

# An Investigation into White Privilege in Canadian High School Sport

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# Critical Whiteness

- Lens for exploring, questioning, and deconstructing whiteness and white privilege

(Nayak, 2007)

- Inseparability of white supremacy and white privilege

(Leonardo, 2004)



**Unpacking  
the  
Invisible  
Knapsack**

# Whiteness in Sport

- Sport is an important environment to study race/ethnicity

(Fletcher & Hylton, 2016)

- Colourblindness
- Meritocracy
- Egalitarianism

- “Level playing field” metaphor ignores systemic inequities that shape participation and outcomes



# Whiteness in Coaching

- **Sport coaching positions are most often held by white people**  
(Long & Hylton, 2002; McDonald, 2002; McDonald & Toglia, 2010)
  - **Discursive practices, microaggressions**  
(Gearity & Metzger, 2017; Glover, 2008; Spaaij et al., 2020).
  - **General disregard for social justice issues**  
(Newman et al., 2020).
  - **Functionalist normative coaching practices**  
(Kochanek & Erickson, 2019; DeJaeghere & Murphy-Graham, 2022)

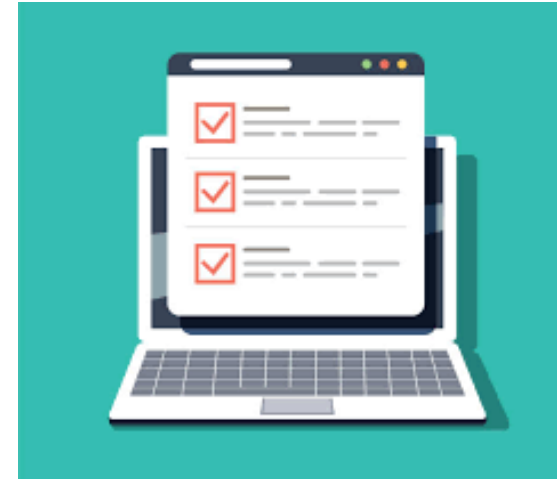


# Purpose of Present Study

- Examine white privilege in Canadian high school sport by investigating white coaches' perspectives on social justice issues

# Participant Recruitment

- Coaches in the Canadian high school sport system during the 2021/2022 school year
- Online survey = 916 coaches from 8 provinces



# Participant Demographics

- 463 white coaches in final sample

## Demographics

- 65% identified as a man
- 79% held a bachelor's degree
- 57% identified teaching as their primary occupation
- 57% reported being NCCP certified



# Instruments

- **White Privilege Awareness** subscale in the White Privilege Attitudes Scale  
(Pinterits et al., 2009)
- **Attitudes Towards Social Justice** Subscale of the Social Justice Scale  
(Torres-Harding et al., 2011)
- **Individual Advocacy** Subscale of the **Anti-Racism** Behavioural Inventory  
(Pieterse et al., 2016)
- **Attitudinal Awareness** Subscale of the **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender** Development of Clinical Skills Scale  
(Bidell, 2017)
- **Affect** Subscale of the Multidimensional Attitudes Scale toward **Persons with Disabilities**  
(Findler et al., 2007)
- Attitudes Towards the Urgency of Climate Change Subscale of the **Attitudes towards Climate Change** and Science Instrument  
(Dijkstra & Goedhart, 2012)

