

**An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to  
advance human rights in and through sport**



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**PhD Thesis**

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## **Acronyms**

<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CR</b>	Critical Realism
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRPD</b>	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSHR</b>	Centre for Sports and Human Rights
<b>EPA</b>	Exploratory factor analysis
<b>HR</b>	Human Rights
<b>HRE</b>	Human Rights Education
<b>ICESCR</b>	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
<b>IPA</b>	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
<b>GAPPA</b>	Global Action Plan on Physical Activity
<b>LGBTQI+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Plus
<b>LoIs</b>	List of Issues
<b>MIE</b>	Mauritius Institute of Education
<b>MINEPS</b>	International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport
<b>MSEs</b>	Mega-Sporting Events
<b>MTU</b>	Munster Technological University
<b>NHRI</b>	National Human Rights Institution
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OP</b>	Optional Protocol
<b>PEPAS</b>	Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport
<b>QPE</b>	Quality Physical Education

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<b>rites</b>	Rights In and Through Empowering Sport
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SROI</b>	Social Return on Investment
<b>ToC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>UPR</b>	Universal Periodic Review
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDHR</b>	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<b>UNDHRET</b>	United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education, Science, Culture Organisation
<b>VNR</b>	Voluntary National Review
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

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## **Abstract**

### **Background**

Sport is a global socio-cultural phenomenon present across the world.

Participation in sport-related activities is a human right captured in many human rights instruments. Likewise, sport can be used as a cost-effective tool to advance fundamental rights such as education, health and employment. The relationship between human rights and sport has received significant scholar attention in specific thematic areas, including the organisation of mega sporting events; safeguarding and remedy mechanisms; and athlete's rights. However, there is little academic engagement in the exploration of more holistic factors such as the impact of sport policies and sport education to advance human rights. This thesis is a contribution to an emerging theme whose demand is increasing across the sport environment: the multi-level implementation of human rights in and through sport.

### **Objectives**

This interdisciplinary multi-level research aims to answer the general research question: How and to what extent are human rights applied to sport policy and practice at international, national and local level? In order to answer this overarching question, the following research questions were devised: a) what is the nature of the relationship between human rights and sport policy in the literature? b) how can those shaping the sport environment increase awareness, understanding, and engagement with human rights treaties to be more accountable for human rights?; and c) what are effective ways to advocate for the application of a human rights-based approach to sport?

In order to answer these research questions, specific objectives for each of the 5 studies included in this thesis were designed.

### **Methodology**

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The ontological and epistemological approach adopted in this research is based on the critical realism perspective. Five independent but related studies were conducted using mixed methods approaches. The results of the studies were analysed and, through a process of retroduction, a theoretical model was developed to explain key generative mechanisms in the alignment of sport policy, human rights and education.

Study one is a critical narrative literature review reporting on the status of sports policy frameworks in the UN system of relevance to the sport sector generally.

Study two examined the relevance and significance of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) in reporting mechanisms related to the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). A systematic document review of State Parties Reports (CEDAW n=100, CRPD= 133); List of Issues (CEDAW n=123, CRPD=84) and Concerns/Observations and Recommendations (CEDAW n=12, CRPD n=23) was carried out. This explorative analysis was undertaken under a macropsychology perspective, which studies how social structures and systems can ultimately promote, or hinder, psychological wellbeing (MacLachlan & McVeigh, 2021).

Study three was also a documentary analysis to explore the relevance of PEPAS in three key document types from the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) reporting mechanisms: State Parties Reports (n = 104), List of Issues (n = 126) and Concerns/Observations and Recommendations (n = 797).

Study four is a case study based in Mauritius, in which eight semi-structured interviews with sport practitioners were run to learn more about their perception of the achievement of the new National Sport and Physical Activity policy.

Finally, study five used three validated questionnaires on sport and human rights with a sample of 151 sport-related practitioners (56% male, 43% female and 1%

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport (preferred not to say) ranging from age 18 to over 65 including teachers, coaches, and academics, with a view of measuring sport 'practitioners' understanding and application of human rights principles in and through sport.

## **Results**

The advent of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the Kazan Action Plan, the WHO Global Plan on Physical Activity 2018 -2030 and allied developments across the sports movement provides an opportunity for revisiting and realigning the definitions and policy objectives of sport and human rights, as highlighted in Study one.

Study two found that States Parties acknowledge the significance of sport and report to Treaty bodies on some key aspects, but they do not provide enough evidence or data to evaluate the impact of a legal framework into practice. Two causal mechanisms were identified to promote and modulate the implementation of human rights in and through sport: The national mechanism for reporting and follow-up to international and regional human rights bodies; and the socialization of human rights among the sport sector.

Study three identified a low profile of PEPAS in State Party Reports, List of Issues and Recommendations arising from the CRC Committee. The results showed that there is scattered information on structural and process indicators, yet details on outcomes indicators are lacking. For this reason, a set of comprehensive indicators should be developed to ensure that children rights are being fulfilled.

Study four identified six key areas to be considered in the development of an action plan to advance the implementation of national sport policies that are in line with human rights: 1) Sociocultural factors; 2) Sport policy; 3) Ongoing actions; 4) Barriers to participation; 5) Opportunities for improvement; and 6) Professional development.

Finally, study five found that there are significant differences among sport professionals in the understanding and application of human rights in and through sport

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport based on biopsychosocial factors like: gender, age, educational level, personality traits and social dominance orientation. Also, three questionnaires were validated (the RITES-Q, the RITES-SE and the RITES-Challenges) and can be used to assess the knowledge and readiness of sport professionals towards human rights as well as their challenges experienced in applying a human rights-based approach in their practice.

### **Discussion**

Based on the events and mechanisms identified in the previous five studies and the critical review of literature, the Rights In and Through Empowering Sport (RITES) model was developed.

RITES is a theoretical model that highlights key multi-level mechanisms having an influence on the implementation of human rights in and through sport. It is relevant for any stakeholder involved in the field of sport, such as sport educators, managers and policy makers, to ensure that the breadth of their work aligns with human rights ethos. RITES is composed of seven elements that interact at different levels. At the macro level, there are 1) the contextual constraints and influences; 2) a national dialogue on human rights; and 3) sport-related policies. At the meso level, there are 4) monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; 5) capacity development; and 6) ongoing actions. Finally, all these elements take shape and are perceived differently by individuals at the micro level, therefore, 8) intersectionality should be taken into account.

In order to facilitate and support the process of adoption and alignment of practice with human rights principles, two practical resources were developed: the RITES Exploratory checklist, a tool to support sport-related professionals to measure their level of understanding of the main elements of the RITES model; and the RITES Toolkit, a practical resource to reflect and develop capacity for embracing human rights in and through sports-based interventions.

### **Conclusion**



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The RITES Model and associated resources aspire to encourage coordinated actions towards bridging the gap between sport and human rights. RITES can contribute to the advancement and establishment of a human rights-based approach in the sports environment by activating mechanisms that align forward-looking policies with workable implementation aspects. The broad overview presented in this thesis paves the way to other research initiatives to further explore specific aspects highlighted in this research, as well as to expand the comprehensiveness and application of the RITES model.

## Chapter one: Introduction

### 1.1. Background<sup>1</sup>

#### **The development of humanistic capacities through sport and physical activity: building a rights-based habitus to leave no one behind.**

In 2015, the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015) became the leading global policy driver for transformative action in areas of critical importance for the sustainability of humanity and the planet. Individuals, organisations and governments are called to invest and take action in a set of 17 goals and 169 targets, with a view of building an inclusive and sustainable future for all.

At the core of the Agenda 2030, there are three transversal principles that sustain the targeted priorities: 1) a human rights-based approach; 2) the notion of leaving no one behind; and 3) gender equality and women empowerment (UN Sustainable Development Group, 2020). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are grounded on human rights norms and instruments. Rattray (2019) points out that over 90% of the goals and targets correspond to human rights obligations and, consequently, they are “two sides of the same coin”. Based on the pledge to safeguard human rights, the commitment to leaving no one behind is addressed many times: “We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind” (UN, 2015). Thus, starting with the most vulnerable is of

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<sup>1</sup> This section has been extracted and adapted from an essay published at the UN Geneva Office. See reference below:

Masdeu Yelamos, G. (2021). The development of humanistic capacities through sport and physical activity: building a rights-based habitus to leave no one behind. *59th Graduate Study Programme. UN Office Geneva*. pp.382 – 387.

<https://www.ungeneva.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/2021-GSP-Report.pdf>

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport primary importance for the implementation at the local, regional, national and international levels.

In order to achieve this set of goals and targets, a defined, interdependent, multidisciplinary approach is required (Stafford-Smith, M., et al. 2017). All knowledge disciplines are called to align with the SDGs and collaborate to reduce inequalities and promote inclusive social development for everyone. Physical education, physical activity and sport are three areas that can drive, enable and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs (Masdeu Yelamos, et al., 2019). In this sense, the preamble to the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2016) acknowledges sport as an enabler for the goals:

*“Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives.”*

Sport is a global socio-cultural phenomenon that promotes value-humanistic ideals (Naumenko, 2018), as the Olympic values. The 37<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council (2018) adopted the resolution “Promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal”, which highlights the valuable contribution of sport towards advancing human rights. Sport is a universal language, a cost-effective tool to achieve other broader objectives such as education (Ascione, et al., 2018), social inclusion (Kelly, 2011), or community development (Schulenkorf, 2012). Sport is a vehicle for social protection and human rights as well as having inherent obligation in human rights instruments.

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*“The unique ability of sports to transcend linguistic, cultural and social barriers makes it an excellent platform for strategies of inclusion and adaptation. Furthermore, the universal popularity of sport and its physical, social and economic development benefits make it an ideal tool for fostering the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities (and other marginalised groups)” (United Nations - Disability, 2018)*

Over the last decades, it has also become a relevant socio-economic sector, engaging with diverse worldwide agencies and individuals in various roles (i.e., athletes, coaches, fans, spectators, managers, sponsors, volunteers, etc.). In this article, the term sport will be used in the same comprehensive manner as outlined in the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017 p.1), which considers it a generic term “comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms”.

In late 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic started to revolutionise the status quo of our communities, bringing changes in multiple dimensions of our lives such as health, economy, social life, politics, etc. COVID-19 pandemic has been undoubtedly a health problem, but also a political challenge, as leaders across the world were forced to react in real-time to an unknown, fast-changing scenario to control the disease (Grix, et al., 2020). The UN Human Rights Council (2021) outlined the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the enjoyment of human rights around the world, including good practices and areas of concern. There is not enough data to measure the impact of COVID-19 on the SDGs, however, Mukarram (2020) claims three possible consequences of this global pandemic to the advancement of the SDGs: 1) it might be a drawback for some of the achievements made so far; 2) it might slow the progress of some goals due to resetting priorities, and 3) it might require a reallocation of resources to support priority sectors.

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Ali, et.al., (2020, p.415) claim that the “COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted the already marginalized groups in our societies”. This fact has also been reported in “the other pandemic of system inequity” (Gray, et.al., 2020), which highlights inequity in access and enjoyment of social determinants of health and well-being. Despite being an unprecedented multi-layered crisis, the outcomes of the pandemic arguably bring us back to the starting point of the SDGs and raise the following question: How can we improve, do better, and avoid similar scenarios in the future?

The core principles of the SDGs are reinvigorated with the new context. The core premise should be strengthened: Starting with the most vulnerable, by applying a human rights-based approach, to leave no one behind. The World Health Organisation (2020, p.1) affirms that “human rights frameworks provide a crucial structure that can strengthen the effectiveness of global efforts to address the pandemic”. Human rights enshrine human dignity and, consequently, upholding human rights means the acknowledgement of the intrinsic worth of all human beings, regardless of age, gender, disability, religious belief, socioeconomic status, ethnic minority or any other social or personal characteristics. Yet, a greater awareness of human rights by rights-holders as well as by duty bearers might be needed. Likewise, an increased understanding of roles and responsibilities pertaining to human rights is required and should move towards inclusive actions, advocacy, and investments across multiple sectors (Carty, et al., 2021), including the education sector and the sports sector.

Sport can provide a comprehensive framework for learning values, thus contributing to the development of soft skills needed for responsible citizenship (UNESCO, 2020). Human rights education in and through sport is an innovative methodology to instil abstract concepts (i.e. human rights), in a comprehensible, applied and fun way for individuals, in formal, non-formal and informal settings. Through

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport values-based education using sport, individuals can be better prepared to face challenges that life may present, as is the case with the current global pandemic.

Sport inherently contributes to the advancement of human capital in its multiple forms (i.e. economic, social, physical, intellectual, emotional and individual) (Bailey, et al.,2013) and, therefore, it enhances the development of humanistic capacities. The systemic adoption of humanistic competences and abilities can be instrumental in giving response to the individual and social needs and can facilitate the rebuilding of the post-COVID recovery stage and, beyond that, the creation of resilient communities. SDG implementation in and through sport and the adoption of human rights-based approach should lead to more robust healthcare systems, improved social protection mechanisms, better labour conditions, etc.

In the post-COVID recovery stage, one of the priorities is to reinforce a rights-based habitus to leave no one behind. Addressing inequalities and discrimination should be at the centre of recovery efforts. Drawing from Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 2018, p.170), which can be defined as an "internalised need converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practice and meaning-giving perceptions", a rights-based habitus is the internalisation of human rights and consequent behaviour to respect, protect and fulfil them. A rights-based habitus can only be achieved by coordinated and collective action, in safe, inclusive and interconnected environments and nurtured by human rights education activities such as awareness-raising, training, information, events, etc. Human rights education through sport has the potential to contribute to transforming the understanding of human rights, instil a rights-based habitus, strengthen the SDGs core principles and, ultimately, support the establishment of a more inclusive and sustainable social contract worldwide.

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## **1.2. Research Context and Researcher's Role**

I started working in 2016 as a research assistant at the UNESCO Chair, a research centre based at the Munster Technological University. The UNESCO Chair "Transforming the Lives of People with Disabilities, their Families and Communities, Through Physical Education, Sport, Recreation and Fitness" works across policy and practice to deliver change in inclusive Sport, Physical Activity, Physical Education, Fitness and Recreation.

On a policy level, the UNESCO Chair collaborates with UN Agencies to safeguard the right to access physical education, recreation and sport services to everyone. In this context, we engaged with human right treaty bodies (CEDAW, CRPD, CRC; ICESCR) to ensure that the guidance that they provide to State Parties on articles related to physical education, physical activity and sport is appropriate and has a cross-cutting intersectional approach. As part of this work, I carried out studies 2 and 3, which are included in this thesis in chapters 4 and 5.

The UNESCO Chair supports UNESCO in advancing its agenda of sport and social inclusion. The agreement with UNESCO commits the Chair to a global work plan to:

- build capacities of professionals to better work with people with disabilities in physical education, sport, recreation, and fitness.
- develop a virtual space to provide a vehicle for unified collaboration worldwide.
- engage in multi-sectorial transformational research to address the deficit of knowledge regarding the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- mobilise the partnership to disseminate, advocate, operate, research and transform current practice in a unified and coordinated manner, to encourage the implementation of changes in legislation, policy and practice as regards

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the inclusion of people with disabilities in physical education, sport, fitness  
and recreation and

- cooperate with UNESCO on relevant programmes and activities.

One of the main mandates of the Chair is to lead a global response to the inclusive policy actions of the Kazan Action Plan (KAP), which emerged from MINEPS - the World Conference of Sports Ministers and Senior Officials in 2017. KAP aims "to facilitate international and multi-stakeholder policy convergence, ease international cooperation and foster capacity-building efforts of governmental authorities and sports"(UNESCO, 2017). As depicted in figure 1, KAP is a coherent mechanism for policy development, implementation and monitoring aligned with universal human rights and the SDGs within and beyond the UN system. This has extended the Chair's remit beyond disability inclusion to include all areas of marginalisation and exclusion.

As part of this action plan, since 2018 the UNESCO Chair has been working with stakeholders in Mauritius to advance research, understanding and capacity to deliver and monitor development outcomes and human rights such as gender equality, peace justice, strong institutions, and data for development. Why the Republic of Mauritius? The Republic of Mauritius is investing in making sport accessible to all their citizens, as reflected by the National Sport and Physical Activity Policy for the Republic of Mauritius (2018 – 2028). In 2018, they were members of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS) and had the political willingness to advance this agenda. Also, the UNESCO Chair MTU had previously collaborated with the Mauritius Sports Council and other national stakeholders (i.e., Mauritius Institute of Education) and, therefore, some relationships were already established. For these reasons, a collaborative research project was agreed.



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Considering the international sport policy context, this research aimed to develop a case study of Mauritius to a) gather evidence on the progress done in the domain of physical education, physical activity and sport and b) identify capacity building needs to strengthen the link between physical education, physical activity and sport with human rights and sustainable development. The outcomes of this research are available in chapter 6.

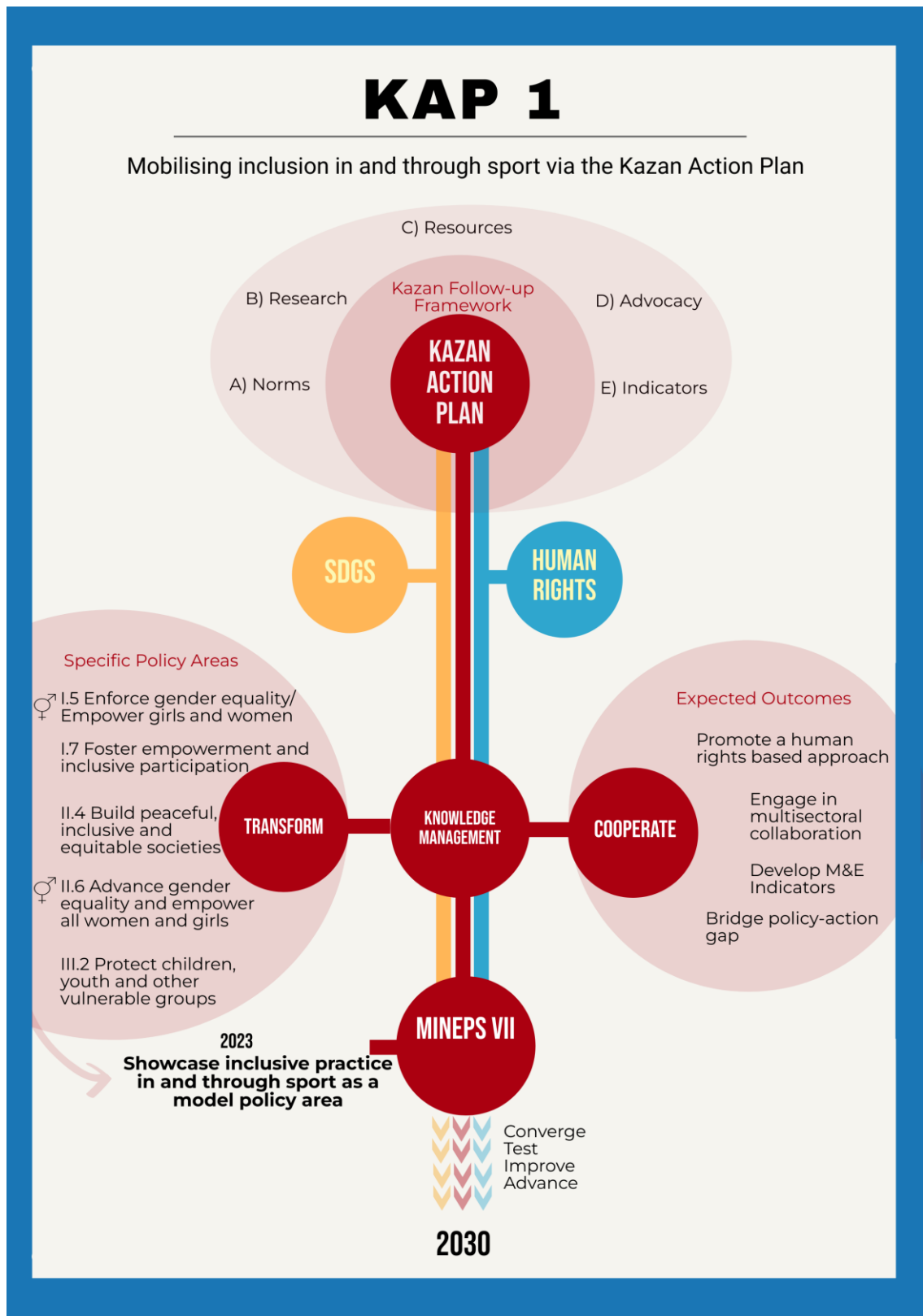


Figure 1. UNESCO Chair MTU Action Plan to advance KAP.

My work as a research assistant involves designing and implementing sports-based reporting and solutions aligned to the SDGs and Human Rights. One example is my direct involvement in the development of The Rights Understanding Sport Toolkit

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport (TRUST) (TRUST, 2021) an educational platform that showcases how human rights education through sport can bridge the theory-practice gap and empower sports practitioners to embed and fulfil human rights in and through sport. In collaboration with my colleagues and external stakeholders, we developed two online modules to build the capacity of individuals to provide human rights education through sports taking into consideration the needs of marginalised groups such as refugees, people with disabilities and LGBTQI+ community.

TRUST was awarded a grant by the Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO) program of the EU and Council of Europe. The UNESCO Chair was the lead organisation and included the following partners: the Gaelic Athletic Association, the National Olympic Committee of Portugal, and the Dutch NGO Refugee Team. In the frame of this project, I was able to undertake some data collection, which is reflected in study 5 of this thesis (chapter 7).

Finally, in my endeavour to learn more about human rights and the work that United Nations agencies are undertaking, I applied in 2021 to the Graduate Study Programme at UN Geneva, the longest-running educational programme of the United Nations. I was selected to participate in this two-week course. This opportunity provided me a good overview of various United Nations agencies and international organisations based in Geneva through online lectures delivered by outstanding professionals, including Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

### **1.3. Aims and Objectives**

The overarching research question of this thesis is: How and to what extent are human rights applied to sport policy and practice at international, national and local level? To answer this overarching question, the following three aims were devised:

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1. What is the nature of the relationship between human rights and sport policy in the literature?
2. How can those shaping the sport environment increase awareness, understanding, and engagement with human rights treaties to be more accountable for human rights?
3. What are effective ways to advocate for applying a human rights-based approach to sport?

With a view to facilitating a pathway to achieve the research aims, specific objectives for each of the 5 studies undertaken were designed. These are presented below and depicted in figure 2.

Study 1 presents a narrative literature review reporting on the status of sports policy frameworks in the UN system of relevance to the sport sector generally. These were the specific objectives:

1. To map sport policy and human rights frameworks related to sport and physical activity.
2. To identify research evidence on the interlinkage between sport, human rights, health and well-being based on critical literature.
3. To promote multidisciplinary collaboration across all stakeholders that shape the plurality of the sport sector by providing policy and academic evidence related to human rights and inclusion.

Study 2 and 3 present a documentary analysis of three key document types from three Treaty Body reporting mechanisms – CRPD and CEDAW in study 2 and CRC in study 3. Both studies focused on three key document types from the Treaty Body reporting mechanisms: State Parties Reports, List of Issues and Concerns/Observations and Recommendations. While similar in methodology, study 2 targets a sport-related

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport audience whereas study 3 targets human rights practitioners. The specific objectives of these studies were:

1. To examine the relevance and significance of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) in reporting mechanisms related to the CRPD, CEDAW and CRC.
2. To identify the most common topics reported in State Parties Reports, List of Issues and Concerns/Observations and Recommendations in the domain of PEPAS.

