel welcome in the program?
 - a. If yes, why did you feel welcome? If not, why did you not feel welcome?
 - b. What could be done to make you feel more welcome?
5. Did you talk with your instructor(s) and peers?
 - a. If yes, what did you talk about?
 - b. If not, why do you think this didn't happen?
6. How could the program be better for children/youth/teens/adults?
 - a. What would you change or add?
 - b. What would you keep the same?
7. What other sports or activities do you do?
 - a. Where do you do these activities?

Concluding Questions

- a. Additional information participant may wish to add
- b. Next steps