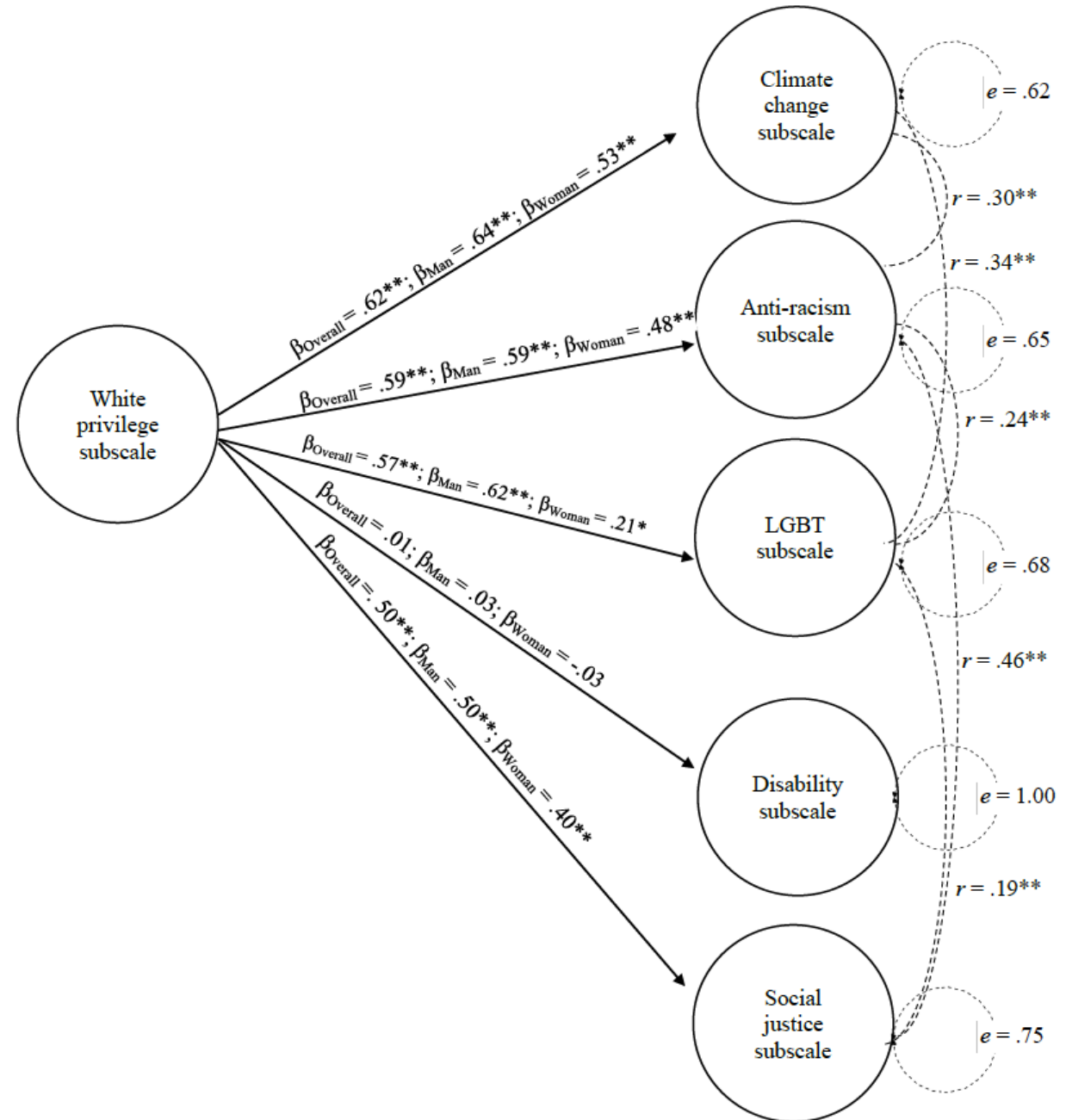


# Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics
- Structural Equation Modelling
- Moderation Analyses  
(effect of gender)



# Results: Model



# Results: Descriptive Statistics

## *Summary of Descriptive Statistics of the Psychometric Measures*

Subscale	Min	Max	<i>M</i> (SD)	Skewness (SE)	Kurtosis (SE)
White privilege subscale	4	24	17.79(4.68)	-.68(.11)	-.13(.23)
Anti-racism subscale	11	45	35.00(5.81)	-.75(.11)	.80(.23)
Climate change subscale	6	30	23.55(5.88)	-1.09(.11)	.78(.23)
Social justice subscale	11	77	68.94(10.72)	<b>-2.36(.11)</b>	<b>7.89(.26)</b>
LGBT subscale	16	49	45.52(6.27)	<b>-2.40(.11)</b>	<b>5.75(.23)</b>
Disability subscale	16	60	27.97(8.02)	1.13(.11)	1.22(.23)

*Note.* Skewness and kurtosis values greater than or equal to 2 are presented in bold

\*\* $p \leq .001$

# Discussion: White Privilege

- Initiatives to get coaches to be more aware of white privilege and white supremacy are needed
- Potential for awareness of white privilege as steppingstone in developing awareness of other social justice issues

# Discussion: Intersectionality

- Entangled relationships between racism and gender inequities  
(Leonardo, 2004)
- Future research on intersectional privileges in youth sport coaching is needed
- Future research also needed regarding white privilege and climate change/environmentalism

# Discussion: Critical Consciousness

- Social justice coach education efforts could benefit from following the three iterative steps of critical consciousness

(Gonzalez et al., 2020)

- Critical reflection
- Political efficacy
- Critical action

# Limitations and Future Directions

- Cross-sectional design; self-reported measures
- Self-selection bias
- No behavioural measures
  - Attitudes → behaviours?
- All coaches in present study identified as man or woman
  - Must meaningfully include coaches of various gender identities in samples

# Conclusion

- Responds to Kochanek and Erickson's (2020) call to reimagine youth sport coaching as a critical praxis
- Serves as instigator for addressing elephant in the (research) room
  - Need to combat white silence, white fragility in sport coaching research  
(DiAngelo, 2012, 2015)



# Thank you!

- Questions?

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