Study 4 is a case study of the Republic of Mauritius to explore how the National Sport and Physical Activity Policy aligns with human rights and promotes sport for all. Due to previous collaborations between the UNESCO Chair and the Ministry of Sport in Mauritius, an opportunity arose to undertake this research project in the interest of both parties. The study had the following specific objectives:

1. To explore the views of physical education teachers, sport coaches and university lecturers about the implementation of the National Sport and Physical Activity Policy in Mauritius and its contribution to human rights.
2. To identify barriers and opportunities to strengthen the connection between sport policy and a human-rights based approach to sport.

Finally, study 5 is mixed-method research undertaken to acquire a comprehensive overview of sport 'practitioners' understanding of human rights in and through sport. The specific objectives were:

1. To assess sport practitioners' understanding of human rights in and through sport.
2. To evaluate the application of human rights principles in service delivery by sport educators.

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- To measure the level of perceived self-efficacy of sport practitioners in effectively delivering education on human rights in and through sport.

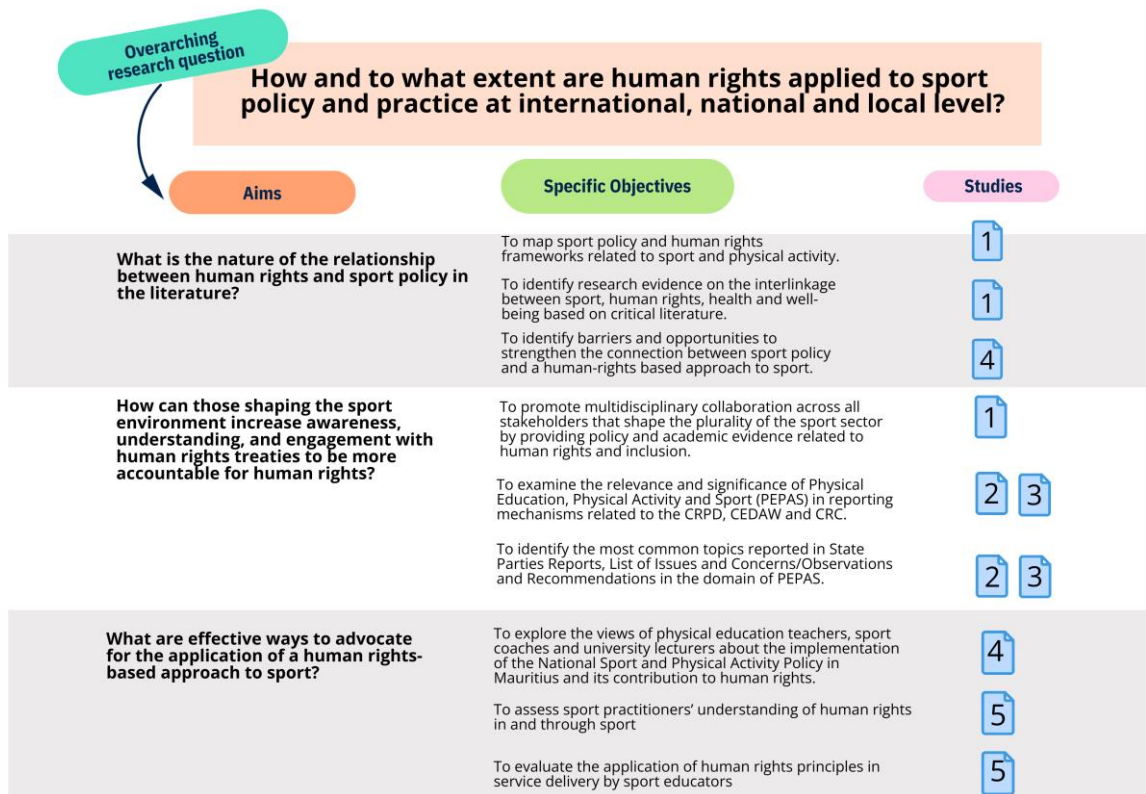


Figure 2. Research question, aims, specific objectives and studies.

#### 1.4. Thesis Outline

The multi-level research to advance human rights in and through sport described in this thesis will follow this structure.

- In this first chapter, the rationale for research and the research context were outlined; the aim, research questions and specific objectives of the studies were presented. A brief explanation of the impact of COVID-19 on the research process is presented.
- Chapter two presents a review of literature that addresses relevant theoretical topics of interest for this thesis: human rights, sport policy development and sport education. It also includes study 1, a narrative literature review reporting on the status of sports policy frameworks in the UN system of relevance to the sport sector.

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- Chapter three describes the ontological and epistemological approach of critical realism, as well as its main tenets of this paradigm. The research design is summarized. Methods and techniques to collect and analyse data are also presented. Finally, a discussion on methodological strengths and issues for the studies undertaken in this research is provided.
- Chapter four presents study 2, a peer-reviewed article that examines, from a macropsychology perspective, the relevance and significance of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) in reporting mechanisms related to the CRPD and CEDAW.
- Chapter five presents study 3, a peer-reviewed paper exploring the relevance of PEPAS in relation to the framework of the State Party reporting mechanism related to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
- Chapter six introduces study 4, a paper under review introducing a case study of the integration of human rights in sport-related policies in the Republic of Mauritius.
- Chapter seven includes study 5, a quantitative-oriented paper that measures sport 'practitioners' understanding and application of human rights principles in and through sport.
- In the last chapter, an outline of the key events identified in the previous studies is outlined. Then, the RITES model is presented, together with the RITES Exploratory checklist and the associated toolkit. Some recommendations for key stakeholders are shared and the final conclusions provided.

In the next pages, figures 3 and 4 depict the chapters mentioned above.

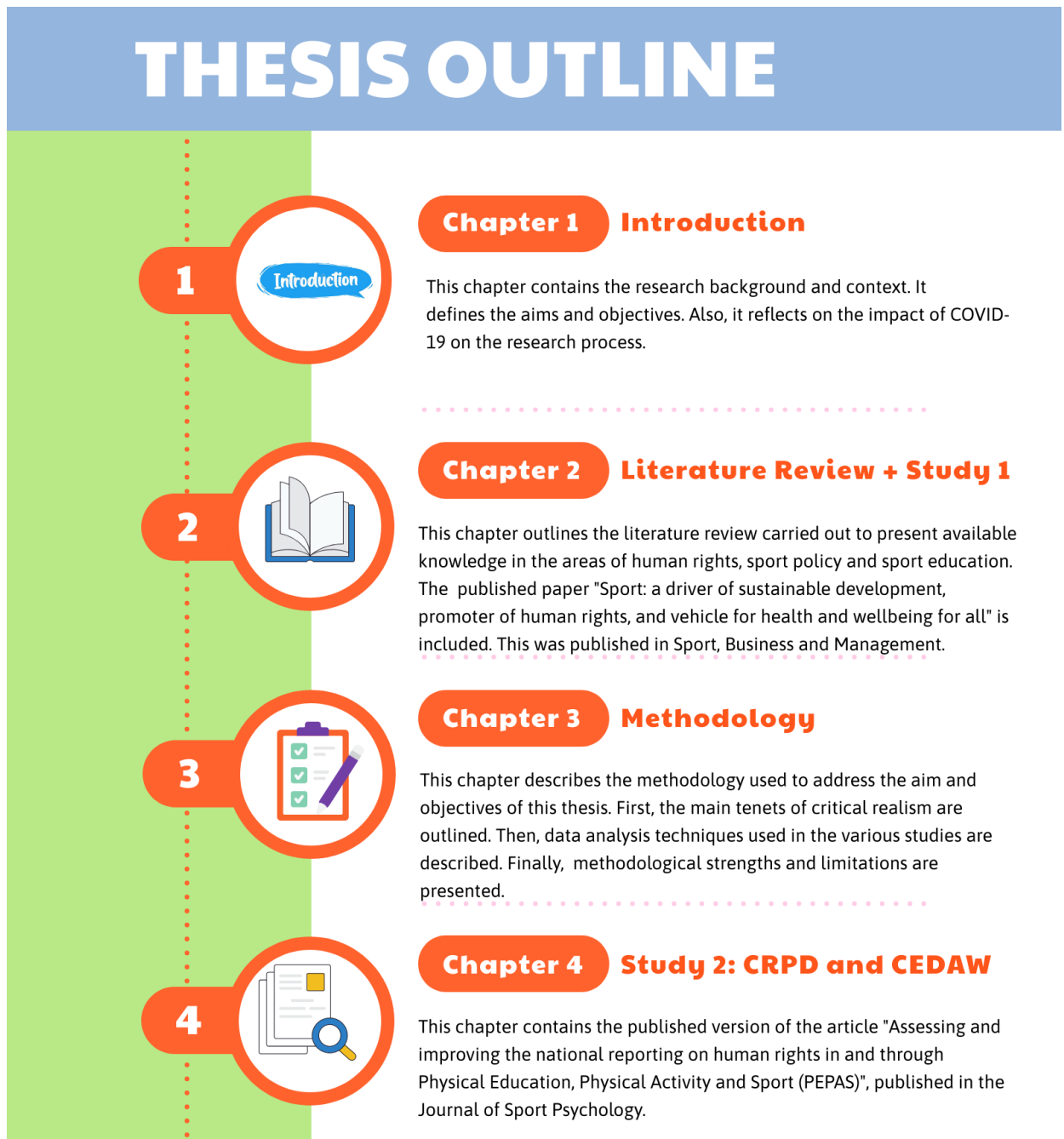


Figure 3. Thesis outline: Chapters 1 to 4





Figure 4. Thesis outline: Chapters 5 to 8

### 1.5. Impact of COVID-19 on the research process

My research was significantly disrupted by the global pandemic of COVID-19. One of the main issues was the postponement of data collection and the reconfiguration of an adequate methodology to adapt my research to a new context.

In March 2020, I had a booked trip to the Republic of Mauritius for a 3-months research stay to undertake my data collection. In 2019, I received some funds through the UNESCO Chair MTU to financially support my collaboration with Mauritius Sports Council and Mauritius Institute of Education. Due to COVID 19, international travel

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport was cancelled and, therefore, I was not able to undertake my research stay in Mauritius. During this time, due to the lockdown, I had to work from my parents' home and at the same time try to advance my research. Despite efforts being made to undertake consultation online, in the initial months it was not possible to contact research participants for various reasons. For instance, many participants indicated lack of capacity to collaborate with my research due to increased responsibilities derived from online work; another main barrier was lack of access to reliable internet connection.

As I had planned a research stay, my methodology included face-to-face data collection techniques (e.g., observation, interviews, focus groups, etc.). During the period of interruption, I was not able to reach out to collaborators and research participants. Consequently, my research methodology was outdated, and I had to redesign it. After a couple of months, I was able to get back to my research but, unfortunately, this was on hold for many months.

Regarding my career development, during the interruption period I struggled to set realistic goals and create a plan to achieve them. There were many questions that we were unable to answer that this became a personal challenge to overcome. However, with perseverance and the support of my supervisor and colleagues I was able to redress my research and focus on emerging opportunities.

## **1.6. Dissemination of published work**

This thesis contains 5 studies, which have been published in peer-reviewed journals of various disciplines. Also, it contains a study published by the UN Office Geneva. The references to the studies are outlined below:

- Masdeu Yelamos, G., Carty, C. and Clardy, A. (2019), "Sport: A driver of sustainable development, promoter of human rights, and vehicle for

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health and well-being for all", *Sport, Business and Management, Vol. 9 No. 4*, pp. 315-327. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM-10-2018-0090>

- Masdeu Yélamos, G., Carty, C. and MacLachlan, M. (2020). Assessing and improving the national reporting on human rights in and through Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS). *Journal of Sport Psychology, Vol. 29 No.5*, pp. <https://rpd-online.com/index.php/rpd/issue/view/6/7>
- Masdeu Yelamos, G., Carney, S., Carty, C., & MacLachlan, M. (2021). A Thematic Analysis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) State Party Reporting Mechanisms Related To Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport. *The International Journal of Children's Rights, 29(3)*, 765-794. [https://brill.com/view/journals/chil/29/3/article-p765\\_765.xml](https://brill.com/view/journals/chil/29/3/article-p765_765.xml)
- Masdeu Yelamos, G. (2021). The development of humanistic capacities through sport and physical activity: building a rights-based habitus to leave no one behind. *59th Graduate Study Programme. UN Office Geneva*. pp.382 – 387. <https://www.ungeneva.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/2021-GSP-Report.pdf>
- Masdeu Yelamos, G., & Maclachlan, M. (2023). A qualitative exploration of sport policy implementation in Mauritius and its implications for human rights. *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences, 29(1)*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37597/ajphes.2023.29.1.1>
- Masdeu Yelamos, G.; MacLachlan, M.; Carty, C. & Carney, S. (2023). The role of human rights in sport education: A call towards a new curriculum. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*. Under Review.



## **Chapter two: Literature Review and Study 1**

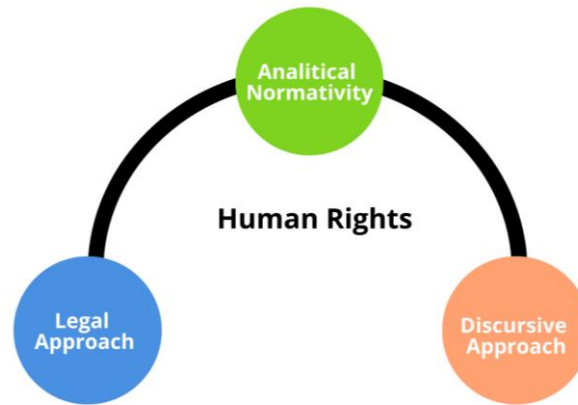
### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents a critical review of literature relating to three themes: human rights; human rights in and through sport; and sport policy frameworks embedding human rights principles. The sources used are mainly published peer reviewed articles, policy documents and grey literature from UN related agencies. This review aims to explore and discuss published information in these subject areas in order to identify synergies and gaps to be bridged to maximise the impact of human rights in and through sport at all levels.

### **2.2. Human rights**

All human beings, by the virtue of their existence, have universal rights. These rights are not granted by any State and do not take into consideration any aspect of our identity (e.g., nationality, sex, ethnic origin, religion, colour, language, disability, etc.). They range from the fundamental right to life, to those that enable individuals to live life with dignity, such as the rights to education, food, health, employment and leisure (OHCHR, 2022).

As a social construct, human rights have different meanings for different groups of people. Therefore, as suggested by Goodale & Merry (2007), we will explore these orientations as if they were a spectrum which goes from a restricted definition to a more open one (see figure 5).



*Figure 5. Human rights approaches*

In the most restrictive end of the spectrum, we have a legal approach to human rights. Despite there being various strands within this approach, there are three aspects that are common in this orientation: 1) human rights must be legislated; 2) legally recognized; 3) and codified before being considered in international law (Goodale & Merry, 2007). In the centre of the spectrum, there is an approach that embraces the legal, but goes beyond the recognition in international law. One of the main proponents of this vision is Donnelly (2013), who affirms that the concept of human rights (HR) includes the notion of individuality, as rights belong to individuals. From this notion stem the principles of universality, which recognizes that we are all equally entitled to HR; and inalienability, as these rights belong to us and should not be taken away. Finally, at the other end of the spectrum, there are the discursive approaches. This approach considers that human rights emerge in social practice and, therefore, normativity is only one aspect that can be studied. Whereas in the legal approach, States have the ultimate responsibility to ensure the protection of human rights, the rights discourse critically challenges this conception. Baxi (1994, p.3) claims that the rights discourse “must both, and in a just and effective measure, simultaneously disempower as well as empower the state”.

In the following subsection, the origins and normative framework will be outlined.

### **2.2.1. United Nations human rights protection system**

After the Second World War, the international community came together and established the United Nations, a multilateral institution that aims to maintain international peace and security and promote and protect human rights. In 1948, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), a pioneering document agreed by all States that defines a wide range of rights (OHCHR, 2013). The UDHR set out an unprecedented appreciation of international human rights and the efforts to advance global went beyond national sovereignty (Lauren, 2011). Despite the UDHR is not a legally binding document, it paved the way for the treaty structure.

Following the UDHR, nine core international human rights treaties emerged to address specific phenomena. These set international standards for the protection and promotion of human rights are independent and States can subscribe to any of them. Unlike the UDHR, these treaties are legally binding and States Parties that sign and ratify them, are obliged to report periodically on the implementation at the national level. The nine treaties form a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of human rights. These treaties are (OHCHR, 2012):

- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

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- The Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families;
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Each of these treaties have a committee that is in charge of monitoring implementation at the national level and make recommendations for further action. These committees, also known as treaty bodies, are composed by a group of independent experts, as depicted in figure 6. Also, most of these treaties have developed an optional protocol (OP), which address and bring clarity on issues that the parent treaty does not cover or does not provide enough guidance. As it happens with the treaties, State Parties need to sign and ratify these OPs.

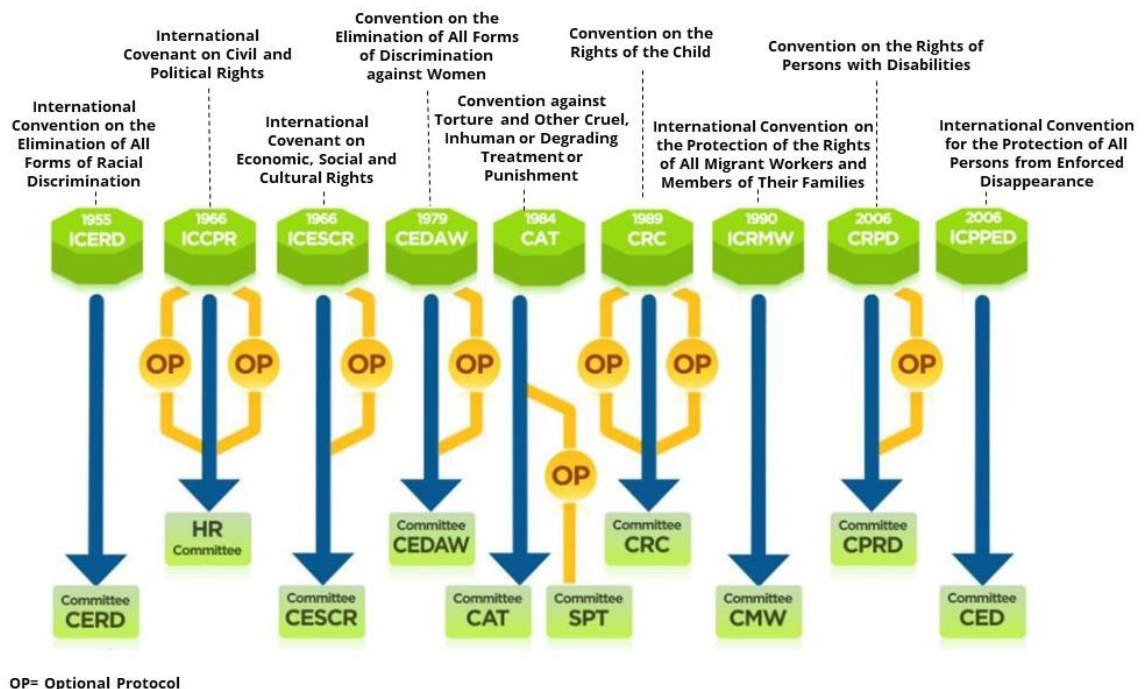


Figure 6. Human Rights treaties and treaty bodies (OHCHR, 2015, p.12)



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Apart from Treaty-based bodies, there are other mechanisms to support and monitor international human rights standards, which fall under the Human Rights Council (OHCHR, 2015b):

- The special procedures: a mechanism where independent experts from a thematic perspective examine, advise and report on human rights situation in specific countries.
- The Universal Periodic Review (UPR): a platform that allows interactive dialogue between States. These declare what actions were implemented to improve human rights at the national level, and the member and observer States of the Council
- Complaint procedure: a complaint submitted by individuals or civil society groups that claim to be victims of human rights violations in a State.

All these mechanisms and treaties form the basis for the international legal protection of human rights. However, as mentioned in the previous section, the notion of human rights should bring the involvement of everyone, and it should not remain in the juridical sphere. As Sen (2017, p.319) clearly outlines:

*“The implementation of human rights can go well beyond legislation, and a theory of human rights cannot be sensibly confined within the juridical model in which it is frequently incarcerated”*

For this reason, the concept of human rights education will be explored in the following subsection.

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### **2.2.2. Human rights education**

Education plays a central role in the protection and fulfilment of human rights. The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (COE, 2010) defines human rights education as

*education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower learners to contribute to the building and defence of a universal culture of human rights in society, with a view to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.*

Human rights education (HRE) is an essential approach that examines our societies and contributes to build more cohesive communities (Tibbitts, 2002). In the last decades, the HRE discourse has spread around the world due to globalization trends, supporting the creation of a global vision of human rights and membership (Ramirez, et al., 2007). However, the lack of knowledge and understanding of human rights and international instruments is well evidenced, especially among teachers and students (Stellmacher, et al., 2018; Suarez, 2007).

Stellmacher, et al. (2018) identified knowledge and the rated importance of human rights as two critical variables to predict likeliness to behave according to human rights. In other words, the more people knew about human rights, the more likely they were willing to get involved in the protection of human rights and, therefore, to speak up and act.

HRE is not only used in educational settings, but there are also other disciplines and professionals who receive training in human rights, such as social workers, diplomats, and police. Also, it is used as part of community development programmes

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport and in public awareness campaigns (Tibbitts & Kirchschräger, 2010). Hence, the concept of human rights practice emerges to depict the diversity of social actors – individuals and entities- and from a wide range of disciplines that engage with the notion of human rights from all perspectives available: discussion, advocacy, criticism, research, legal enactment, dissemination, education, etc. (Goodale & Merry, 2007). While this research thesis adopts an explicitly interdisciplinary approach, it is noteworthy that HR are also increasingly featuring in the literatures of specific disciplines, for instance, psychology (Rubin & Flores, 2020; Twose & Cohrs, 2015), sociology (Hynes et al., 2014), and education (Bajaj, 2011).

Sport is also one discipline that benefits from HRE and sport can be used as a method to teach human rights (Isidori & Benetton, 2015). Due to its experiential nature, sport enables people to acquire skills through less formal methods and in a more informal environment, thus bringing abstract concepts into fun and practical activities. Likewise, it can attract and provide education to target groups who are not involved in formal education (Collison, et al., 2017).

### **2.2.3. National human rights institutions (NHRIs)**

By the early 1990s, the international community focused on the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) (Reif, 2015). OHCHR (2010, p.13) defines NHRIs as “State bodies with a constitutional and/or legislative mandate to protect and promote human rights. They are part of the State apparatus and are funded by the State”. These public bodies are mandated to protect and promote human rights in the country. In 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted the Paris Principles (UN, 1993). This set of international standards that guide the work of NHRIs, which include having a broad mandate; pluralism in membership (e.g. government officials, civil society, academia, faith-based groups, etc.); adequate resources and independence from the government.

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Due to their independent nature, NHRIs perform a unique role as a link between government and civil society, as they address the protection gap between individuals' rights and state's responsibilities. The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI, 2022) define some of the general functions of NHRIs as follows:

- Monitoring and reporting the human rights situation
- Providing advice to government and others
- Receiving, investigating and responding to human rights complaints
- Delivering human rights education programmes
- Cooperating at the national level with key partners
- Engaging with the international human rights system.

Although some NHRIs have collaborated with sports organisations to promote human rights in and through sport, the relevance of sport to human rights is not recognised by many, and, similarly, many sport organisations do not appreciate the value and importance of human rights to sport (Biscoe, 2020). In the following subsection, the relationship between human rights and sport will be explored.

### **2.3. Human rights in and through sport**

There is considerable amount of literature that explores the relationship between human rights and sport (Giulanotti, 2004; Donnelly, 2008). Most of this academic exploration is focused in certain thematic areas, such as the organisation of mega sporting events (Adams & Piekarz, 2015; Horne, 2018; Schofield, et al., 2018; & McGillivray, et al., 2019); safeguarding and remedy mechanisms (Naidoo & Grevemberg, 2022; Gauthier & Alford, 2019; Cornu, et al., 2018; Cooper, 2010) children rights (David, 2004; Donnelly, et al., 2016; Masdeu Yélamos, et al., 2021) and athlete's rights (Patel, 2021; Tuakli-Wosornu, et al., 2021). However, there is little

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport engagement in the exploration of other relevant themes with direct and indirect impact of human rights, such as sport policies and sport education.

Within the sport academic sphere, there are many disciplines dealing with this area: sport psychology, sport sociology, sport philosophy, sport history and sport management. The discussion around human rights and sport identifies two main streams (Hums, et al., 2008): on the one hand, the notion that participation in sport is a human right. This perspective focuses on human rights issues related to *participation* such as barriers and facilitators, exclusion and discrimination, abuses and harassment in sport. And on the other hand, the idea that sport is a *vehicle* that can be used to advance other human rights. This perspective includes sport-based interventions in development settings as well as the area of mega sporting events. For instance, leveraging mass participation events for sustainable health legacy (Murhpy, et al., 2015). In this thesis, the use of the concept “human rights in (*participation*) and through (*vehicle*) sport” comprises both perspectives.

### **2.3.1. The flaws of sport**

Due to sport’s marginal policy status, in the last decades, efforts were made to claim its relevance to other agendas (i.e. economy, education, welfare, health, etc.). However, as Coalter (2015, p 33) argues:

*There is a need to de-reify “sport” and to address the issue of sufficient conditions—the mechanisms, processes and experiences which might produce positive impacts for some participants.*

Sport *per se* might not provide a systemic transformation, as it requires some mechanisms to enable positive impact for participants. To date, there is a lack of systematic, robust supportive evidence to support the claim that sport is having a cross-cutting impact (Coalter, 2007).

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As it happens with many other social constructs, the fact that human rights remain a contested concept with multiple definitions and understandings, makes it difficult to untangle how human rights are supported in sport programmes. In consequence, this complicates the task of identifying successful approaches, develop effective measurements and design transformational theories (Moustakas & Robrade, 2022).

Despite some positive evidence that mega-sporting events contribute to advancing human rights, the social impacts and consequences of mega-sporting events are also contested by many scholars (Horne, 2018; Adams & Piekarz, 2015). In the Human Rights Watch Annual Report 2015, Worden (2015, p.1) identified five main human rights abuses that had been associated with sports mega-events: 1) the forced evictions of citizens without due process or compensation; 2) the abuse and exploitation of migrant workers; 3) the silencing of civil society and rights activists; 4) threats, intimidation and arrest of journalists; and 5) discrimination within nations competing to host or simply competing at the mega- events. These are some examples of the flaws of sport which need to be addressed.

Regarding the impact of sport policies to the general public, an international review of the effectiveness of sports policy interventions (Nicholson, et al., 2011, p. 305) concluded that:

*Government policies designed to increase sports participation have had limited success (...) Some have had success within small communities or specific cohorts...[but] the same level of success has not been apparent within the mass population (...). It is also clear that governments and researchers don't know enough about the way in which complex systems of organisations function to either induce or disrupt sports participation patterns.*

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To counter the negative effects that sport can produce, Giulianotti, et al. (2019) coined the term “Sportland”, a concept to outline and reenvision the potential of sport to contribute to development by being more inclusive and outward focused; more inter and multi-disciplinary, and broader politically, economically, theoretically, and methodologically.

To address the lack of evidence of the social and economic value of sport, recent research efforts have focused on measuring the social return on investment (SROI) of sport and physical activity (Gosselin, et al., 2020; Davies, et al., 2019; Keane et al., 2019). This research strand might be an effective way to redress the flaws of sport.

#### **2.4. Sport Policy Frameworks**

The study of sport policy has borrowed many theoretical frameworks, such as the stage model (Houlihan, 1990), the multiple streams framework (Kingdon & Thurber, 1984) and the advocacy coalition framework (Green & Houlihan, 2004). These models stem from other disciplines and were applied to the sport policy field, leading to major epistemological, methodological and practical challenges in research (Jayawardhana & Piggan, 2021).

The use of these frameworks is criticised as they describe the “ideal world”, yet they do not provide information on what is really happening as a result of the sport policy development process (Bloyce & Smith, 2009). There is little research evidence in sport policy studies on evaluative methodologies of the impact of national sport policies (Chen, 2018), as well as exploring philosophical, methodological and practical challenges of comparing sport policies across nations (Dowling, et al., 2018). Stachura, et al. (1996, p vii) explain that:

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“The phenomenon of extensive government involvement in sport is relatively recent, having arisen primarily in the post-World War II era. This may further explain the relative paucity of scholarly work on national sports policies”.

In the last decades, the intervention of government in sport policymaking shifted the vision from the achievement of sport-related goals towards the use of sport as a vehicle for achieving other social objectives such as social inclusion and public health (Bloyce & Smith, 2009). Nonetheless, many countries continue to have elite sport at the centre of many national sport policies (Veerasingam, 2013; Green, 2004). Institutions are challenged at macro and meso-level; thus, more attention should be placed on this analysis to legitimise the policy enactment process (Suzuki, 2017). A scholarly debate regarding the extent to which community sport initiatives contribute to achieving the policy goal of “sport for all” continues to be contested (Schailée et al., 2019).

Although policy development usually takes place at governmental level, sport practitioners should not be alienated from this process. An understanding of sport policy development is a precondition for more effective policy implementation (Bloyce & Smith, 2009).

Keech (2003, p.211) clearly explains the relevance and value of policy development for sport practitioners:

*Applied policy analysis is often seen to be of little relevance to practitioners, whether they are teachers or sports development professionals. What counts, apparently, is whether or not the individual is able to do ‘their job’. Agreed – but only in part! Many of those who work in Physical Education, physical activity or sport development often became involved through their enjoyment of sport and/or activity, but now fail to realise that they work within a highly politicised environment. Within ongoing debates about professional*



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport development, it is proposed that until practitioners develop a greater strategic awareness of the complex policy context within which they operate, they will not be fully able to realise why policy doesn't always work in practice and therefore lobby more effectively for the resources required to fulfil their responsibilities and do 'their job'.

Based on a system thinking approach (Hynes, et al., 2020), all policies are interconnected and, therefore, should be considered by other policy agendas to promote cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary collaboration (Hynes, et al., 2020). Figure 7 depicts some of the UN frameworks mentioned in this thesis in which the contribution of sport is called for.

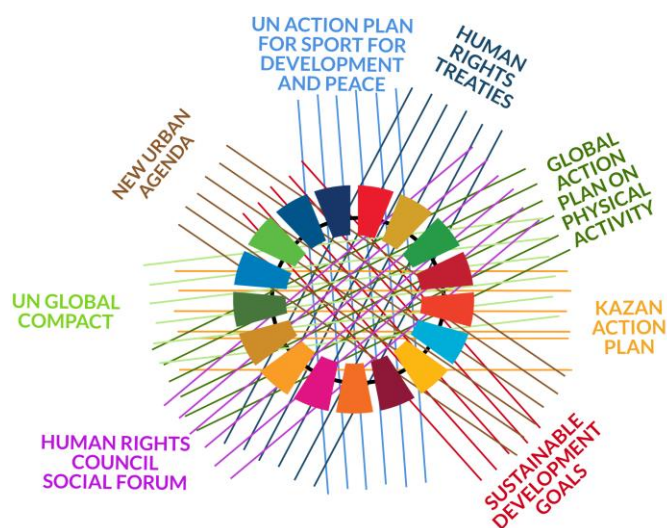


Figure 7. Cross-cutting UN policy frameworks of relevance to the sport sector

In chapter 8, the RITES model will be presented as a tool for sport professionals to bring coherence and alignment between policy agendas and practice. In the next section, an already published study of the author further examines the current international developments in sport policy related to human rights and sustainable development.

## 2.5. Study 1

### Sport: a driver of sustainable development, promoter of human rights, and vehicle for health and wellbeing for all

This is the published version of the following publication: Masdeu Yelamos, G., Carty, C. and Clardy, A. (2019), "Sport: A driver of sustainable development, promoter of human rights, and vehicle for health and well-being for all", *Sport, Business and Management*, Vol. 9 No. 4, pp. 315-327. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM-10-2018-0090>

#### 2.5.1. Abstract

**Purpose of this paper:** This paper examines current momentum in the sport policy arena congruent with the sustainable development agenda. It presents two consensus frameworks endorsed by the UN that provide mechanism for coherent action to 2030. With a human rights backdrop it outlines the role of organisations operating in the domains of physical education, physical activity and sport (PEPAS), promoting multidisciplinary partnerships and aligning to global agendas that enhance health and wellbeing for all.

**Design/methodology/approach:** This position paper is a narrative literature review reporting on the status of sports policy frameworks in the UN system of relevance to the sport sector generally. It relates these to research evidence on the interlinkage between sport, human rights, health and well-being based on critical literature.

**Findings:** The advent of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the Kazan Action Plan, the WHO Global Plan on Physical Activity 2018 -2030 and allied developments across the sports movement provides an opportunity for revisiting and realigning the definitions and policy objectives of sport and health.

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**Research limitations/ implications:** The authors' bias as a UNESCO chair towards UN frameworks is acknowledged as is leniency toward physical education, physical activity and sport.

**Practical implications:** Multilateral agencies, health and sport authorities and sport organisations are encouraged to review and leverage their resources and engage with the call for action of global agendas to improve public health.

**What is original/value of paper:** This paper presents the global policy backdrop for action and investment in inclusive sport, physical education and physical activity. It presents a fresh new health and well-being perspective aligned to wider interdisciplinary agendas, on which sport organisations can make a significant contribution.

**Keywords:** Sport, Health, Human Rights, Sustainable Development, Kazan Action Plan, Strategic Management

### **2.5.2. Introduction**

Health leaders and organisations around the world are calling for major reform of health systems (OECD, 2015; UN, 2016; WHO, 2018). In 2015 the OECD reported that without reform, healthcare systems will be financially unsustainable by 2050. Global trends of rapid urbanisation and technological advancements and the associated changes in society, lifestyles, and culture, have led to major declines in physical activity (Bailey et al., 2013), largely contributing to the health systems crisis, while increasing the role of the sport and recreational physical activity in providing the critical health benefits of physical activity (Breuer et al., 2015). Sport organisations can play a strategic role by adopting health promotion principles and practice (Casey et al., 2009). The increasing relevance of sport within society provides an optimal context for entrepreneurial initiatives to generate not only profitable benefit but also social change (Hayduk and Walker, 2018).

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This position paper aims to raise awareness of global developments and policies in health and wellbeing, serving as a call to action for sports businesses and organisations within a whole-of-society approach to health and wellbeing (WHO, 2013; Dahlgreen and Whitehead, 1991). It offers a thumbnail sketch of contextual factors relevant to sport organisations, sport entrepreneurs, policymakers and academia. A vast body of knowledge, including a wide range of perspectives (health, sport, policy, business and management) is presented, with a specific focus on United Nations frameworks, in support of the dawning paradigm shift. While informing sport stakeholders of these momentous developments to the sport sector, this article aims to propose innovative organisational approaches for strategic management (Keupp et al., 2012). Likewise, by providing policy and academic evidence, this paper seeks to bridge the health and sport sector and encourage action from all stakeholders that shape the plurality of the sport sector.

Firstly, the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017) and the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018 -2030 (WHO, 2018) are introduced as two pivotal global frameworks, under the umbrella of the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2016), for collaborative action in sport, physical activity and physical education.

Secondly, this paper explores a broader conceptualisation of health and wellbeing, in addition to the recognition of health and sport as human rights emphasising the potential of physical education, physical activity and sport to be actualised as health catalysers. Based on these fundamentals, this narrative literature review builds the case to consider sport and health as two inextricably intertwined sectors with potential to address the health systems crisis, adopting a sustainable lifestyle approach to health and wellbeing.

The third section describes the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) as a framework to be considered by sport organisations, due

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport to its capacity to foster a collaborative and multidisciplinary approach to health and wellbeing, as well as to facilitate capacity building strategies that support health promotion practice.

Finally, the conclusions summarize some of the main ideas discussed before and encourage relevant agencies to take responsibility and consolidate sport as a significant part of a sustainable health solution.

#### ***2.4.2.1 Global recognition of the contribution of sport to sustainable development***

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2016) represents a call to transformative action to individuals, organizations and governments in areas of critical importance for the sustainability of humanity and the planet. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the continuation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (UN General Assembly, 2000), an unprecedented global partnership to inspire and promote the principles of human dignity, equality and equity. The SDGs are a set of 17 ambitious goals and 169 targets that aim to guide policy development and investment to 2030 with a view of addressing some of the most pressing global issues such as ending poverty (SDG 1), promoting health and wellbeing at all ages (SDG 3), and providing universal access to education (SDG 4) under partnership approaches (SDG 17).

In order to achieve this set of goals and targets, a defined, interdependent, multidisciplinary approach is required (Stafford-Smith, M., et al. 2017). Biermann, Kanie, & Kim (2017) coined the concept of ‘Governance through goals’, to exemplify a new inclusive and interdependent goal-setting strategy that relies on partnerships and provides freedom to all actors to take action within the SDG framework. Within this context, the Sport Movement, composed by all those individuals and entities operating and supplying the domains of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport (PEPAS), has an opportunity to harness evidence and vindicate the impact of PEPAS in our societies.

The preamble to the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2016) acknowledges sport as an enabler for the goals:

*“Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals, and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives”.*

To drive this collective action, the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017), announced at the Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI), arises as one of the reference policy documents for all the diverse PEPAS stakeholders. The Kazan Action Plan aims to integrate and strengthen the connection between sport policy development and the sustainable development goals (SDG’s). The Kazan Action Plan follow-up framework is actively engaging the sport sector by mobilizing action; measuring progress; facilitating knowledge exchange and providing evidence of the role of PEPAS as enabler of sustainable development.

The provisional agenda of the seventy-third session of the UN General Assembly (2018), included the report of the Secretary-General, “Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace” which supports top-level political acknowledgement of the central role of the Kazan Action Plan in the Sport agenda across the United Nations system. Likewise, it affirms the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018 -2030 (WHO, 2018) as an established framework for

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport collaborative action for achieving wider development outcomes and capitalizing on the core attributes of participation in sport, physical activity and active play.

With International endorsement of these two global frameworks established, where are health and wellbeing positioned within these frameworks? And how can these recognized policy frameworks influence positively the mission of sport organisations?

#### ***2.4.2.2. Access to Health and Wellbeing: a human right at the core of sustainable development***

The last century saw rapid increases in lifestyle-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as the lead causes of premature death (GBD 2015 DALYs and HALE Collaborators, 2016; IHME, 2016) and researchers tell us we can expect a further increase (Bailey et al., 2013). In 2016 NCDs accounted for 85% of the disease burden in the OECD countries (IHME, 2017). Furthermore, people with NCDs are also spending more years of their lives with resulting disabilities (Gmeinder et al, 2017, OECD). Target 4 of SDG 3 ‘Good Health and Wellbeing’ specifically aims to reduce premature mortality from NCDs through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being by one third by 2030. Target 3.13 aims to strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.

Healthcare budgetary allocations do not reflect the scope of preventative actions in these domains. In 2015, for example, less than three percent of healthcare budgets were allocated to prevention in OECD countries, which was less than the administration allocation (4%). Most of the expenditure went to curative care (54%), medical goods (22%) and long-term care (5%) (Gmeinder, Morgan and Mueller, 2017). Giving mounting compelling evidence, the scope for transforming the health through investment in prevention, warrants attention. Considering the relative cost of preventative actions versus curative actions, the potential for such actions to stem costs

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport at the curative bottleneck even at low efficacy levels could deliver savings and should not be overlooked (UN Chronicles, 2015). OECD acknowledging this issue called on people to take a more active role in their health (OECD, 2015), sport is an obvious player in this space. This is not to ignore the congruent policy and environmental foundations and conditions needed to facilitate progress at the population level.

In the following sections, three dimensions with potential to improve the current situation will be explored: a) Expanding the scope of health; b) transforming public health using the SDGs; c) revalidating the contribution of PEPAS to health and wellbeing.

### **2.5.3. Broadening health: Embracing salutogenesis**

Health is a dynamic state of well-being resulting from a combination of an individual's potentials, life's demands and social and environmental determinants (Bircher, Kuruvilla, 2014). This definition aligns with the concept of salutogenesis, a construct introduced by Antonovsky (1979) that breaks down the dichotomy between health and disease and explores health as a continuum. Antonovsky defines it as "the process of movement toward the health end of a health ease/disease continuum" (Eriksson and Lindström, 2010, p.18). This orientation stresses the importance of being active to achieve positive health outcomes. As Ventegodt and Merrick (2009 p.16) assert: "The health process is a learning process where we reflect on what will create health and what are the options for life and improved quality of life". In contrast to the salutogenic approach to health, there is the pathogenic perspective of health, which has been the traditional understanding. The pathogenesis approach considers that health is created by reducing risks that lead to diseases (Eriksson and Lindström, 2010). In this approach, health is based on biological factors and the individual is a passive being who can only reduce the chances to acquire or develop a disease. The pathogenic medical



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport mode of thought is to dichotomize (Antonovsky, 1993) and consequently, one is either healthy or not.

The broader range of interventions aligned with Antonovsky's approach embraces strengths-based initiatives for keeping well people and for dealing with the necessary treatment interventions as relevant.

This wider spectrum of health is represented by the Sustainable Health Spectrum (SHS, UNESCO Chair, 2017) on figure 8. The SHS illustrates the pathogenic approach as treatment paradigm and the salutogenic approach as wellbeing paradigm, which would include all stakeholders contributing to the promotion of public health through physical activity and sport. Historical positioning of health in a healthcare and treatment focused paradigm and sport in a narrowly defined elite and competitively focused arena has arguably stifled both.



Figure 8. Sustainable Health Spectrum

#### 2.4.3.1. Leaving no one behind: A transformative vision

Agenda 2030 is relevant to everyone concerned with health and social justice as it guides development and identifies critical areas of investment to 2030. In terms of health and wellbeing, SDG 3 seems to be the main reference (Davis, et al., 2015). SDG3 "Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages" includes targets for

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport reducing global maternal mortality ratio (3.1), strengthening the prevention and treatment of substance abuse (3.5) and achieving universal health coverage (3.8). However, as cross-cutting constructs, health and wellbeing are not addressed exclusively in SDG 3, rather they are embedded in most of the SDGs as they focus on people and their wellbeing. Health is both an outcome of and a path to achieving sustainable development (UN General Assembly, 2016).

The commitment to leaving no one behind is affirmed many times in the Sustainable Development Goals, which centres the focus on human dignity and pledges to safeguard human rights. As described in the Agenda 2030 (UN, 2016):

*‘We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want, and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind’.*

Hence, the mention of “for all at all ages” in SDG 3 is of great importance, as it strengthens the linkage with international human rights principles and instruments to prevent discrimination of any kind (Zamora et al., 2018).

The recognition to health and sport as a human right is well documented in many human rights instruments (table 1). The Human Rights Council Social Forum 2018 exemplifies the increasing relevance and status that sport is acquiring in the human rights agenda. This three-day meeting convened by the Human Rights Council was for the first time focused on “the possibilities of using sport and the Olympic ideal to promote human rights for all and to strengthen universal respect for them”.

<b>Human right instrument</b>	<b>Health Article/s</b>	<b>Sport Articles/s</b>
Universal Declaration on Human Rights	25.1	27.1

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	12	15
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	5 (e iv)	5 (e vi)
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	10 (h), 11. 1 (f), 12, 14 (b)	10 (g), 13 (c)
Convention on the Rights of the Child	23, 24, 25, 39	23 (3), 29, 31
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	28, 43.1 (e), and 45.1 (c)	43.1 (g) and 45.1 (d)
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	25	30.5

*Table 1. Human rights treaties and articles related to health and sport.*

The notion of being left behind is a multidimensional concept that covers dimensions of discrimination, deprivation and wellbeing (Klasens & Fleurbaey, 2018). Therefore, a leaving no one behind approach should consider the heterogeneity of population groups and the complexity of barriers to strengthen health systems (WHO, 2016). The United Nations Development Programme (2018) developed a framework that governments and stakeholders can use to act in their endeavour to progress to achieve the SDGs. This framework encourages a three-level approach: find out more about the ones left behind; empower those left behind; and enact inclusive and forward-looking policies aligned to the SDGs.

The examination of the impact of health and wellbeing factors, including physical activity, for the ones furthest behind has been evidenced by many researchers in a wide range of marginalised groups. For example among people with disabilities (McKenzie Smith, Pinto Pereira, Chan, Rose, & Shafran, 2018); indigenous populations (Azzopardi et al., 2018); migrants (O’Driscoll, Banting, Borkoles, Eime, & Polman, 2014); first generations migrants (Close et al., 2016); individuals reporting racism (Paradies et al., 2015); ageing population (Bauman, Merom, Bull, Buchner, & Fiatarone Singh, 2016) and in youth (Lubans et al., 2016).

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As the Special Rapporteur on the rights of people with disabilities (UN General Assembly, 2018) affirms:

*Early access to health and rehabilitation services ensures better health outcomes and reduces the costs incurred by health and social care systems associated with poor health. Health goes beyond formal health-care systems. Factors such as safe and affordable housing, transportation, education and employment also have an impact on the health of individuals and communities. (...) Persons with disabilities have the same health needs as everybody else, including the need for health promotion, preventive care, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation.*

#### **2.5.4. Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport as health catalysers**

Physical activity is a widely acknowledged, scientifically valid and cost-effective intervention which has been shown to not only reverse and prevent many NCDs, but to also contribute towards moving people across the full health spectrum towards optimal wellbeing, in particular alongside other lifestyle interventions and approaches (Bailey et al., 2017; Dyson et al., 2015; WHO, 2014; WHO, 2018).

The Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018 -2030 (WHO, 2018) affirms that:

*“The global cost of physical inactivity is estimated to be INT\$ 54 billion per year in direct health care, in 2013, with an additional INT\$ 14 billion attributable to lost productivity. Inactivity accounts for 1–3% of national health care costs, although this excludes costs associated with mental health and musculoskeletal conditions”.*

The evidence of mental and physical health benefits associated with physical activity is well-established (Penedo & Dahn, 2005; Haskell et al., 2007; Bize, Johnson

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport & Plotnikoff, 2007; Janssen & LeBlanc, 2010; Timmons et al., 2012). Despite this fact, the development of health promotion policies acknowledging the role of sport and physical activity, as well as sport policies recognizing the health-enhancing dimension, are still being overlooked rather than mainstreamed (Eime et al., 2015)

This article has already discussed the broader spectrum of health, as illustrated in the Sustainable Health Spectrum (figure 8), which encompasses the pathogenic focus, predominantly addressed by the medical model or treatment paradigm, the focal point of which is pharmacological intervention. The salutogenic focused wellbeing paradigm expands further to incorporate a lifestyle approach to address the increase in lifestyle-related and current prevailing causes of morbidity and mortality in a scientifically valid, cost-effective and sustainable manner in which all levels of society share responsibility in determining the health and wellbeing of its members, ranging from policymakers to individuals. Sport organisations already play a valuable and meaningful role in contributing to many domains of health and human capital (Bailey et al., 2013) and within the wellbeing paradigm, this role is further emphasised and capitalised upon. Furthermore, civic-conscious sport organisations who embrace their social responsibility and provide inclusive practice, as endorsed in the many international and national human rights norms, guidelines and policies, play an even greater role in creating, maybe even pioneering, social justice and equity in their communities.

SDG 3 and its 9-related targets present a lack of consistency in distinguishing between health sector action and action in other sectors to realize health outcomes, which can be considered an implicit call for cross-sectoral collaboration reflected in SDG 17 “Strengthen and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” (Buse & Hawkes, 2015).

This fact aligns with the call for action from other United Nations global frameworks, which included mental health, wellbeing and disability in their scope, for

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport example, the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–30 (UNISDR, 2015) and the New Urban Agenda (UN General Assembly, 2017). Similarly, the UN Global Compact is a United Nations driven initiative launched in 2000 that is encouraging private companies to voluntarily subscribe to principles related to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and align their strategies and operations to advance societal goals. Nearly 10000 businesses across 162 countries and from diverse sectors have already joined this global call (UN Global Compact, 2019). As Koffi Anan summarized (UN, 1998):

*“Leaders of government and business continue to have choices. So let us choose to unite the power of markets with the authority of universal ideals. Let us choose to reconcile the creative forces of private entrepreneurship with the needs of the disadvantaged and the requirements of future generations. Let us ensure that prosperity reaches the poor. Let us choose an enlightened way forward towards our ultimate, shared goal: a global marketplace that is open to all and benefits all”.*

The research undertaken by Nunes, et al. (2016) provide a framework to operationalise health and wellbeing objectives, measures and indicators of SDG 3 through health and non-health sector collaboration. Physical activity is proposed as a solution to address overweight and obesity, yet the sport sector can have a more prominent role.

This intersectoral collaborative scenario represents an opportunity for non-traditional health sector stakeholders, like sport authorities and sport organisations, to rethink their strategic management (Nag et al., 2007) and to raise their profile and get involved in cross-sectoral collaboration to maximise the impact of health and wellbeing for everyone.

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### **2.5.5. ICF: A person-centred model to foster cross-sectoral partnerships for health**

In 2002 the World Health Organisation (WHO) published the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) to create a common language to facilitate multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional partnerships and approaches to health expanding beyond traditional medical professionals to include physical activity and lifestyle approaches. The ICF model is a person-centred and strengths-based model which exemplifies the broader biopsychosocial definition of health, and in relation to people with health conditions, disabilities and functioning difficulties it focuses on functioning and capacity, as opposed to deficits and inability. This model also acknowledges a range of contextual factors which impact a person's health, wellbeing and ability to participate in life situations. These factors range from macro to micro levels of society and reinforce the multi-sectoral approach. They consist of environmental and personal factors each of which can serve as inhibitors or facilitators and reinforce. This model is often applied in the disability context however, it was intended for universal application, in particular as a conceptual framework when identifying health enhancing factors for all across the various social determinants of health, or in this context the broader range of stakeholders to be included within health system policies and practice. This broader context also accredits sports leaders and managers with a focused role and responsibility within health systems and interventions.

#### ***2.4.5.1. Environmental Factors***

Environmental factors consist of the social environment and the physical environment. Very often sports clubs, leaders and practitioners associate inclusive practice with accessible building design, facilities and equipment often outlined in national regulations. While important, there is also an array of social factors ranging

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport from macro to micro social determinants of health and inclusion. This article has outlined many of the international policies which exist, yet research tells us that these policies don't always trickle down to the meso and micro levels of society (UNESCO, 2015). To bridge this policy-practice gap there are some challenges to overcome for inclusive participation in sport, in particular for people with disabilities including: inclusive practitioner training and education (Shields, Synnot and Barr, 2012; UNESCO-NWCPEA, 2014); negative attitudes and social stigma (Variety, 2017); lack of family support especially in countries that have strong traditional beliefs and where institutionalisation is prevalent (Devine et al., 2017); and cost of suitable transport, coaching and membership (Variety, 2017). Many international organisations are creating partnerships to support this agenda. For example, Nike led a global partnership of champions via the research-based Design to Move Campaign (2012) by identifying the benefits of physical activity in the context of five forms of human capital (Bailey et al., 2013) and creating Active City guidelines for city leaders. More recently the Active Well-being Initiative (Active Well-being Initiative, 2018) has launched two physical activity and health related standards. The Global Active City campaign and standards work with city leaders to develop projects and services to increase physical activity in particular for people at risk of physical inactivity related health conditions. The Global Well-being City standards expand their scope beyond physical activity incorporating additional drivers of wellbeing including nutrition, mental health interventions, culture and art.

#### ***2.4.5.2. Personal factors***

Personal factors are attributes and circumstances which often inhibit inclusive participation in sport. Awareness of these factors enables sports managers and organisations take an active role in targeting the large percentage of the community not engaging in sport by addressing their concerns and challenges. Research informs us that



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport these challenges often include: the participant’s lack of confidence in their own ability; and a lack of knowledge of the benefits of sports participation (DePauw & Gavron, 2005; Devine et al, 2017; Haegele, Zhu and Davis, 2017; Misener and Darcy, 2014; Shield, Synnot and Barr, 2012; UNESCO-NWCPEA, 2014; Variety, 2017). For example, sport organisations may facilitate health-enhancing participation via promotional materials which represent positive images of local community demographics, and which inform the community of the range of health benefits. Organisations may adopt inclusive practices, applying the Inclusion Spectrum (Black & Williamson, 2011) and other inclusive strategies to create environments which are welcoming and supportive of personal challenges and differences.

#### **2.5.6. Conclusion**

The breadth and scope of sport to positively impact across multiple sustainable development goals (SDGs) and targets for the betterment of people, prosperity and the planet needs to be brought to the attention of key decision makers across government, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations. To achieve this, the sports sector must be in a position to relay its scope and effect, which extends well beyond sport into education, health and wellbeing. While anecdotal perceptions abound about the benefits of sport, it beholds us as a sector to collate evidence the research, data, best practices and solutions for the SDGs.

Two major frameworks, endorsed at governmental levels, have been pivotal in driving and coordinating progress to date on progress toward the SDG solution namely the Kazan Action Plan and the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030. Furthermore, as indicated in the Secretary general's report “Kazan Action Plan can be used as a basis upon which to build strengthened coherence and coordination across the United Nations system”. The Kazan Action Plan follow-up framework provides an agreed structure for coordinated action on relevant a) Norms- international instruments,

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport charters, treaties, b) Resources- Guidelines, good practice, champions c) Monitoring and evaluation indicators, self-Assessment, benchmarks d) Research e) Advocacy tools. The elaboration of the Kazan Action Plan implementation areas addressing 1) an advocacy tool presenting evidence-based arguments for investments in physical education, physical activity and sport; and 2) common indicators for measuring the contribution of physical education, physical activity and sport to prioritized SDGs and targets; will provide a solid vehicle for conversation with governments and policy makers especially at the intersection with education, urban development, health and human rights.

The interconnected indivisible SDGs provide the perfect backdrop for Kazan Action Plan crosscutting action to be positioned as a unifying policy support area. 2018 marked 70 years since the landmark Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was agreed by 48 member states and adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. This declaration put responsibility on all of us to be advocates and agents in the promotion and protection of human rights. Sport is relevant from founding human rights instruments through to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Seventy years since UDHR later, however, we note at the Global Disability Summit (2018), the first theme was “Tackling stigma and discrimination – commitments could include greater legislation at national level; quotas on representation and visibility of people with disabilities; and high-profile media campaigns”. This fact reaffirms the need of action to ensure that no one is left behind. Sport is a vehicle for social protection and human rights as well as having inherent obligation in human rights instruments.

*“The unique ability of sports to transcend linguistic, cultural and social barriers makes it an excellent platform for strategies of inclusion and adaptation. Furthermore, the universal popularity of sport and its physical, social and economic development benefits make it an ideal tool for fostering*

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport *the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities*” (United Nations - Disability, 2018)

Both the 1948 World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of health and the 2001 Council of Europe definition of sport refer to physical, mental and social well-being variables, while even Olympism at possibly the more elite level of sport refers to the aligned constructs of body, will and mind (International Olympic Committee, 2017). This connects the constructs and suggests investment in sport and investment in health are invariably intertwined. Deconstructing each and robustly supporting the arguments in term of physical, mental and social well-being is essential for broadscale investment and action. The process of gathering the data must also reflect the inclusive and indivisible nature of the SDGs and again the notion of starting with the most vulnerable, and in the case of sport we have extremely limited data in this domain. Kazan Action Plan action 2 “Develop common indicators for measuring the contribution of physical education, physical activity and sport to prioritized SDGs and targets” and the follow-up framework offers a focal point for concerted global actions for public and private sectors alike to start the process of data gathering in order to exemplify the case for investment. The SDGs can be seen as an opportunity for revisiting defining characteristics of sport and health with a view to aligning policy and practice for better outcomes across both sectors for all.

A call for bold and transformative steps to address arguably the most significant opportunity to transform the sector for the betterment of all is at our feet. With many policy and practitioner level stakeholders in both health and sport invested in delivering the best possible outcomes for our allied sectors it is beholden upon us to think differently, to act now and to consolidate the evidence and potential impact of a new approach.

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Aligned developments in health and wellbeing could help to consolidate sport as a significant part of a sustainable health solution. By embracing the defining scope of both fields, we empower them both, sport and health, to deliver more holistically, for more people, more of the time. The underpinning human rights agenda redoubled by the 2030 promise of ‘leaving no one behind’, positions policy actions for marginalised groups front and centre with ICF model available to support inclusive action. Public and private health and sport authorities, sport governing bodies and organizations can leverage their resources to engage with this call for action to improve public health, for people, prosperity and the planet.

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*End of published paper – All references are included at the end of this thesis*

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### **2.5.7. Key findings in the overall context of the thesis**

In this research we have identified policy frameworks in the UN system of relevance to the sport sector generally. The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable development is at the centre of all these policy frameworks. The multidisciplinary and cross-cutting approach fostered by the Sustainable Development Goals have facilitated that UN agencies align their scope of work to this ambitious policy.

The sport sector is encouraged to engage with the call for action of these global agendas by reviewing and leveraging their resources. However, the alignment of their scope of work to all these policies aligned to the SDGs can be a daunting task, especially for those with a lack of experience in sport policy. For this reason, this thesis aims to bring some clarity in aligning those frameworks with practice in the sector. In this way, the article contributes to answer the research question in aim 1 of this thesis,

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport which enquires about the nature of the relationship between human rights and sport policy in literature.

Although the above article addressed the relationship between human rights and health, this thesis is focused more generally on sport and human rights. Nonetheless, it serves to exemplify the leading role that sport organisation can adopt as health catalysers. This reinforces the positioning of sport as a cost-effective solution to systemic issues referenced by the SDGs (e.g., gender equality, no-discrimination, poverty reduction, sustainable cities, etc.). Likewise, this article strengthens the importance of education and capacity building initiatives to promote a greater understanding of human rights in and through sport.

## **Chapter three: Methodology**

This chapter describes the methodology used to address the aim and objectives outlined in chapter one. First, the ontological and epistemological approach adopted will be defined, followed by the description of the main tenets of critical realism. Secondly, an overview of the research design is provided, followed by a brief introduction to multilevel research. Thirdly, a detailed description of each of the mixed methods used in the studies will be given. Finally, a discussion of methodological strengths and challenges relevant to the research, including ethical considerations, will be presented.

### **3.1. Epistemological and ontological approach**

The ontological and epistemological approach adopted in this research is based on the critical realism perspective (Bhaskar, 1978; Fleetwood, 2014). Critical realism originated in the late twentieth century in the work of Roy Bhaskar, as an alternative to both positivist direct realism and postmodernist nominalism (Saunders, et al., 2009). The main objective of a critical realist research is the development of explanatory theories to describe ‘tendencies’ in phenomena that have been observed or experienced, which are triggered by the underlying mechanisms (Haigh, et al., 2019). Critical realism offers a nuanced version of realist ontology and, therefore, stands in a mid-way between positivism and interpretivism (Zachariadis, et al., 2013). As Atkinson (2012, p.148) affirms, “ontological questions and positions are no laughing matter, and therefore before anyone can embark on a quest to know something, they must possess an idea about what can be known at all”. To better understand the differences between positivism, interpretivism and CR paradigms, Table 2 summarizes the main assumptions regarding ontology and epistemology.

<b>Paradigm</b>	<b>Ontology</b>	<b>Epistemology</b>
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Positivism	Objective reality, unproblematically apprehended	Empirical testing and verification of predictive theories via hypothetical-deductive methods; findings assumed true until falsified.
Interpretivism	Reality is socially constructed by humans via subjective meanings, symbolic action and social politics	Knowledge generated by understanding the meanings and actions or subjects; findings “created” by researcher based on this understanding
Critical Realism	Objective, stratified reality, but imperfectly and fallibly apprehended	Knowledge retroduced to theories regarding underlying reality which explain observable events, findings probably true, but mediated by humans.

Table 2. Comparison of research paradigms adapted from Wynn & Williams (2008)

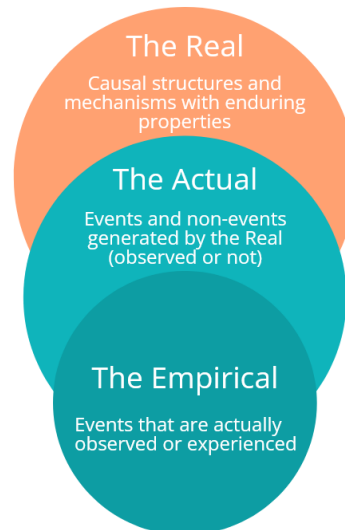
As Bhaskar and Danermark (2006, p.294) points out:

*“The argument for critical realism, as an explicit ex ante [based on forecasts rather than actual results] metatheory and methodology for the research process, is not that this is the only way to do science, but that this is the easiest way to do science and the only way to do it consciously and consistently.*

Also, Bhaskar recognizes the potential to leverage a CR approach to achieve interdisciplinarity -which is very relevant for the topic of this thesis. As this paradigm is a “relatively new approach to ontological, epistemological and axiological issues” (Easton, 2010, p.119), especially in the field of sport and physical activity (Smith & Sparkes, 2016), its main epistemological tenets are outlined in the following subsections.

### **3.1.1. Stratified ontology**

For critical realists, reality is not only what can be observed empirically (Sayer, 2000). Reality is external and independent to human perception and, consequently, not accessible through observational methods and our generated knowledge. In this sense, reality is divided in three underlying domains: the real, the actual and the empirical (see figure 9).



*Figure 9. Critical realist stratified ontology (Bhaskar, 1978)*

The empirical domain of reality is where events are observed or experienced by individuals. All we can see around us, such as objects and institutional structures, belongs to this realm. However, events may be shaped differently than what we are able to perceive or there might be events that under certain circumstances can't be observed or pass unnoticed in the empirical domain. All these are taking place in the domain of the actual. Finally, the domain of the real is the one comprising causal structures and generative mechanisms that trigger -or inhibit- the emergence of events.

For example, an analysis of the quality of a sport programme for children may take into consideration the views of participants, coaches, parents, etc. They would provide an input at the empirical level. Nonetheless, there might be other aspects not reported by any of these agents neither observed by researchers that may influence the quality of the programme. These aspects happen in the domain of the actual. And all these events are triggered by causal mechanisms that influence their emergence (or not) of relevant aspects modulating the events and, ultimately, the perceived quality. These may include socioeconomic structures, power relationships and sociocultural factors, for instance. These generative mechanisms are present at the domain of the real. Collier (1994, p.62) clarifies that a generative mechanism is used as a “technical term to denote



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport those mechanisms are real and exist dormant in structures even when they are not producing events”. There is a relational nature between domains (Jessop, 2005), which means that the real includes naturally necessary properties and conditions to create a tendency for events and structures to emerge or not.

### **3.1.2. Mediated knowledge**

Our knowledge about natural and social objects is a social product constructed by us and transferred throughout time, yet natural and social objects exist and act independently (De Souza, 2014). In critical realism, the intransitive and transitive dimensions of scientific enquiry are differentiated (Jessop, 2005). Knowledge (transitive) is developed by moving across stratified layers ‘from manifest phenomena to the structures that generate them’ (Bhaskar, 1998, p. 20). This process is enabled by a continual process of confrontation between theoretical hypothesis about the intransitive called retrodution. Olsen (2007) defines retrodution as the technique used by critical realist scholars for “reasoning about why things happen including why the data appear the way they do” (p.1). In this way, this technique helps researchers to strengthen the methodology by improving the knowledge of the object of research while keeping their assumptions in check.

From a critical realist perspective (see Figure 10), the five studies conducted in this research (transitive domain) were used to illuminate the relationship between sport policy and human rights in and through sport at multiple levels in the empirical domain. Building upon key events and findings (actual domain), I have, through a process of retrodution, identified the causative mechanisms (deep domain) that facilitated these events to take place, as will be outlined in the discussion chapter.

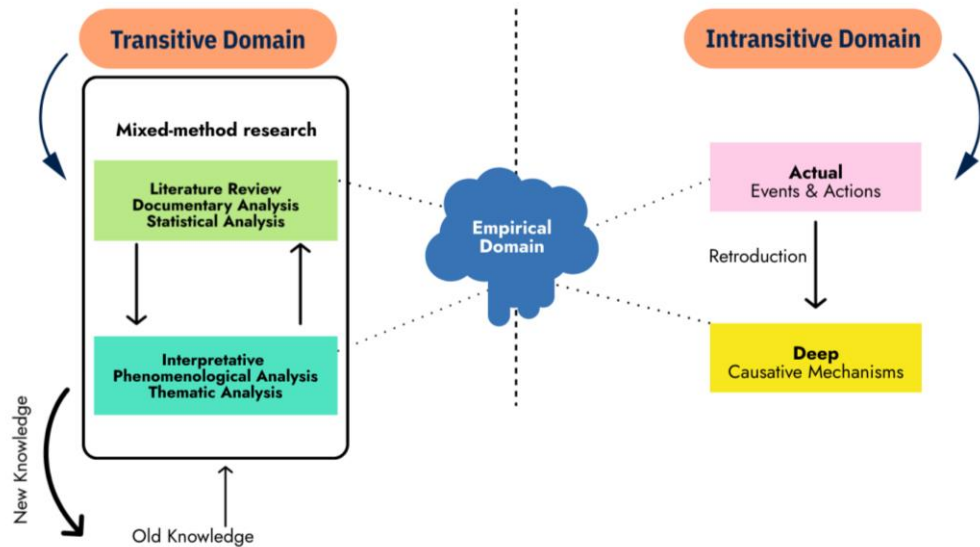


Figure 10. Methodology design. Adapted from Zachariadis, et al. (2013).

### 3.1.3. Open-systems perspective

According to CR, reality is an open system external to our ability to control it (Scott, 2005). As Da Souza (2014, p.147) clearly articulates:

*In open systems, multiple mechanisms operate simultaneously and the everyday events humans observe may be activated under certain conditions but not others. Understanding the powers of objects and the conditions which generate mechanisms to operate and produce events, is key in critical realism.*

Unlike positivism - which search for similarities between situations to describe natural laws- critical realism aims to find tendencies (or demi-regularities) in the empirical observations. As Pawson & Tilley (1997, p.150) claim: "The social world is an 'open system' ... Unlike a laboratory where the conditions for the effective triggering of causal mechanisms can be created, no such opportunity exists in the social world". In other words, CR seek the causal mechanisms that trigger or inhibit a certain result (Sayer, 2000).

In the field of sport and exercise, a CR understanding of causality may maximise the

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport impact of our work by providing alternative ways to legitimately reinforce causal explanations about specific phenomena (Wiltshire, 2018).

#### **3.1.4. Judgemental rationality**

Critical realism acknowledges that scientific findings are always fallible because of limitations in our observational and experimental methods. As Clark et al. (2007, p.525) claim:

*“Critical realism attempts to find the truth as a goal which avoids judgemental relativism (all beliefs are of equal truth value) while retaining the view that human knowledge is socially produced”*

Due to the inaccessibility to the actual domain, humans can only obtain information of the empirical domain, through our experience. What is experienced in the empirical domain, it is only a representation of its real shape, as it can be experienced in the real domain. To find out the generative mechanisms of these events, retrodution is the technique to choose one of the many multiple alternatives to explain the same phenomena. Researchers adopting a CR approach require to be critical of the theories and explanations that they use, hence the importance of “critical” in critical realism (Stutchbury, 2022). Hu (2018, 9.130) states that judgemental rationality allows:

*researchers to evaluate and compare the explanatory power of different theoretical explanations and, finally, to select theories which most accurately represent the ‘domain of real’ given our existing knowledge.*

#### **3.1.5. Summary: Methodological application of critical realism**

This research aimed at consolidating evidence on the relationship between human rights and sport policy as well as promoting the application of a human rights-based approach to sport. For doing this, five methodological principles for the conduct and evaluation of critical realist research were used, as proposed by Wynn & Williams

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport (2012). Table 3 provides an overview of how these 5 principles were applied in this research.

Ontological and Epistemological Basis	Evaluation Criteria	Application to this research
<b>Explication of Events:</b> Identify and abstract the events being studied, usually <i>from experiences</i> , as a foundation for understanding what really happened in the underlying phenomena.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stratified ontology</li> <li>• Mediated knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thick description of case “story” including actions and outcomes</li> <li>• An abstracted sequence of events (including the experiences of participants and observers)</li> </ul>	The discussion section of this thesis examines the key events considering the five studies undertaken.
<b>Explication of Structure and Context:</b> Identify components of social and physical structure, contextual environment, along with relationships among them. (Critically redescribed from actor’s viewpoint into theoretical perspective.)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stratified ontology</li> <li>• Open-systems perspective</li> <li>• Mediated knowledge</li> <li>• Unobservability of mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of the structural entities, constituent parts, and contextual conditions existing in the case</li> <li>• Identification of the relationships among the entities</li> <li>• Explication of changes to the structure</li> <li>• Description of the resulting emergent properties</li> </ul>	We set the scene and describe the context and the sport system in relation to human rights (study 1) for, later on, engaging in a discussion of the key events and transformations.
<b>Retroduction:</b> Identify and elaborate on powers/ tendencies of structure that may have interacted to generate explicated events.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergence</li> <li>• Focus on explanation</li> <li>• Explanation via mechanisms</li> <li>• Multiple explanations</li> <li>• Unobservability of mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of a set of plausible candidate causal mechanisms</li> <li>• Logical and analytical support for the existence of proposed mechanisms linking the structure to events</li> </ul>	We consider relevant mechanisms that explain the emergence of the events described in the each of the studies undertaken.
<b>Empirical Corroboration:</b> Ensure that proposed mechanisms have causal power and that they have better explanatory power than alternatives.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent reality</li> <li>• Stratified ontology</li> <li>• Unobservability of mechanisms</li> <li>• Multiple explanations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analytical validation of proposed mechanism based on case data</li> <li>• Assessment of explanatory power of each mechanism relative to alternative explanations</li> <li>• Selection of the mechanism(s) that offers the <i>best explanation</i></li> </ul>	Considering that there are multiple explanations to our research phenomena, we have used multilevel research to build arguments around the causal mechanisms.
<b>Triangulation &amp; Multi-methods:</b> Employ multiple approaches to support causal analysis based on a variety of data types and sources, analytical methods, investigators, and theories.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent reality</li> <li>• Mediated knowledge</li> <li>• Unobservability of mechanisms</li> <li>• Multiple explanations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple theoretical perspectives</li> <li>• Multiple analytical and methodological techniques</li> <li>• Variety of data sources and types</li> <li>• Multiple investigators</li> </ul>	We have used multiple sources, disciplines and types of data to examine the sport policy development phenomena and provide a comprehensible explanation of the reasons behind. As a result, we develop a multilevel theory to explain this phenomenon.

*Table 3. Application of 5 methodological principles of CR in this research.*

### **3.2. Research design**

Critical realism sets great importance in the choice of methodological approach, as methodology is the link between the assumptions about the existence of the world (ontology) and the way how knowledge is produced (epistemology) (Whaley & Krane, 2011). Being congruent with the underpinning CR approach, this research has used a mixed methods research strategy. Based in the ideas of Bhaskar (1979) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), Mingers (2001), described research as a process with four phases:

1. Appreciation phase involves the initial conceptualization of the phenomena as experienced by researchers, main actors and existing previous literature. In this phase a literature review and a documentary analysis was undertaken.
2. Analysis phase is the stage where data is analysed via appropriate methods in order to understand the main events and the structure of relations involved in the phenomena. In this study, it is a retroductive phase and, therefore, the aim is to seek an explanation of potential mechanisms and structures that produce the phenomenon studied. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to obtain a comprehensive overview of the phenomena of human rights in and through sport.
3. Assessment phase or elimination phase refers to the interpretation of results, inference to other situations and postulation of explanations or theories that adequately describe the phenomena. In this phase, we interpreted the results obtained with existing theories and bringing together the mixed methods analysis with the aim of reaching conclusions about causal mechanisms that generate an effect to the promotion of human rights in and through sport.
4. Action phase involves the dissemination of the research design and, if desired, the implementation of changes to transform the phenomena. The

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport development of the RITES Model, a theory to bridge the gap between policy, practice and education in human rights in and through sport, is the main outcome of this research. As Heron and Reason (2008, p.144) declare:

*“The outcome of good research is not just books and academic papers, but it is also the creative action of people to address matters that are important to them ... it is concerned too with revisioning how we understand our world, as well as transforming practice within it.”*

Figure 11 depicts the research design used in this study, following the four phases outlined above.

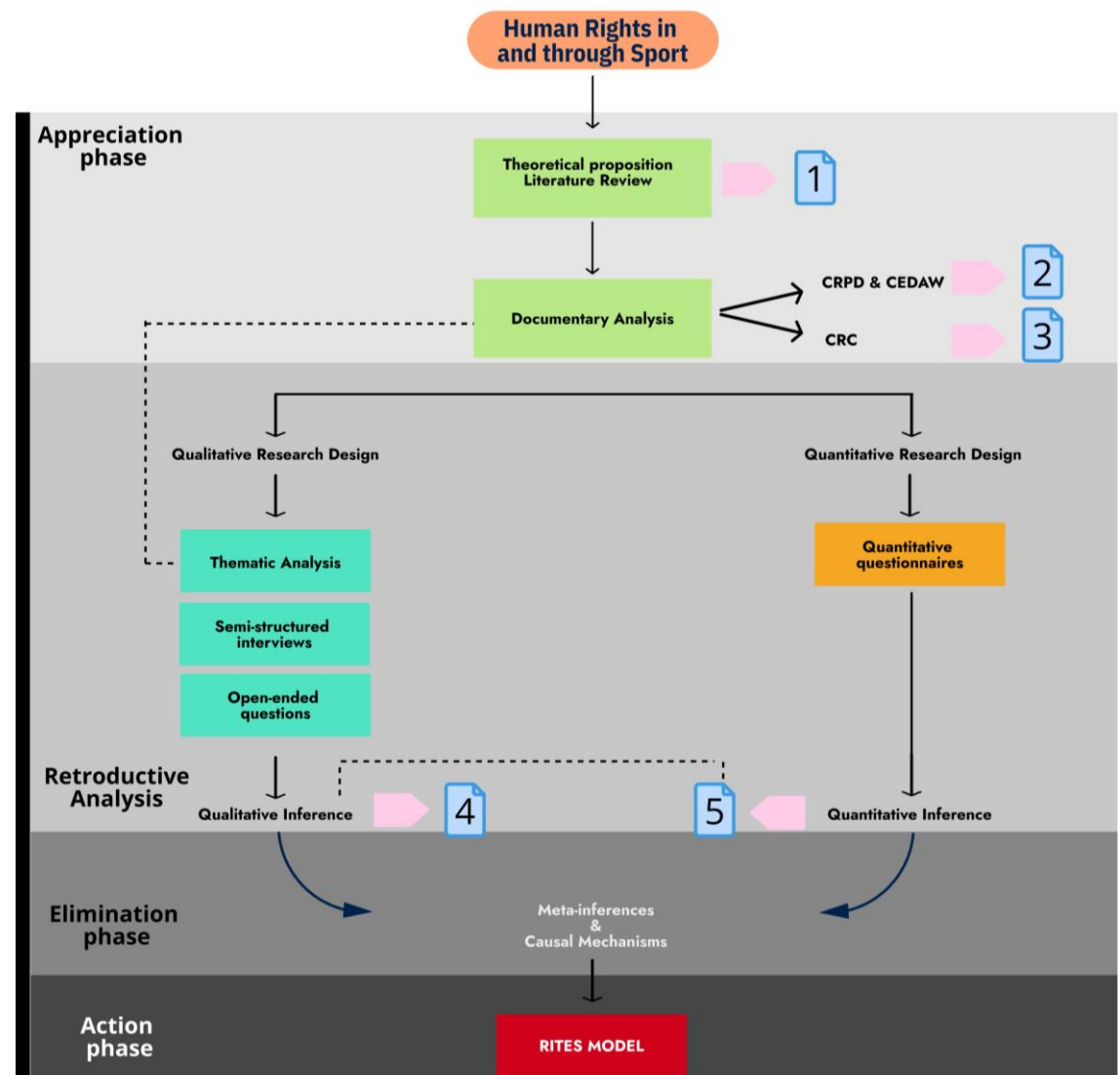


Figure 11. Mixed method retroductive research design. Adapted from Zachariadis, et al. (2013).

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### 3.2.1. Emergence and multilevel research

As outlined in the previous chapter, the relationship between sport policy development and human rights has not received enough attention in the academic literature. The interplay between sport policy and human rights is an emergent theme that should be further researched. Based on complexity theory, Kozłowski et al. (2013, p.583) define emergence “as a dynamic, interactive process and specify three core conceptual foci to capture its essential nature: It is multilevel, process oriented, and temporal”. In this definition, there are some concepts to be noted, which are relevant to our research and need to be consequently addressed in the methodology: 1) Multilevel; 2) process oriented; and 3) temporal.

First, multilevel refers to the fact that a phenomenon is manifested at different levels and, therefore, should be studied at different levels. Molina-Azorín, et al. (2020, p.320) define multilevel research as:

*“the development of multilevel theory (for example, combining different theoretical approaches at different levels and establishing relationships between constructs at different levels), as well as the main elements of methods for empirical studies (sampling, data collection, variables and their measures, and analysis techniques, which may include quantitative and qualitative techniques)”.*

In this case, the aim is to establish a relationship between non-traditionally linked constructs, such as sport and human rights, at different levels. The understanding of human rights in and through sport can be considered a “*laminated system*” (Bhaskar and Danermark, 2006), as there are multiple causes that interplay with different contexts and have various effects at distinct levels, thus, shaping this phenomenon in multiple forms. This approach is recognized as legitimate within psychology, as recognized by

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport MacLachlan & McVeigh (2021). Thus, this is one of the frames that can be used for undertaken research from a CR perspective.

Consequently, a critical realist approach was adopted in this research, a theoretical paradigm that acknowledges the potential of combining different approaches (e.g. descriptive statistics, interpretative phenomenological analysis, etc.) and the use of mixed methods: quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques.

Secondly, an emergent phenomenon is a dynamic process mechanism that is shaping and driving interaction among key elements. This is congruent with the epistemological characteristic of CR to identify causative mechanisms (deep domain) through a process of retroduction. The aim of this research is to identify causative mechanisms that offers the best explanation to explain the alignment between sport policy development and human rights in and through sport.

Thirdly, temporality is also a key aspect to be considered in emergent phenomena, as processes -and events- require time to develop and manifest (Bedwell et al., 2012). For this reason, longitudinal research designs are encouraged in order to capture complexity (DeShon, 2012). In this research, a longitudinal approach has not been taken into account due to the opportunities to conduct such research within the time frame and broader context in which this research was undertaken. The results therefore provide an initial mapping of processes, which could be further explored in a longer timeframe.

Finally, context is of paramount importance in conceptualizing an emergent phenomenon, as there are some contextual factors at higher level that shape and constraint the unfolding of the phenomena (Kozlowski et al., 2013).

### **3.3. Data Analysis techniques**

Chapters 4 to 7 include four studies, which used diverse quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyse data. In the methodology section of each



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport study, the process carried out is outlined. However, this section will provide further details on the process followed to analyse data and complement the information described in the published articles.

### **3.3.1. Documentary analysis**

In study 2 and 3, a documentary analysis of three key document types from the Treaty Body reporting mechanisms was undertaken. The purpose of these studies was to map, report and discuss concepts related to PEPAS in human rights treaties. Taking this into account, the selected method to carry out the analysis was a scoping review.

This research aimed to map, report and discuss concepts related to PEPAS and human rights and, as suggested by Munn, et al. (2018), for this purpose a scoping review is the most suitable approach. This methodology is used to inform research agendas and identify policy relevance and practical implications (Tricco, et al., 2016).

Three UN Treaties were analysed: The Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); the Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women /CEDAW); and the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). Despite recognizing that other Treaties also contain sport related articles, in this research only these three Treaties were addressed. I conducted these studies as part of work-related duties as researcher at the UNESCO Chair MTU, as some findings of the studies were presented to these three Treaty Bodies by the UNESCO Chair MTU on behalf of a wider consortium of sport-related organisations. The scoping review followed this inclusion/exclusion criteria (see Table 4):

	<b>Study 2 (CRPD &amp; CEDAW)</b>	<b>Study 3 (CRC)</b>
<b>Source of data</b>	State Party Reports and List of issues documents were retrieved from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights database (2019b); observations and recommendations were retrieved from the Universal Human Rights Index (2019c).	

<b>Date of publication</b>	On CEDAW, only documents published from 01/01/14 until 14/01/19 were retrieved; for the CRPD (as it is a more recent convention) all documents available until 14/01/19 were retrieved.	Only List of Issues and State Party Reports published from 01/01/15 until 01/01/20 were retrieved.
<b>Language</b>	Only documents in English were analysed	
<b>Search words</b>	Only paragraphs in the above documents that included the terms “Physical education”, “Physical activity”, “sport*” (which, includes related terms such as “sports” and “sporting”), “play” and “recreation” were analysed.	

*Table 4. Scoping review inclusion/exclusion criteria*

All reports of this search were downloaded to conduct quantitative and qualitative synthesis. For the quantitative analysis, two open-source, web-based applications were for visualization and analysis were used: Voyant tools and Overview. These software enabled the management of a large corpus of data and provided quantitative insights such as the frequency of mentions. Also, these software’s were used for text mining. In this way, an automatized search was run and all paragraphs that included the search words were downloaded for later, conducting a thematic analysis, using the software Quirkos (study 2) and NVivo (study 3).

### **3.3.2. Thematic analysis**

For the qualitative analysis of the scoping review, as well as for the open-ended questions of the questionnaire (study 5), thematic analysis was the selected technique. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.79) define thematic analysis as a “method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. This systematic process involves searching for themes across the corpus of the data set. For this purpose, each of the data items are classified under codes. Then, as part of an iterative process, codes are analysed and organised into themes. Appendix 2 shows the generated themes and codes that emerged from study 2.

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There are two types of thematic analysis: inductive and theoretical. The first one, as the names indicates, involved creating a new coding system based on the data received. On the other hand, the theoretical analysis consists in fitting the data into an existing theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this thesis, the thematic analysis used was inductive, as the goal of the research was to identify and map concepts related to PEPAS in human rights treaties.

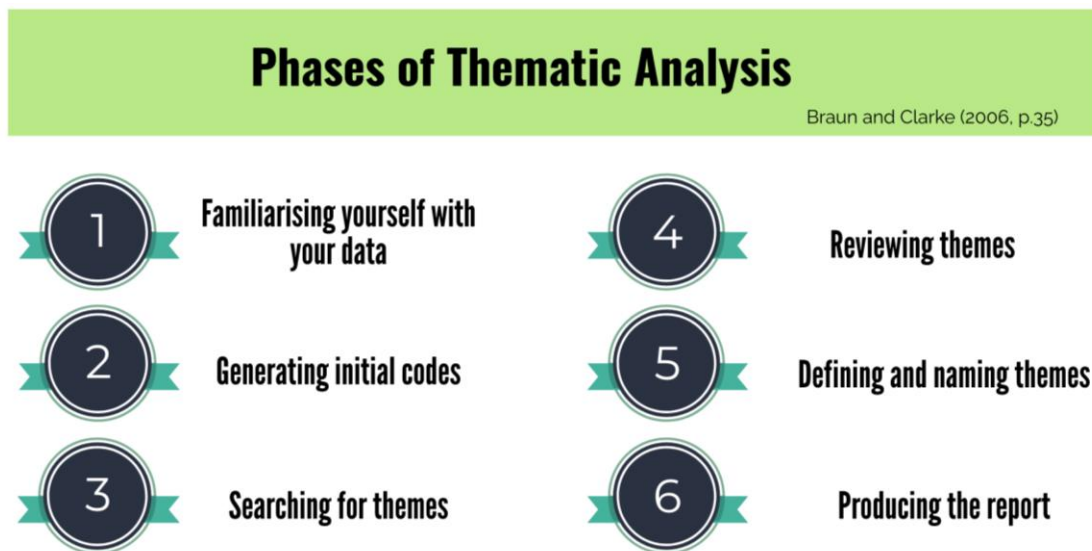


Figure 12. Phases of thematic analysis

The process for running the thematic analysis was composed of six phases (see figure 12), as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006):

- **Phase 1:** Data audio recorded in the interviews was transcribed. In each study, data collected was read and reread in order to become familiar with the data.
- **Phase 2:** The second phase involved creating initial codes to produce a coding manual. The codes were extracted through an induction across the corpus of data collected based on explicit meaning of the data set.
- **Phase 3:** The codes were organised into potential themes. All data collected was placed under one theme.
- **Phase 4:** The fourth phase involved generating a thematic „map“ of the analysis by linking the themes in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set.

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- **Phase 5:** An iterative process to refine each of the themes; create clear theme names; generate specific definitions for each theme; and understand how they interrelate between them.
- **Phase 6:** Finally, a selection of illustrative quotes or testimonials of each theme was extracted. These were used in the presentation of the results.

### **3.3.3. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Study 4**

In study 4, presented in chapter six, eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with sport practitioners to find out their personal experience on opportunities and barriers in Mauritius for vulnerable groups to access sport-related services and their understanding of the national sport policy. The approach adopted to analyse the data was based on interpretative phenomenological analysis. Smith and Osborn (2003, p.53) state that

*The aim of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is to explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world, and the main currency for an IPA study is the meanings particular experiences, events, and states hold for participants.*

The small sample facilitates a better understanding of participants' viewpoints at the micro-level. And through an inductive, idiographic and interpretative analysis, IPA provides a detailed examination of the phenomena grounded on participants insights (Smith & Osborn, 2015).

A protocol was developed for the interviews, which was composed by five areas: 1) introductory opening questions; 2) contribution of sport to people's lives; 3) approaches and strategies to inclusive access for all in sport policies in Mauritius; 4) implementation of inclusive sport programmes in Mauritius; 5) closing questions. To enhance reliability, I stucked very close to the interview plan and behaved as similar as

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport possible between interviews (Smith & Osborn, 2003). All interviews were recorded, and the audio was later transcribed to facilitate the analysis, which followed the same steps outlined in the subsection 3.3.2. of thematic analysis, with the particularity that in this case, under IPA, the quotes of participants had a significant weight in the presentation of results and discussion.

#### **3.3.4. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis and hypothesis testing: Study 5**

Chapter 7 includes study 5, which used a questionnaire to ascertain sport 'practitioners' understanding and application of human rights principles in and through sport. This questionnaire had mostly a quantitative approach, although it included a few open-ended questions that were analysed using a thematic analysis. The quantitative oriented questions were analysed with three techniques: descriptive statistics, factor analysis and statistical difference.

Descriptive statistics summarize data collected from a sample, including descriptors such as mean, median, mode, variance and standard deviation. (Sutanapong & Louangrath, 2015). In the study, descriptive statistics were used to get to know the main characteristics of the participants that completed the questionnaire. This first step is required if the researcher intends to use inferential statistics, which allow us to demonstrate associations, infer causes, draw and generalise from a sample to the population (Marshall & Jonker, 2010).

In this research, a bespoke online questionnaire was used, which also included two standardized tools: the SDO-7 scale and the 10-item personality inventory (TIPI). To reduce the amount of data obtained and assemble common variables into descriptive categories, a factor analysis was run (Yong & Pearce, 2013). In the case of the two standardized scales, despite their psychometric properties being established in other samples (Ho et al., (2015; Romero, et al., 2012), their factorability was analysed to ensure that they were relevant for the sample of this study.

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There are two factors analysis techniques: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory factor analysis. The first one was implemented in this research, as the purpose of EFA is to uncover complex patterns and testing predictions (Child, 2006). Also, EFA is the first step in developing new scales and metrics (Yong & Pearce, 2013). The procedure followed to run an EPA is thoroughly described in the study.

Once the key factors were extracted for each section of the questionnaire, statistical inference techniques were applied for hypothesis testing: Mann-Whitney U Test was used for comparing 2 samples (e.g., male/female and personality groups) and Kruskal-Wallis for comparing 3 or more samples (e.g., age groups or education levels). The hypothesis testing of key relationships between the variables in each questionnaire is included in Appendix 6.

### **3.6. Methodological strengths and limitations**

This section addresses overarching methodological strengths and issues for the studies undertaken in this research, including ethical considerations, reliability and validity issues, and researcher reflexivity.

#### **3.6.1. Ethical considerations**

For studies one, two and three, there were no ethical considerations, as they were based on document analysis. However, study four and five required an ethical review. Study four received ethical approval under Tier 2 from the Maynooth University Social Research Ethics Subcommittee and the School of Education at the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE). Study five received ethical approval from the same ethics Subcommittee in Maynooth University. The letters of ethical approval are available in Appendix 1.

In both studies, there were human participants and, therefore, there are some aspects to be considered while undertaking research. These are some key aspects that were taken under consideration:

- In study 4, a purposive sample of key stakeholders were selected to participate in interviews. Potential participants were informed via email and social media of the opportunity to participate in the study and the study information sheet and consent forms were shared in an accessible electronic format to the potential participants in advance. The contact details of the principal researcher were provided to offer any clarifications or follow up information whenever requested. A researcher from the UNESCO Chair Munster Technological University acted as a gatekeeper (Singh & Wassenaar, 2016) and invited participants to participate in this study. The gatekeeper was functional in the identification of key stakeholders from diverse organisations and roles in Mauritius as well as with the establishment of communication between participants and researcher. Adequate time to read the form thoroughly (5 to 7 days) was given to participants, and in case they did not read it in advance, the researcher read the form out loud to them prior the interview. The researcher was available to further discuss the study in person at a specifically convened meeting. Participants agreeing to take part in the interview were required to sign a written consent form or provide consent in an audio recorded transcribed format.
- In study 5, participants were invited via social media of the UNESCO Chair MTU to engage with the questionnaire. The UNESCO Chair MTU used posts such as the following:
  - “How are human rights applied in and through sport? If you are a sport-related professional and/or student over 18, help us by answering our 15min survey”.
  - “We are conducting a study to learn more about challenges that people working in sport have in applying a human rights ethos to their work &

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport the factors that might influence this. Share your experience by answering our 15 min questionnaire”.

- The researcher included the study information sheet and consent forms in electronic format in the first page of the online questionnaire to inform potential participants of the voluntary opportunity to participate in the study. Participants were requested to read and, if agree, tick a box to give consent before starting with the questionnaire. The contact details of the principal researcher were provided to offer any clarifications or follow up information if requested.
- As in both studies humans were involved, the risk of breach of confidentiality could happen. Participants voluntarily signed an information and consent sheet, where the exercise of obtaining, handling, and storing data was described. As outlined in section 3.4 of Maynooth University Research Ethics Policy (2020, p.11), “consent should be an ongoing, negotiated process, particularly in circumstances where the research is carried out over an extended period of time or through repeated data collection sessions”.
- Data obtained from research participants was of non-sensitive nature and their anonymity was preserved at all stages. They did not need to agree to share details such as name and organisation. Also, I have been compliant with Maynooth’s Data protection Law, to address the risk.
- Beneficiaries of this research might include marginalised groups. The ethical issues about having vulnerable research participants are mainly due to their lack of ability to provide informed consent and, also, the sensitivity from the researcher, as these individuals are a greater risk of being deceived or forced to participate (Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011). However, as the topics explored were not of sensitive nature and the informed consent was obtained before starting the research process, this potential issue was addressed.



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Considering the minimal risk of both studies and the potential practical, research and societal implications that both studies were able to provide, a research plan was designed (see 3.2. research design) to ensure that research participants were at no risk.

### **3.6.2. Reliability and validity**

Debates on how to assess knowledge claims made by qualitative research have been extensively recorded in academia (Hammersley, 2009; Smith & Sparkes, 2016; Ronkainen & Wiltshire, 2019). The use of concepts such as reliability and validity are common in quantitative research, yet their definition should be reenvisioned under qualitative paradigms such as critical realism.

Reliability refers to the ability to replicate research processes and results. This definition is rooted in the quantitative paradigm. In qualitative research the essence of reliability lies with consistency (Leung, 2015). In a CR context, reliability is considered under “methodological trustworthiness” (Healy & Perry, 2000), which refers to the capacity to audit research, for instance, using quotations in the written report. In this research a transcript was developed for all interviews (study 4 and 5) and quotes were used in the analysis phase to exemplify the connection between the experience of events by participants and the potential generative mechanisms. Also, as depicted in the research design (section 3.2), the researcher kept track of all steps developed in this research with a view to allowing replication of the research in other contexts. This is another mechanism to enhance transparency and rigour.

In CR, the application of triangulation of different data sources and theories enhance explanatory value. Researchers are encouraged to triangulate to overcome the perceptual limitations of the domain of the actual and have a well-informed view of the domain of the real (Frederiksen & Kringelum, 2021). As Patton (2001, p.247) claims “triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches”.

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport  
In this research, mixed methods and approaches were used in the different studies.  
Through a process of retroduction, underpinned by a critical realist approach, and based  
on the data obtained across the studies, the subsequent development of a model was  
undertaken.

The notion of validity in qualitative research does not refer to the property of the  
data only, but the “appropriateness” of the tools, processes and data (Leung, 2015).  
Smith & Johnston (2014) affirm that validity is a logical assessment of the relationship  
between data and events and, consequently, identify four types of validities in critical  
research, as outlined in Table 5.

<b>Type of validity</b>	<b>Critical Realism</b>
Measurement validity	Evidence that the empirical data collected gives information about the events of interest
Internal validity	Evidence that the particular proposed generative mechanism and only that mechanism has been triggered to cause the event/effect observed.
Ecological validity	Evidence that the theorised mechanism for a phenomenon in the domain of practice was activated in the research environment in a way that is reflective of practice
External validity	Evidence that the mechanism that causes the events in the research environment causes events outside of the specific domain of the research

Table 5. Concept of validity under critical realism (adapted from Smith & Johnston, 2014).

In order to assess the validity and consequently the quality of research from a CR perspective, the use of a criteria/list is encouraged (Smith & McGannon, 2018). For this reason, as shown in Table 6, the research process described in this thesis is tested against a list of suggestions proposed by Ronkainen & Wiltshire (2019) to probe the strengths and limitations of this research under a critical realist approach.

<b>Realist suggestions for qualitative research in sport</b>	<b>Actions for this research</b>
<b>How empirically adequate is the research account?</b>	
How well has the descriptive validity (Maxwell, 1992, 2017) of the research account been established	Data collected in the interviews was transcribed. Also, throughout the duration of the research, I took notes, updated the research design and highlighted the key findings in each study to keep coherency and consistency.
How well have the limitations of data collection techniques been guarded against?	This research has used multiple methods, including quantitative and qualitative techniques. The analysis based on retrodution has used the triangulation of all results obtained to develop a theory to explain the phenomena studied. One of the limitations was that the engagement of participants was sporadic and not prolonged. A longer engagement would have provided a deeper understanding, yet this issue has also been addressed through the use of mixed methods.
<b>How ontologically plausible is the research account?</b>	
How well does the account engage with theoretical explanation of the empirical evidence?	Despite the limited amount of academic literature on the theme of human rights in and through sport, the search for the generative mechanisms has drawn upon existing theory from diverse disciplines (e.g., human rights, psychology, organisational studies, etc.).

How well does the theoretical account accommodate context and complexity?	Studies 1 examined the broader socio-political context, and the rest of studies were also congruent with different environmental circumstances. The RITES model (described later) includes the category “contextual constraints and influences” to accommodate context and complexity.
How thoroughly have the researchers engaged with competing alternative explanations of the evidence?	Three out of the five studies have been already published in peer-reviewed journals (the other two are under review). Also, I am part of a research group where researchers come from different theoretical and methodological perspectives. Consequently, throughout the research process there has been multiple discussions with academics to test the ideas presented against other potential theories. Similarly, I have presented at conferences and UN workshops and events with people from different backgrounds and I have received questions and comments that helped me in my research. Also, I published in multidisciplinary journals and received reviewers’ feedback comments to improve my studies.
<b>How much practical utility does the research account have?</b>	
How well do the research claims guide practical actions in the real-world?	One of the main outcomes of this research is the development of the RITES Model, whose purpose is to bring coherence and alignment between policy, practice and education in human rights in and through sport. Also, the development of an article for youth and a reflexive tool (Appendix 7), is another example of a practical outcome.
Have those practical actions been shown to have impact on the phenomenon under investigation?	Many ideas emerging from this research are having an impact beyond the academic sphere. For example, the main findings of studies 2 and 3 were shared with Human Rights Treaty Bodies (CRPD, CRC and CEDAW) in thematic meetings organised in Geneva with them (Appendix 8). Also, key concepts of this research were embedded in the TRUST Online educational modules ( <a href="http://www.trustsport.net">www.trustsport.net</a> ).

*Table 6. List of realist questions to help researchers work with threats to descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity (adapted from Ronkainen & Wiltshire (2019).*

Despite the lack of a universally accepted terminology of criteria to assess qualitative research (Noble & Smith, 2015), researchers should clearly define their ontology and epistemology and the implications of these in all the stages of the research process such as methodology, data collection techniques, analysis or presentation of findings (Smith & McGannon, 2018).

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### **3.6.3. Reflexivity**

When undertaking critical realist research, researchers should be aware of the ways in which their beliefs, attitudes, socio-cultural background and experiences might have an effect on the research. In turn, they should strive to minimise such biases and be as objective as possible (Saunders, et al., 2009). Mason (1996, p.6) defined reflexive research being where:

*the researcher should constantly take stock of their actions and their role in the research process and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their “data.”*

The process of reflexivity brings multiple benefits for the research process.

Finlay (2002, p.532) holds that reflexivity has the potential to be a valuable tool to:

1. Examine the impact of the position, perspective and presence of the researcher.
2. Promote rich insight through examining personal responses and interpersonal dynamics.
3. Open up unconscious motivations and implicit biases in the researcher’s approach.
4. Empower others by opening up a more radical consciousness.
5. Evaluate the research process, method and outcomes.
6. Enable public scrutiny of the integrity of the research through offering a methodological log of research decisions.

In this research, I have used a mixed-method approach underpinned by a critical realist perspective. Throughout the process of interpreting the results obtained in each of the published articles, I have continuously asked myself questions about the potential alternatives to interpret the results. I was conscious of my own sociocultural biases, and

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I tried to offer an objective perspective of the results. I am a middle class, white male from a Western country with a high level of formal education. I have a BSc in Psychology, a BSc in Sport Sciences and a MSc in research. In my professional career, I worked a few years in an occupational centre as adapted physical activity instructor with adults with cerebral palsy, as well as a project assistant and researcher in multiple universities. These experiences forged in me a special interest in disability, social justice and empowerment. Also, I had the chance to live abroad in multiple European countries. In all these countries prevail European values such as democracy, inclusion, justice and human rights. In summary, all these experiences shaped the way I may interpret phenomena in a way that reflect my lens, which might be different from someone else' interpretation.

As an example of an objective interpretation of results, in the analysis of the interviews of study four, I used an interpretative phenomenological analysis, with a view of better understanding how participants are making sense of their personal experience and the phenomena of this study. In this case, the qualitative evaluation checklist developed by Patton (2003) was very useful not only to ensure that reflexivity was part of the process, but also to improve the research design of the study. In this way, it helped me to take decisions on the design of the questions for participants and the evaluation of data collected.

In critical realism, the process of reflexivity leads to seek the causal relationships that enable (or inhibit) social relations in a given context. Therefore, reflexivity is of great importance to map out a theory of causality, which is fully compatible with qualitative research methods (Roberts, 2014).

## **Chapter four: Study 2**

### Assessing and improving the national reporting on human rights in and through Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS)

This chapter contains the published version of the following publication:

Masdeu Yélamos, G., Carty, C. and MacLachlan, M. (2020). Assessing and improving the national reporting on human rights in and through Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS). *Journal of Sport Psychology*, Vol. 29 No.5, pp. <https://rpd-online.com/index.php/rpd/issue/view/6/7>

The language used by United Nation Bodies can be uninviting for readers who have never engaged with this writing style. To facilitate the readability of this article, the use of the UNTERM portal is recommended. UNTERM is a multilingual database for official terminology relevant to the work of the United Nations (UNTERM, 2022).

#### **4.1. Abstract**

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) are two of the nine international human rights treaties that safeguard the rights of vulnerable groups. This paper aims to examine, from a macropsychology perspective, the relevance and significance of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) in reporting mechanisms related to the CRPD and CEDAW. A systematic document review of State Parties Reports (CEDAW n=100, CRPD= 133); List of Issues (CEDAW n=123, CRPD=84) and Concerns/Observations and Recommendations (CEDAW n=12, CRPD n=23) was undertaken. States Parties acknowledge the significance of sport and report on some key aspects, but they do not provide enough

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport evidence or data to evaluate the impact of a legal framework into practice. The guidance given by the CEDAW and CRPD committees on articles related to PEPAS was appropriate and had a cross-cutting intersectional approach, although limited in scale. With the support of the sport sector both Treaty Bodies can leverage their capacity to call for greater attention to this agenda. A General Comment on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) would help to provide clarification and guidance to State Parties on how to report on these related articles.

**Key words:** evaluation, indicators, inclusion, treaty bodies, social justice.

### **Resumen**

La Convención sobre la eliminación de todas las formas de discriminación contra la mujer (CEDAW) y la Convención sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad (CRPD) son dos de los nueve tratados internacionales de derechos humanos que salvaguardan los derechos de grupos vulnerables. Este artículo pretende examinar, desde una perspectiva de la macropsicología, la relevancia y la importancia de la Educación Física, la Actividad Física y el Deporte (PEPAS) en los mecanismos de evaluación relacionados con la CDPD y la CEDAW. Una revisión sistemática de documentos de los Informes de los Estados Parte (CEDAW n = 100, CRPD = 133); Lista de problemas (CEDAW n = 123, CRPD = 84) y Preocupaciones / Observaciones y Recomendaciones (CEDAW n = 12, CRPD n = 23). Los Estados Partes reconocen la importancia del deporte e informan sobre algunos aspectos clave, pero no proporcionan evidencia o datos suficientes para evaluar el impacto de un marco legal en la práctica. La orientación brindada por los Comités de la CEDAW y CRPD sobre artículos relacionados con PEPAS fue apropiada y tuvo un enfoque interseccional transversal, aunque de escala limitada. Con el apoyo del sector del deporte, ambos órganos de Tratados pueden aprovechar su capacidad para solicitar una mayor atención a esta agenda. Un comentario general sobre educación física, actividad física y deporte



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport ayudaría a proporcionar aclaraciones y orientación a los Estados Partes sobre cómo informar sobre estos artículos relacionados.

**Palabras clave:** evaluación, indicadores, inclusión, comités, justicia social.

#### 4.2. Introduction

There is new momentum to reinvigorate sport within and beyond United Nations agencies, as illustrated by the development and convergence of global policies such as the Kazan Action Plan (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017), the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (World Health Organisation, 2018) and the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace 2018–2020 (United Nations General Assembly, 2018). These frameworks were ratified by the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly (2018) “Sport as an enabler of sustainable development”. Collective sectoral action emerged as a response to Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015), which advocates for imminent action to leave no one behind underpinned by a human rights-based approach (Masdeu Yelamos, Carty and Clardy, 2019).

Under international human rights law, the protection and promotion of rights of vulnerable groups has necessitated the development of conventions to safeguard their rights and to establish monitoring bodies to ensure the compliance of State Parties (Nifosi-Sutton, 2017). At present, there are nine international human rights Treaties (OHCHR, 2006) that, together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN General Assembly, 1948), promote the rights of vulnerable groups via a specific treaty body, which is composed by a panel of independent experts (See table 7). State Parties that ratify these Treaties are obliged to report on the implementation of conventions to the respective Committee, who review the implementation of the convention on a regular basis.

Treaty Name (Date of Signature)	Acronym	Treaty Body
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International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (21 Dec. 1965)	ICERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (16 Dec. 1966)	ICCPR	Human Rights Committee (HRC)
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (16 Dec. 1966)	ICESCR	Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (18 Dec. 1979)	CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment and Punishment (10 Dec. 1984)	CAT	Committee Against Torture (CAT)
Convention on the Rights of the Child (20 Nov. 1989)	CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (18 Dec. 1990)	ICMW	Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (13 Dec. 2006)	CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (20 Dec. 2006)	CPED	Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)

*Table 7. Nine international Human Treaties and Treaty Bodies*

While psychology has made many and varied valuable contributions to sport and exercise (Moran, 2013) these have generally been at the individual and team levels, and sometimes at the organisational and community levels. However, it has had a modest presence at policy level. Macropsychology is the study of how the broader settings and conditions of people’s lives, influence their behaviour (MacLachlan, 2014; MacLachlan et al, 2019). These settings and conditions very much include social structures and policies, and also working with governments and UN agencies, to facilitate inclusive change (MacLachlan, et.al, 2019; MacLachlan, Mannan and Wescott, under review).

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This paper develops a macropsychology perspective in Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS).

The standard reporting cycle for the Treaties and Treaty bodies described in Table 1 consists of the following six stages (OHCHR, 2013):

1. The State submits its report.
2. Treaty body presents State with a list of issues (LoI) and questions based on concerns raised by the State's report.
3. The State may submit written replies to the LoI.
4. A constructive dialogue between the Committee and the State takes place during a session of the Treaty Body.
5. The Treaty body issues its concluding observations, including recommendations, on the report.
6. The follow-up procedures on the implementation of treaty body recommendations takes place.

In this reporting cycle, civil society – which includes non-governmental organisations (NGO's) and United Nations (UN) agencies - can contribute by submitting shadow reports at stages 2, 4 and 6; with a view to providing a more 'grass roots', balanced and complete view of the national reality to the Committee. Despite the limitations of this reporting system (UN General Assembly, 2014), treaty bodies can have a positive impact; improving human rights standards by providing guidance to State Parties on how to address national issues (Lhotský, 2017).

In this paper we focus on two of the treaties: The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (UN General Assembly, 2007) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (UN General Assembly, 1979). Both treaties include articles related to sport. For instance, article 30.5 of the CRPD refers to the States' duty to enable persons with disabilities to

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities. While the article does not specifically reference physical education or physical activity, these two disciplines are inherent in article 30.5 and in article 24 (education) 25 (health) 26 (habitation and rehabilitation) and are relevant and definitive reporting areas that should be addressed in order to achieve the rights envisioned by the Convention. Similarly, CEDAW addresses sport in article 10 b/c/h and specifically (g) “The same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education”; and also, article 13 (c) “The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life”. Additional transversal articles are also addressed: 8 (representation), 11 (employment), 12 (health), 14 (rural women) and 22 (Role of Specialized Agencies). Given the pervasiveness of sport across these human rights articles, this research aimed to examine the extent, relevance and significance of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) reporting to the CRPD and CEDAW. The relevance of physical education, physical activity and sport across the intersection of disability and women’s rights is also explored.

### **4.3. Methodology**

The United Nations Development Programme (2018) developed a three-level framework that governments and stakeholders can use to act in their endeavour to progress to achieve the SDGs: 1) find out more about the ones left behind; 2) empower those left behind; and 3) enact inclusive and forward-looking policies aligned to the SDGs. The study is purposively examining the impact of human rights reporting pertaining to the first stage as a mechanism for ‘finding out more’. Whilst acknowledging other reporting mechanisms exist, this research presents a documentary analysis of three key national reporting mechanisms (OHCHR, 2019a)

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- a) *State Parties Reports* (CEDAW n=100, CRPD= 133): The report that a country is required to submit regularly to a human rights treaty indicating the measures it has adopted to implement the treaty and the difficulties it has encountered.
- b) *List of Issues* (CEDAW n=123, CRPD=84): A list of issues or questions, formulated by a treaty body on the basis of a State party report and other information available to it (information from United Nations specialized agencies, NHRIs, NGOs, etc.), which is transmitted to the State party in advance of the session at which the treaty body will consider the report.
- c) *Concerns/Observations and Recommendations* (CEDAW n=12, CRPD n=23): The observations and recommendations issued by a treaty body after consideration of a State party's report.

This research aimed to map, report and discuss concepts related to PEPAS and human rights and, as suggested by Munn, et al. (2018), for this purpose a scoping review is the most suitable approach.

A scoping review was undertaken following these inclusion/exclusion criteria:

- State Party Reports and List of issues documents were retrieved from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights database (2019b); observations and recommendations were retrieved from the Universal Human Rights Index (2019c).
- On CEDAW, only documents published from 01/01/14 until 14/01/19 were retrieved; for the CRPD (as it is a more recent convention) all documents available until 14/01/19 were retrieved.
- Only documents in English were analysed. All documents available in other languages were excluded.
- Only paragraphs in the above documents that included the terms “Physical education”, “Physical activity”, “sport”, “sports” and “sporting”, were analysed.

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Computational and statistical software were used to analyse documents. Two open-source, web-based applications were for visualization and analysis: Voyant tools and Overview. In addition, Quirkos was used for qualitative coding and content analysis was conducted to identify key themes, based on grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2006).

#### **4.4. Results**

The results of this scoping review are presented for each of the two Treaties reviewed.

##### **4.4.1. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

73% of State Party Reports on CEDAW addressed sport (including sports and sporting), 22% physical education and 9% some aspects of physical activity (see Table 8). Regarding the number of mentions, there was a significant difference between mentions of these 3 concepts and other concepts such as education and health, which were much more prominent.

<b>Keyword</b>	<b>Documents</b>	<b>Counts</b>
health*	100	6334
education*	100	6982
disability	79	434
sport*	73	642
recreation*	39	119
physical activity	9	13
physical education	22	34

\* Match terms that start with this word as one term. For example, sport= sport, sports and sporting

*Table 8. Number of mentions in State Party Reports*

The qualitative analysis (see Appendix 3) indicated that the most prominent reported topics on State Party reports related to the promotion and level of participation of women in sport (21%); mentions of national sport entities that promote sport and physical activity (21%); information related to participation of women in sport (14%), including grassroots until elite athletes; relevant legislation to safeguard access to sport opportunities (11%); funding and resources allocated to the promotion of sport for women (8%); comments related to school sport for girls and promotion of sport throughout the education system; and governance measure to foster gender balance in sport organisations (6%).

The List of Issues provided by the CEDAW Committee has drawn attention to violence, discrimination, health, education, sexual, law, trafficking, services and data. Health and education registered 910 and 945 counts respectively, whereas sport was mentioned only 20 times in 11 documents. There was no mention of physical education or physical activity at all. Regarding the emerging themes from these 20 mentions, the need to break down gender stereotypes through sport practice was the most recurrent topic, followed by participation of girls in school sport (see Figure 13).

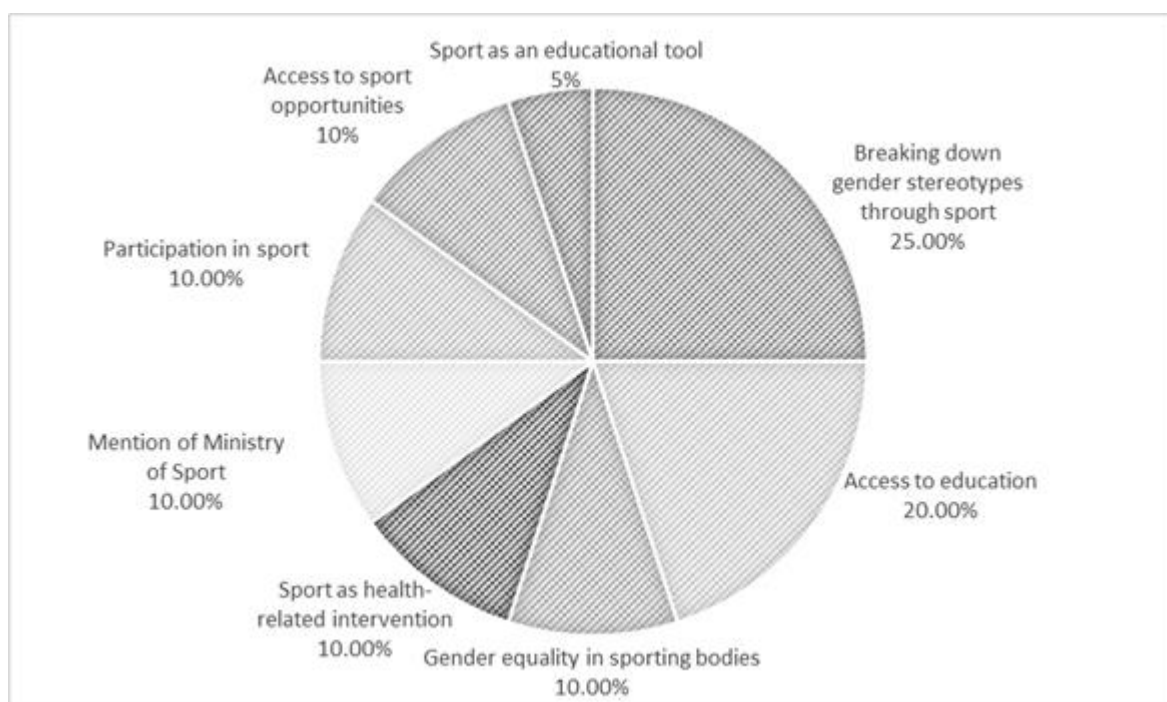


Figure 13. CEDAW List of Issues on PEPAS 2014-2019 – Thematic Analysis

In addition, 6 concerns/observations and 6 recommendations were provided. The Committee pointed out that women do not participate in PEPAS due to household duties, and women with disabilities were excluded due to stereotypes. Also, the Committee were concerned about the underrepresentation of women in sport federations, and the broadcasting time given to women’s sports competitions. The recommendations from the Committee pointed towards the need to promote participation of girls and women in sport and to address the unequal access to sport and recreational activities for women and girls.

#### 4.4.2. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

87% of the CRPD States Party Reports reported on sport, 22% on physical education and 16% on physical education. The number of mentions was significant (sport=2819, PE=90 and PA=29), although many sport mentions were direct references to the title of article 30.5 (10%). State Parties reported on a wide and diverse range of topics (45%), such as sport in school, participation in Paralympics or Special Olympics events or multidisciplinary service provision which included sport activities.



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Nonetheless, the most relevant categories were a) initiatives to promote sport for people with disabilities (16%); b) mentions to national disability sport entities (9%) or c) Ministries of Sport (8%); d) legislative frameworks and measures adopted to protect the rights of people with disabilities in sport settings (8%) and e) aspects related to accessibility to sport facilities (4%) (see Figure 14).

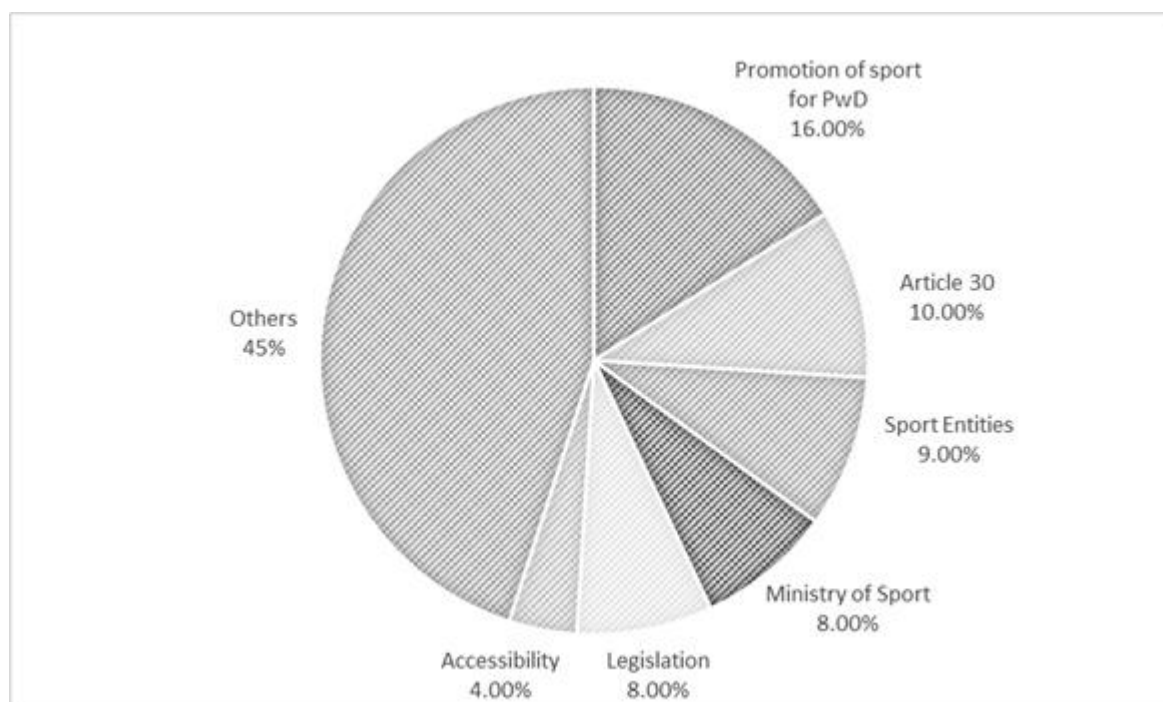


Figure 14. CRPD State Party Reports - Thematic Analysis

The CRPD Committee highlighted, in general, rights, education, health, children, service and care. In the list of issues “sport” was mentioned 74 times in 63 documents, whereas there was no mention of physical education or physical activity at all. Most of the remarks only referred to article 30 of the Convention, which explicitly mentions participation in sport (53%). Apart from that, measures to ensure and promote access to sport (12%), aspects related to accessibility in sport facilities (12%) and legislative measures (5%), were the most prominent topics (see Figure 15).

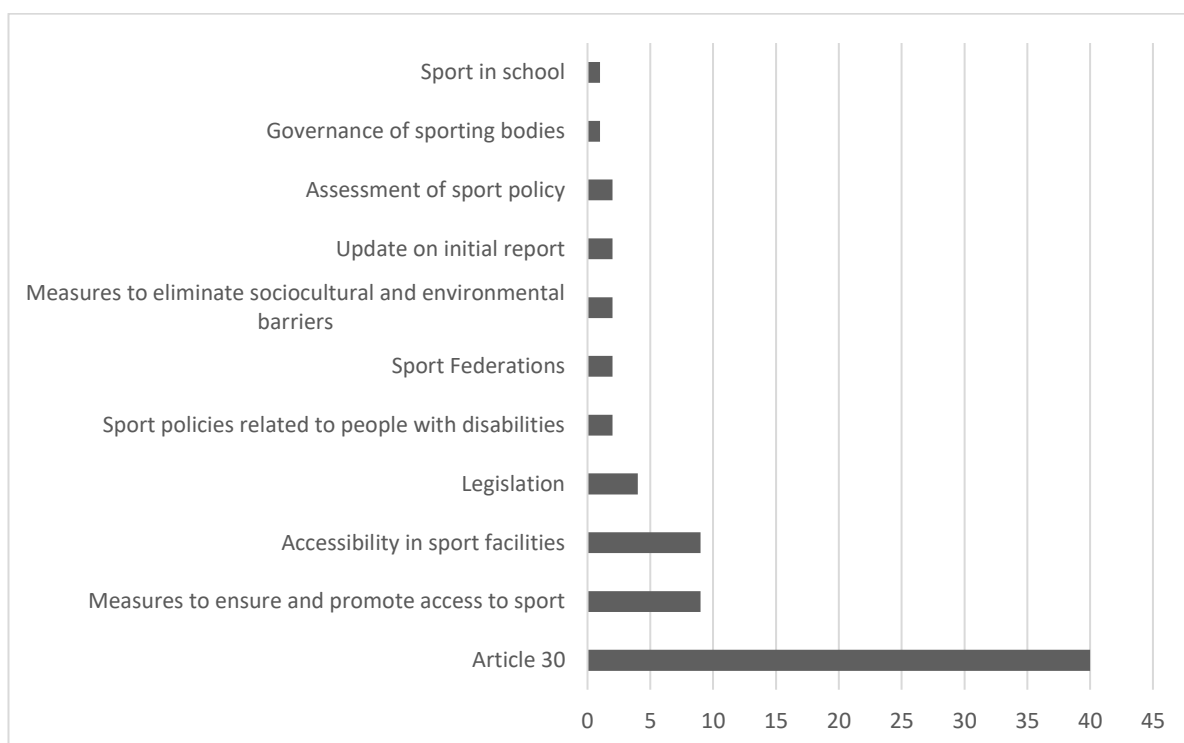


Figure 15. CRPD List of Issues on PEPAS – Thematic Analysis

The observations and recommendations from the CRPD Committee highlighted the need to review legislative and policy frameworks to safeguard the right to participation of people with disabilities in sport (26%). They were also concerned about the lack of support to access sport (22%) as well as issues related to accessibility to sport facilities (22%) and absence of inclusive sport programmes (17%). Finally, the Committee also recommended to itemize a budget for promoting sport for people with disabilities (8%) and flagged current barriers to participation (4%).

#### 4.5. Discussion and Conclusions

The reporting procedure for CEDAW and CRPD is a legal obligation for State Parties who have ratified these conventions. It provides an opportunity to stimulate national dialogue on human rights and should ultimately benefit rightsholders at the national level (OHCHR, 2017). Our analysis suggests that while State Parties report on PEPAS, this process is selective; it is neither systematic nor exhaustive. Attempts to promote the inclusion of marginalized groups in sport, using psychological or other

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport types of interventions, will be constrained to the extent that the broader settings and conditions for inclusion are not addressed in reporting mechanisms. Psychology has a role to play both in terms of valuing marginalized groups and promoting specific interventions; but also, in influencing the broader context of social structures and policies (MacLachlan et al, 2019).

It is noteworthy that, while still relatively modest in comparison to other areas, the number of mentions of “Physical education, physical activity and sport” was much higher in CRPD reporting (sport=2819, PE=90 and PA=29) than in CEDAW reporting (sport=642, PE=34 and PA=13). This may be attributed to the clear articulation of CRPD article 30 “Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport” as well as to the high-profile and robust structure around disability sport, led by global organisations, such as Paralympics, Special Olympics and Deaflympics.

Across both Conventions, States Parties acknowledge the significance of sport and report on some key aspects, but they do not provide enough evidence or data to realistically evaluate the impact of these Conventions. For example, the Palestine report to the CEDAW stated:

“With regard to sport for women with disabilities, it should be noted that the law on sport attaches particular importance to developing the potential of persons with disabilities and providing them with opportunities to engage in sporting activities at high levels.”

In this case, reporting on the specific legal protection for women with disabilities under the law on sport is of great significance, however, in order to evaluate the value and impact of this law it is necessary to accompany this statement with statistics or performance indicators, for example, the number of women with disabilities affiliated to sport clubs since the amendment of the law. This would allow the country

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Uzbekistan's report exemplifies this point reporting on participation levels of women in sport and employment rate:

“The country is working to encourage women and girls to become involved in physical fitness and sports. The number of women and girls involved in sports is more than 1.9 million, of which 680,400 take part on a regular basis and enter competitions. In general education schools, vocational colleges, institutions of higher learning, sports clubs and societies, 8,725 women work as physical education teachers, trainers, and instructors for various sports”.

The adage “What gets measured, gets done”, in this context, refers to the tendency for activities to pursue subsequent reporting requirements. By guiding reporting toward specific quantification, we can encourage specific activities. Disaggregation of data should therefore be encouraged. Some countries already do this in terms of gender and disability.

On CEDAW State Party reports, one of the emerging themes was sport governing bodies and gender equality. Countries were reporting on the progress made in increasing the number of female representations in sport organisations. This is a very specific action that has been developed in the last 20 years and gained traction among State Parties. In 2000, in the 2nd International Olympic Committee World Conference on Women in Sport, the following resolution was adopted: “The Olympic Movement must reserve at least 20 percent of decision-making positions for women within their structures by the end of 2005”. Since then, this has been a top priority in gender promotion equality strategies. On the other hand, one of the most prominent topics on the CRPD is related to accessibility. Measures to increase accessibility to sport facilities is a pertinent topic, however, there are many other factors that need to be addressed in

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport order to ensure the right to participation of people with disabilities in sport, as exemplified by the Universal Transformational Management Framework (Masdeu Yelamos, et al., 2019) and these are rarely mentioned in country reports.

On the positive side our analysis also found that the guidance given by the CEDAW and CRPD committees on articles related to PEPAS was appropriate and had a cross-cutting intersectional approach, although limited in scale. Despite the undoubted expertise of Treaty Body members, we argue that they could benefit from technical information related to PEPAS, in order to improve their guidance notes to the State Parties, and to help them be more specific with recommendations likely to produce the desired changes to promote inclusion. For example, one area to improve on State Party and Treaty Body reporting is the misrepresentation of physical education and sport in school settings, the terms have been used synonymously. Expert technical guidance could prove valuable to bring clarity to the concepts and to determine indicators to safeguard the right to participate in inclusive physical education. This aligns with the identified need to deploy human rights capacity-building experts to provide states with training on reporting (Lhotský, 2017).

MacLachlan and Mannan (2016) argue that “barriers to implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are embedded within longstanding social structures and attitudes that do not give way easily” (p.102.). One approach to addressing such barriers is the use of Theory of Change (ToC), which has developed from the early social and organisational psychology of Kurt Lewin; drawing in particular on the concept of Force Field Analysis (Lewin, 1943); where the configuration of forces-for and forces-against change are considered. This framework for large-scale (including national level) project delivery is now used across many domains (Breuer, et al, 2016), including international development. As De Silva et al (2014) argue “ToC is not a sociological or psychological theory such as Complexity

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport Theory or the Theory of Planned Behaviour, but a pragmatic framework which describes how the intervention affects change. The ToC can be strengthened by inserting sociological or psychological theories at key points to explain why particular links happen” (p.2). ToC has the advantage that it makes explicit causal pathways without imposing pre-defined structure and it allows for multiple causal pathways, along with interventions at different levels. State Parties Reports, List of Issues and Concerns/Observations and Recommendations are important mechanisms in the reporting process. However, for the process to have a greater chance of influencing change, then State Parties should be encouraged to develop and subsequently report on their overall ToC for promoting the rights of women and girls, and people with disabilities, as well as other marginalized groups. A macropsychology perspective, such as developing a national ToC has much to contribute to this and to complement the contributions of psychology to PEPAS at other levels.

This research aimed to identify significant data in established national reporting mechanisms that could potentially provide a better insight of the relationship between PEPAS, human rights and vulnerable groups. The PEPAS Sector is experiencing an unprecedented convergence of collaborative action at a policy level. The realization of rights articulated in Human Right Treaties like CEDAW and CRPD is at the core of this momentum.

There is significant scope for CEDAW and CRPD Committees to increase guidance to State Parties regarding PEPAS. With the support of the sport sector, both treaty Bodies can leverage their capacity to call for greater attention to this agenda. A General Comment on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) would help to provide clarification and guidance to State Parties on how to report on these related articles. CEDAW and CRPD Committees should ensure, through direct

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport reference in guidance notes and/or list of issues, that state and non-state reporting mechanisms include representation from the PEPAS sector.

State parties should also be encouraged to develop a national-level theory of change, with relevant indicators to benchmark and track change. The human rights reporting mechanism provides an opportunity for sport organisations to actively engage on human rights dialogue with States. Sport Governing Bodies, sport organisations and civil society will need to promote the effective interplay between human rights and PEPAS in order for sport to impact on social change. Likewise, the sport movement has human, social and economic capital to stimulate and support increased actions by governments, international bodies and national human rights institutions in meeting their obligations in relation to the human rights treaties; and these stakeholders should be key players in the development of and implementation of theories of change. Strengthening the collaboration between national governments and the sport sector and mobilising their respective capacities to realise human rights is a symbiotic process that would benefit both parties. Further research to identify key reporting indicators on PEPAS and examples of effective reporting and follow-up would be desirable. These resources could support current global actions to increase the realisation of human rights in and through sport, starting with the most vulnerable and leaving no-one behind.

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*End of published paper – All references are included at the end of this thesis*

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#### **4.6. Key findings in the overall context of the thesis**

In this article, two causal mechanisms are highlighted, which promote and modulate the implementation of human rights in and through sport: The national

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport mechanism for reporting and follow-up to international and regional human rights bodies; and the socialization of human rights among the sport sector.

National reporting of human rights is a legally binding requirement. This standardized mechanism should stimulate national dialogue on human rights. This mechanism is complementary to other procedures and policies at national level. For instance, in Ireland the section 42 (1) of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (Government of Ireland, 2014) defines the public sector equality and human rights duty, which require public bodies to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunities and protect human rights of staff and beneficiaries. Ultimately, those mechanisms are established to benefit rightsholders.

States Parties are providing a partial overview of the reality and many aspects of the social context, policy enactment and practice are being omitted. In order to improve this shortage of information, the following actions are suggested:

1. Strengthen evaluation systems
2. Disaggregate data
3. Increase expert technical guidance and capacity building initiatives to bring clarity to the concepts to be reported.
4. Develop a national Theory of Change with relevant indicators to benchmark and track changes.

The sport sector and Treaty bodies should establish a symbiotic relationship. In this collaborative effort, the sport sector can offer technical guidance which can support Treaty Bodies to increase guidance to State Parties regarding PEPAS. The socialization of human rights among the sector, should lead to a major involvement in the national reporting mechanism on human rights. In this way, a better understanding of this mechanism by the sector should stimulate the development of action plans (theories of change) and strategies with a view of obtaining a more realistic overview of the



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport contribution that sport has in communities. Figure 16 depicts how these mechanisms could be improved.

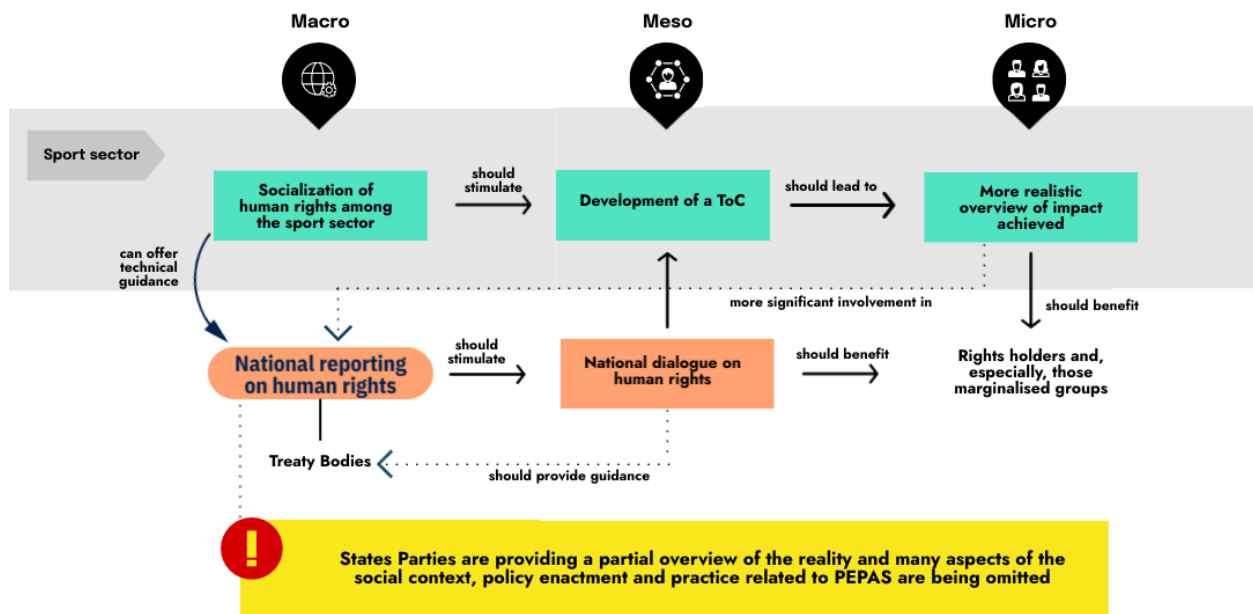


Figure 16. Key findings of study 2

The findings obtained in this study contribute to achieve aim two of this thesis. Sport-related agents can be aware of the existing mechanism for reporting on human rights and, consequently, increase their engagement with human rights treaties and develop action plans to advance this agenda.

### **Chapter five: Study 3**

## **A Thematic Analysis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) State Party Reporting Mechanisms Related To Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport**

This chapter includes the published version of the following publication:

Masdeu Yelamos, G., Carney, S., Carty, C., & MacLachlan, M. (2021). A Thematic Analysis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) State Party Reporting Mechanisms Related To Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 29(3), 765-794.

[https://brill.com/view/journals/chil/29/3/article-p765\\_765.xml](https://brill.com/view/journals/chil/29/3/article-p765_765.xml)

### **5.1. Abstract**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the most ratified human rights treaty. In this article, three intimately connected concepts will be explored in relation to the framework of the State Party reporting mechanism related to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: physical education, physical activity and sport (PEPAS). A documentary analysis of three key document types from the Treaty Body reporting mechanisms was undertaken, including State Parties Reports (n = 104), List of Issues (n = 126) and Concerns/Observations and Recommendations (n = 797). There was a very low prevalence of the concepts of physical education, physical activity and, to a greater extent, sport, in these three reports. Seven themes emerged after the qualitative analysis: sport programmes, school-based sport, legislation and policies, key agents, interdisciplinary approach, enablers of sport and miscellaneous. Increased questioning of States with regards to their implementation of the right to sport, the issuance of PEPAS-based recommendations and guidance on how to achieve these

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport rights from the Treaty Bodies would assist in solidifying understanding of sport as a human right and increase the impetus on States to act for PEPAS provision.

**Keywords:** rights, children, reporting, sport, physical education, physical activity, play, recreation

## **5.2. Introduction**

In December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution, “Sport as an enabler of sustainable development” (A/RES/73/25). This document acknowledges the growth-promoting role that sport can play in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015) and recognises the increasing mobilisation of resources internationally to address diverse policy agendas in and through sport. The UN General Assembly also acknowledged the Secretary-General’s report, “Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace” (document A/73/325). The recognition of sport within the UN system is the result of recent policy development activity undertaken by diverse UN agencies in partnership with a vast number of sporting bodies and private and public stakeholders. The explicit recognition of sport as a contributor to human rights is expressed in Human Rights Council Resolution 37/18 on Promoting Human Rights through Sport and the Olympic Ideal, (A/RES/HRC/37/18) as well as several human rights treaties.

There is a broad consensus amongst stakeholders shaping the sport movement that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (reference), the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017), the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (WHO, 2018), the UN Action Plan for Sport for Development and Peace (UN General Assembly, 2018) and the International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (UNESCO, 2015), constitute an aligned and solid foundation relevant for sport policy development and provision (Carty, et al., 2020). A pivotal notion for all these policy frameworks is the prioritisation on starting with the most vulnerable, supported by the rights-based

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport nature of Agenda 2030. In that regard, research suggests that those with the greatest support needs experience the greatest barriers to participation (Sagas and Cunningham, 2014).

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most ratified UN Treaty: 196 State Parties have ratified it and only the United States of America has not ratified it yet; although it has signed it (OHCHR Dashboard, 2020). Children across the world may therefore benefit from the implementation of the treaty provisions. In this paper, three closely connected concepts will be explored in relation to the framework of the State Party mechanism concerning the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: these are, physical education, physical activity and sport (PEPAS). Despite the diversity of understanding of each of the concepts and lack of clarity in their boundaries (Aggerholm, 2016; Kilvington et al., 2017; Bailey, 2017), their significance and cross-cutting contribution to human rights is well evidenced.

We think it is important to distinguish between these three concepts to facilitate understanding in our subsequent analysis within this paper. Quality Physical Education (QPE) is the ‘planned, progressive, inclusive learning experience that forms part of the curriculum in early years, primary and secondary education. In this respect, QPE acts as the foundation for a lifelong engagement in physical activity and sport’. The Declaration of Berlin (UNESCO, 2013), launched at UNESCO’s World Sports Ministers Conference (MINEPS V), states that ‘physical education is the most effective means of providing all children and youth with the skills, attitudes, values, knowledge and understanding for lifelong participation in society’. Physical education aims to teach students, through a structured curriculum, how to learn relevant skills, knowledge and principles to engage in a long-life regular practice of physical activity (Johnson and Turner, 2016). The World Health Organisation (2018: 100) defines physical activity as, ‘any form of bodily movement performed by skeletal muscles that result in an increase

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport in energy expenditure’. Physical activity includes activities such as walking, running, dancing, yoga, etc. Finally, the generic definition of “sport”, as described in the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017: 1), is rather comprehensive, ‘comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms’.

There is robust research evidence on the significance of human rights in and through sport (McGillivray et al., 2019; Masdeu Yelamos et al., 2019; Schenk and Verschuuren, 2019; Schwab, 2018; Isidori and Benetton, 2015; Donnelly, 2008).

Likewise, access to sport, recreation and physical activity is addressed in many human rights instruments, as showed in Table 9 (Adapted from Masdeu Yelamos, et al., 2019):

Human right instrument	Sport-related Articles/s
Universal Declaration on Human Rights	27.1
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	15
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	5 (e vi)
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	10 (g), 13 (c)
Convention on the Rights of the Child	23 (3), 31
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	43.1 (g) and 45.1 (d)
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	30.5

Table 9. Human right Treaties and sport-related articles

Article 31 of the UN CRC (1989) states:

1. *States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.*
2. *States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.*

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Regardless of the fact that Article 31 of the UN CRC does not specifically reference sport, physical education or physical activity, these constructs are inherent in Article 31 and in Article 23 (children with disabilities); they also contribute in a transversal manner to Articles 24 (health), 28 and 29 (education) and Article 19 (child protection). In particular, Article 29 on the right to education, specifically notes that education shall be directed to ‘the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential’, thus making physical education an integral aspect of the right to education and creating a state duty to ensure provision of quality physical education (UN CRC 1989). Furthermore, in General Comment No. 17 on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts (Art. 31), the Committee on the Rights of the Child explicitly include sport within their definition of recreation (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2013).

Likewise, Article 23(3) recognises the rights of children with disabilities to access recreation opportunities:

*To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system.*

State obligations with respect to children with disabilities’ right to sport are also specially noted in Art. 30(5) (d–e) of the CRPD.

A report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health (UN Human Rights Council, 2017) claims that people with disabilities are consistently less likely to engage in physical activity and it identifies children with disabilities as a group requiring particular attention in this matter. In keeping with the pledge of “leaving no one behind”, collective actions to address the double and multiple discriminations experienced by children with disabilities are required, as evidenced by the finding that

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport children with disabilities are 4.5 times less active than their peers without disabilities (Steele, 2004).

In addition to Human Rights Instruments, the Fundamental Principles of Olympism (IOC, 2010: 11) recognises:

*The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.*

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights have provided some impetus for the engagement of the sport sector with human rights. While states remain the primary duty bearers with regards to human rights, the Guiding Principles (UN, 2011) acknowledge the responsibilities of businesses to protect human rights meaning:

*“That they should avoid infringing on the human rights of others and should address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved. The responsibility to respect human rights is a global standard of expected conduct for all business enterprises wherever they operate. It exists independently of States’ abilities and/or willingness to fulfil their own human rights obligations and does not diminish those obligations: And it exists over and above compliance with national laws and regulations protecting human rights.*

Some sport organisations have taken note of these responsibilities and have begun to take steps to incorporate human rights respect and protection into their operations. For example, FIFA has engaged in a number of steps including incorporating human rights into their new strategy and examining their bidding process. In 2016 they requested expert help in the form of a report by Professor John Ruggie who issued 25 recommendations to FIFA. Ruggie’s report highlights the UN Guiding

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport Principles as the authoritative standard for sports organisations to embed human rights across their operations, noting that it is not necessary for sports organisations to sign up to them as they are a normative framework which organisations are expected to follow (Ruggie, 2016).

Despite the cross-cutting contribution of sport, the sport movement has paid little attention to human rights in the last decades. The theme of safeguarding children in sport has seen an increase in scientific study in recent years (Brackenridge and Rhind, 2014; Mountjoy et al., 2015; Rhind et al., 2015; Shukor, 2017; EU Commission, 2019). The UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children launched a report in 2018 entitled, “Playing it safe”, in order to provide recommendations to States and sport organisations on creating a safe sporting environment for children wherever they participate and at whatever level.

Yet safeguarding is only one face of the multifaceted approach to human rights in and through sport and, as Ellingsen and Danielsen (2017: 406) point out, ‘there might be a need for more deliberate and systematic integration of the children’s right perspective in youth sport’.

The assumption that the implementation of human rights is confined to a juridical framework (Sen, 2004) might serve as an argument to explain this lack of engagement. Likewise, international efforts to protect human rights have tended to focus on only holding governments responsible internationally for violations (Buerghenthal et al., 2009). Where the intersection between sport and human rights has been considered, it has often been through this juridical lens, focusing on preventing and redressing violations in relation to mega sporting events or exploitation of children and vulnerable people in sports settings. A handbook of good practices published by the Council of Europe (Cornu et al., 2018) brings some clarity on how human rights are implemented in sports and make some suggestions to facilitate their application in these



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport events. This focus is indeed required to ensure the safety of all sport stakeholders and to uphold human rights. However, to fully achieve the right to sport as laid out in core human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a more holistic view of sport and human rights is required, recognising sport as a positive human right for all; requiring specific implementation actions by states.

Considering the human rights treaty-body reporting system, State Parties that ratify any of the nine core human rights instruments are obliged to monitor and regularly report the national reality with regards to implementation of the Articles of each Convention (Rutherford, D., 2018). Masdeu Yelamos et al. (2020) found that States Parties reporting on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), acknowledge the significance of physical education, physical activity and sport and report on some key aspects, but they do not, however, provide enough evidence or data to evaluate the impact of a legal framework on practice. Likewise, while the guidance given by the CEDAW and CRPD Committees on Articles related to physical education, physical activity and sport was appropriate and had a cross-cutting intersectional approach, it could be significantly more detailed and probing, allowing for a much greater understanding of the interaction between sport and rights, in practice. These conclusions resonate with David's (2006) study which assessed the Committee's concluding observations on the progress of 98 States, from 2000–2004. David reported that only in 15 of these countries was their progress in addressing Article 31 (leisure, recreation and cultural activities), but even this was often in a brief and scattered manner. A detailed review of reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and of recommendations issued by the Committee will be outlined in this article.

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While human rights reporting by States on sports and discussion of sport as a human right may be insufficient, children's need for sport is nonetheless recognised, even if it is not always expressed in the language of rights. Research undertaken by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (2009) highlights that the need to increase play and leisure opportunities was the most reported issue that children, as well as parents and carers, asked the Commissioner to address. This aligns with Davey and Lundy's (2011: 13) reflection that, 'if the Committee were to be re-constituted with children as members, the content and priorities of the reports would undoubtedly change. Quite possibly, play, recreation and leisure would have higher priority and visibility'.

Swedish research found that neither child athletes nor adult coaches were aware that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has been incorporated into Swedish sport policy and they were not acquainted with the Convention's content (Eliasson, 2017). Upholding children's rights require interdisciplinary scholarship and engagement (Lynch and Liefgaard, 2020). The recent convergence in sport policy development is strengthening the link with human rights as well as with allied fields such as inclusive urban development (UN, 2016), assistive technology (AAATE, 2019) and inclusive education (UNESCO, 2015).

The present global actions and policy convergence outlined above show a momentum for accelerated action on human rights in and through sport, aligned with the implementation of the SDGs (Carty et al., 2020). UN agencies, State Parties, intergovernmental agencies, the sports movement, civic society and academia have an opportunity to combine and maximise the impact of their operations so as to 'bring rights down from the heights of abstract declaration to the front-lines of application' (Gready, 2009, p. 385).

### 5.3. Methodology

This study presents a documentary analysis of three key document types from the Treaty Body reporting mechanisms (OHCHR, 2020a) (whilst also acknowledging other reporting mechanisms exist):

- a) State Parties Reports (n= 104): The report that a country, which has ratified a treaty is required to submit regularly to the relevant human rights treaty body indicating the measures it has adopted to implement the treaty and the difficulties it has encountered.
- b) List of Issues (n=126): A list of issues or questions, formulated by a treaty body on the basis of a State party report and other information available to it (information from United Nations specialized agencies, NHRIs, NGOs, etc.), which is transmitted to the State party in advance of the session at which the treaty body will consider the report.
- c) Concerns/Observations and Recommendations (n=797): The observations and recommendations issued by a treaty body after consideration of a State party's report.

In this document analysis, the following inclusion/exclusion criteria were used:

- State Party Reports and List of issues documents were retrieved from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights database (2020a); observations and recommendations were retrieved from the Universal Human Rights Index (2020b).
- Only List of Issues and State Party Reports published from 01/01/15 until 01/01/20 were retrieved.
- Only documents in English were analysed.

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- Only paragraphs in the above documents that included the terms “Physical education”, “Physical activity”, “sport\*” (which, includes related terms such as “sports” and “sporting”), “play” and “recreation” were analysed.

This research has followed a similar methodology than the study conducted by Masdeu Yelamos, et al. (2020) but following the six-step thematic analysis procedure (Braun & Clarke, 2006) as shown in Table 10:

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Description of the process</b>
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Downloading the selected reports, extracting relevant data and reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Initial iteration of coding the selected data in a systematic fashion.
3. Searching for themes	Grouping codes into emerging themes.
4. Reviewing themes	Generating a thematic „map“ of the analysis by linking the themes in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2)
5. Defining and naming themes	Refining the specifics of each theme and generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report	Selection extraction of examples to be added in the discussion of the article.

*Table 10. Phases of Thematic Analysis (adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006)*

Computational and statistical software were also used to analyse these documents. Two open-source, web-based applications were used as visualisation and analysis tools: Voyant Tools and Overview. In addition, Nvivo was used for qualitative coding and content analysis; and thematic analysis was used to identify key themes.

#### **5.4. Results**

A total of 775 mentions in 104 State Party Reports were analysed: less than half of the reports analysed (42.3 per cent) mentioned sport; with ‘play’ and ‘recreation’ being mentioned in 37.5 per cent and 31.7 per cent correspondingly. ‘Physical activity’

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport and ‘physical education’ were only mentioned in 11 reports (10.5 per cent), showing a low profile for these two concepts in the reports.

Regarding List of Issues, the number of mentions is significantly lower for all of these concepts: sport is only mentioned in 3.1 per cent of the total, play and recreation in two documents (1.5 per cent), physical education in only one document (0.7 per cent) and physical activity did not receive any mention.

In the Observations/Recommendations, ‘play’ was the concept most frequently referenced, followed closely by sport and recreation (23.4 per cent, 22.4 per cent and 21.4 per cent respectively). Physical education and physical activity were only mentioned in 2 per cent of the total observations/recommendations made. Table 11 summarises the number and percentages of mentions for these three reporting mechanisms related to the sport-related concepts.

		State Party Report		List of Issues		Observations/ Recommendations	
Concepts		N.	%	N	%	N.	%
Physical education	Mentions	14	1,8%	1	11,1%	5	3,4%
	Documents	11	10,5%	1	0,7%	2	2%
Sport	Mentions <sup>2</sup>	422	57%	4	44,4%	43	29,6%
	Documents	44	42,3%	4	3,1%	22	22,4%
Play	Mentions <sup>3</sup>	193	24,9%	2	22,2%	37	25,5%
	Documents	39	37,5%	2	1,5%	23	23,4%
Recreation	Mentions	124	16%	2	22,2%	58	40%
	Documents	33	31,7%	2	1,5%	21	21,4%
Physical Activity	Mentions	22	2,8%	0	0	2	1,3%
	Documents	11	10,5%	0	0	2	2%
Total	Mentions	775	100%	9	100%	145	100%
	Documents	104	100%	126	100%	98	100%

Table 11. Summary of mentions in State Party Reports, List of Issues and Observations/ Recommendations

<sup>2</sup> Note: some of these mentions relate to other concepts like “transport”

<sup>3</sup> Note: some of these mentions do reference another meaning of play (e.g., act or take part of)

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In the following sections, the results of the thematic analysis are presented for each of the reporting mechanisms.

#### **5.4.1. State Party Reports**

The qualitative analysis (see Figure 17 and Annex 3) indicated that the most prominently reported topics on State Party reports referred to sport provision initiatives targeting children (15.72 per cent); mentions of governmental and non-governmental national sport entities that promote sport and physical activity (12.98 per cent); mentions to Article 31 (12.53 per cent); outlining sport facilities and equipment 9.79 per cent) and funding and resources allocated for the promotion of sport for children (4.10 per cent).

Seven themes were identified as key topics provided by governments in their effort to provide a national outline of the system to safeguard, protect and promote the rights of children, as is shown in Table 12.

The first theme (27.3 per cent) was “Sport Programmes” and it included all information provided by State Parties on the implementation at local, regional or national level of sport-related initiatives aimed at children and youth. In this field, there was a strong intersectional approach as it can be seen that countries are reporting not only on mainstream initiatives but also on programmes targeting vulnerable groups such as children with disabilities, asylum seekers and refugees or youth in the penitentiary system.

The second most prominent theme related to legislation and policies (20.7 per cent), which included relevant laws and policies to safeguard the rights of children. However, noteworthy in this theme is that most of the references related only to a mention of Article 31, which might not necessarily indicate a specific action in the domain of physical education, physical activity, sport, recreation or play.

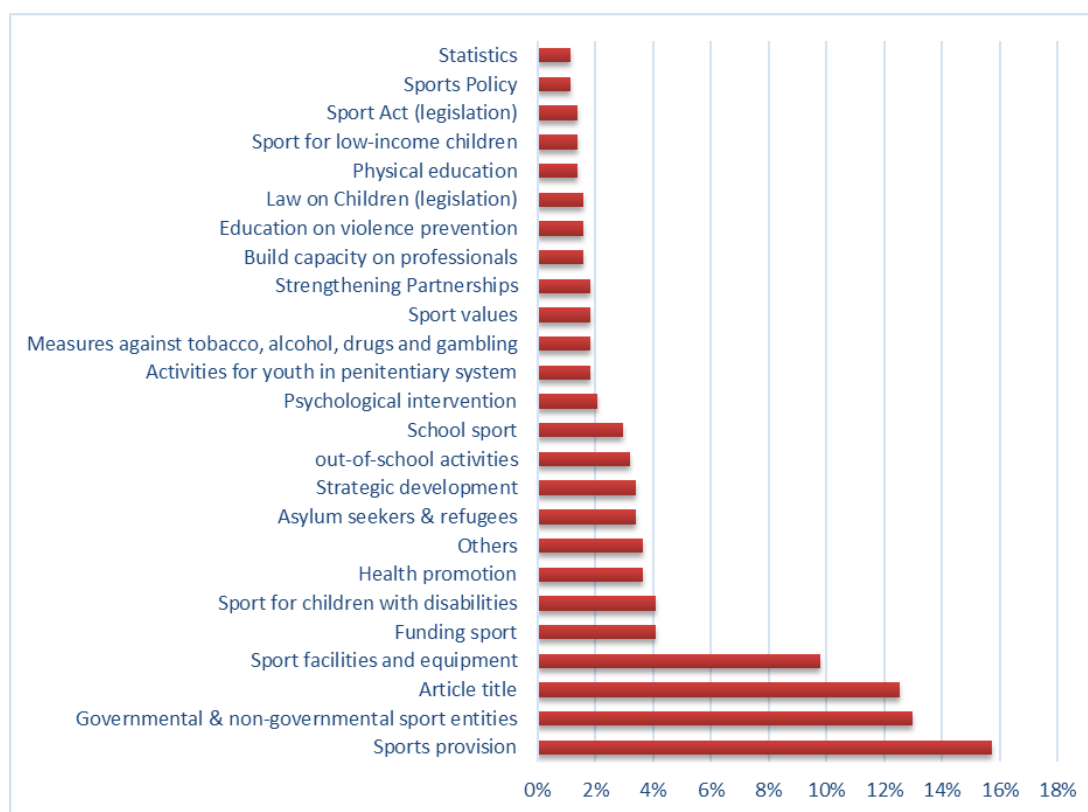


Figure 17. Percentage of codes endorsed in State Party Reports

The third theme was on enablers of sport (15.5 per cent), which included three key sub-themes that are fundamental for sport provision: outlining sport facilities and equipment available for children; funding avenues or investments made since the last report; and capacity building initiatives undertaken with professionals working in a sport-related field.

Key agents for sport (13 per cent) was the fourth most reported theme. This includes mentions of national entities – either governmental or non-governmental – that are promoting physical education, physical activity and sport. The fifth theme was an interdisciplinary approach towards sport (12.5 per cent), which gathers all types of multidisciplinary interventions where sport is considered a methodology, to achieve another goal, such as health promotion, psychological interventions or education against violence. School-based sport (7.7 per cent) was the sixth emerging theme, encompassing all sport-related interventions undertaken in a school setting, either directly related to sport or to physical education.

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Finally, a miscellaneous category (3.2 per cent) includes subthemes that were barely reported, which mainly includes: evocation to sport values; statistics related to participation of children in sport; and sports featuring in the media.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Nr</b>
Sport Programmes (27,3%)	Sports provision	Sport-related programmes and initiatives targeted at children	69
	Sport for children with disabilities	Specific sport-related actions targeting children with disabilities	18
	Asylum seekers & refugees	Specific sport-related programmes targeting asylum seekers and refugees' children	15
	Activities for youth in penitentiary system	Specific sport-related initiatives organized for youth in penitentiary system	8
	Sport for low-income children	Sport-related programmes targeting children living in low-income households.	6
	Traditional sports	Promotion of traditional sports	2
	Military-related sports	Sport for military purposes	1
	Sports performance	Achievement of children in sport competitions	1
School-based sport (7,7%)	out-of-school activities	Extracurricular sport initiatives	14
	School sport	Sport activities organized during school time.	13
	Physical education	Physical education in schools	6
	Special Needs Education	Sport in special need schools	1
Legislation and Policies (20,7%)	Article 31	Mentions of Article 31 in the State Party Reports	55
	Strategic development	Action Plans and Strategic Plans to address sport, physical activity or physical education.	15
	Law on Children (legislation)	Children-related legislation	7
	Sport Act (legislation)	Sport-related legislation	6
	Sports Policy	Sport Policies	5
	Freedom of association	Freedom of association in sport clubs.	2
	Disability Act (Legislation)	Disability – related legislation	1



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Key Agents (13%)	Governmental & non-governmental sport entities	National entities that are promoting physical education, physical activity and sport.	57
Interdisciplinary approach (12,5%)	Health promotion	Sport is mentioned in health promotion initiatives.	16
	Psychological intervention	Psychological interventions targeted at children using sport and/or play	9
	Strengthening Partnerships	Arrangements of organizations to work together towards common interests in and or through sport.	8
	Measures against tobacco, alcohol, drugs and gambling	Specific sport-related initiatives organized to reduce and prevent the consumption of tobacco, alcohol, drugs and gambling	8
	Education on violence prevention	Specific sport-related initiatives organized to prevent violence against children	7
	Employment of children	Regulations on employment of children for the purposes of cultural or sporting or activities.	3
	Development of rural youth	Addressing sport-related needs of rural youth	1
	Awareness against homophobia through sport	Sport-related initiatives to raise awareness of homophobia.	1
	Participation in terrorist organisations	Preventing participation of our youth in terrorist organizations through sport	1
	Prevent hate speech and racism and promote social inclusion	Use of sport as a tool to prevent hate speech, racism and promote social inclusion	1
Enablers of Sport (15,5%)	Sport facilities and equipment	Description of sport facilities available and sport-related equipment	43
	Funding sport	Investment in sport initiatives or sport programmes.	18
	Build capacity on professionals	Capacity building-related initiatives targeting sport professionals working with children	7
Miscellaneous (3,2%)	Sport values	Sport-related values, beliefs and principles cantered on fair play,	8

		respect, honesty and excellence, for instance.	
	Statistics	Statistics related to participation of children in Physical education, physical activity or sport.	5
	Media and sport	Promotion of sport in national media targeting children	1

*Table 12. Summary of themes and codes of State Party Reports*

#### **5.4.2. List of Issues**

Comments provided by the CRC Committee related to PEPAS were very limited, with only seven observations in the last five years. In four out of these seven mentions, the Committee required more information to ensure that vulnerable children were not left behind. It is worth highlighting the intersectionality of those observations, involving several aspects of marginalisation: such as disability, gender, refugee and socioeconomic status:

- Accessibility in sport and leisure centres for children with disabilities.
- Involvement of sport clubs to prevent sexual abuse and prostitution.
- Improving access to leisure and sports activities for asylum-seeking and refugee children.
- Ensuring equal participation of girls in physical education in schools.

The other emerging theme referred to ensuring that abuses and human rights violations were adequately addressed by State parties. For this reason, they required further details on:

- The alleged use of tear gas against children demonstrating against the acquisition of their playing field by a private developer.
- Provision of health care and recreation facilities for children of families displaced by a natural disaster.

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- The standards for conditions and service provision at detention facilities, including for space, hygiene and recreation facilities, access to nutritious food, education and health-care services.

### 5.4.3. Recommendations

At the time of analysis, the CRC Committee had issued 797 concluding observations since the Treaty was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by the UN General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989. In these Concluding Observations, 98 recommendations (12.2 per cent) relating to physical education, physical activity and sport were made. Some recommendations contained more than one topic within them and therefore the total number of topics may amount to more than 98. For example, with reference to its general comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, the Committee recommends that:

*the State party strengthen the promotion of the right to play and to leisure, including through the provision of safe playgrounds and physical education and sports programmes in schools (Un CRC, 2019).*

This recommendation contains three themes, one on sport facilities and equipment, one on physical education and a third on school sports.

Table 13 thematically summarises the recommendations made by the Committee.

Theme	Sub-themes	Description	Nr
Sport Programmes (29,7%)	Sports provision	Sport-related programmes and initiatives targeted at children	16
	Sport for children with disabilities	Specific sport-related actions targeting children with disabilities	21
	Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants	Specific sport-related programmes targeting asylum seeker, refugee and migrant children	6
	Roma and traveller children	Specific sport-related programmes targeting Roma and/ or traveller children	2

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	Activities for youth in penitentiary system	Specific sport-related initiatives organized for youth in penitentiary system	3
	Sport for low-income children	Sport-related programmes targeting children living in low-income households.	4
	Sport for at risk-children	Sport-related programmes targeting children living in precarious situations e.g., street children	1
	Sport for religious minorities	Sport-related programmes targeting children who are members of religious minorities	1
	Sports performance	Achievement of children in sport competitions	1
School-based sport (9,7%)	School sport	Sport activities organized at school	12
	Physical education	Physical education in schools	6
Legislation and Policies (9,1%)	Law on Children (legislation)	Children-related legislation	1
	Sport Act (legislation)	Sport-related legislation	1
	Sports Policy	Sport Policies	8
	Disability Act (Legislation)	Disability – related legislation	3
	Child participation	Involvement of children in development of PEPAS related policy	4
Key Agents (0,5%)	Governmental & non-governmental sport entities	National entities that are promoting physical education, physical activity and sport.	1
Interdisciplinary approach (11,8%)	Health promotion	Sport is mentioned in health promotion initiatives.	9
	Psychological intervention	Psychological interventions targeted at children using sport and/or play	1
	Strengthening Partnerships	Arrangements of organizations to work together towards common interests in and or through sport.	3
	Measures against high-risk behaviour	Specific sport-related initiatives organized to reduce and prevent e.g., the consumption of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, involvement in gangs and gambling	2
	Education on violence prevention	Specific sport-related initiatives organized to prevent violence against children	1
	Employment of children	Regulations on employment of children for the purposes of cultural or sporting or activities.	2
	Development of rural youth	Addressing sport-related needs of rural youth	4

Enablers of Sport (32,4%)	Sport facilities and equipment	Provision of sport facilities and playgrounds available and sport-related equipment	45
	Funding sport	Investment in sport initiatives or sport programmes.	13
	Build capacity on professionals	Capacity building-related initiatives targeting sport professionals working with children	2
Miscellaneous (6,4%)	Awareness raising	Running awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of physical activity for healthy lifestyles, the importance of physical activity for adolescents and the importance of sports and play for childhood development.	7
	Child protection	Measures to ensure children are protected when accessing sports	2
	Gender discrimination	Ensure girls and boys have equal access to sport, physical education and physical activity	3

Table 13. Topic recommendations made by the CRC Committee

The concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee identified similar themes which emerged from the State Party Reports. However, there were also a few subthemes the Committee identified which were not identified in State Party reports. For example, the Committee mentioned seven times the importance of awareness-raising campaigns to highlight the importance of sports and play. Also, the major involvement of children in the development of sports related policies was mentioned four times.

The most reported topic concerned the provision of sport facilities and playgrounds available and sport-related equipment (24.3 per cent), followed by specific sport-related actions targeting children with disabilities (11.3 per cent) and mainstream sport provision for children (8.6 per cent).

## 5.5. Discussion

Our reporting of the above analysis has already discussed a number of issues related to the profile of PEPAS in the documents reviewed. Despite the prominence of PEPAS in a range of Declarations and Conventions, and in particular in the CRC, there

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport continues to be a low profile for PEPAS in State Party Reports, List of Issues and Recommendations arising from the CRC Committee. We now consider how this can be addressed, with particular focus on the importance of indicators and their associated data sources for use by PEPAS stakeholders. The goal of effective reporting is to be able to outline the protection mechanisms of human rights at a national level. It is important to emphasise that human rights reporting mechanisms are not designed to compare countries' performance (OHCHR, 2016). There are many factors that affect the quality of reporting and the paucity of indicators may be due to several reasons; such as the difficulty of identifying performance indicators in complex environments in relation to the sources of information available; reporting being elaborated ad hoc rather than as an established and on-going mechanism; lack of expertise in certain areas by professionals undertaking the report; lack of inter-ministerial cooperation; poor consultative mechanisms; or lack of capacity to gather process-related data (OHCHR, 2016; Koneva, 2014).

To improve the quality and effectiveness of State engagement with human rights reporting mechanisms, disaggregated data and indicators to measure effective use of public resources and to operationalise relevant public policies are required (OHCHR, 2016). Action 1 of the Kazan Action Plan aims to bridge the knowledge gap around sport and human rights by developing indicators and reflective questions to guide the monitoring and reporting process of State Parties, National Human Rights Institutions and civil society. Also, the Universal Periodic Review process is a natural fit for extending the human rights-based action of the sports sector to further its impact and relevance in National reporting and is thereby included in this action; while application to the SDG Voluntary National Review process is also proposed under this action. In alignment to this initiative, the Commonwealth Secretariat is leading Action 2 of the Kazan Action Plan, which aims to develop, test and validate a monitoring and

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport evaluation framework and model indicators to support governments, sporting bodies and other stakeholders to harness the impact of sport on the SDGs and broader sport policies. Both Kazan Action Plan initiatives are congruent, aligned and complement each other in their effort to elevate the status of sport at governmental level and draw attention to the impact sport has on social change. The resulting outputs of both actions will support State Parties, Human Rights Treaty Bodies, National Human Rights Institutions and the sport movement actively to measure the cross-cutting contribution of sport across human rights. However, in order to do this effectively the development, application and reporting of appropriate indicators is necessary.

The national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up should provide in-depth information on structural indicators, process indicators and outcome indicators (OHCHR, 2016). Structural indicators refer to policies and legislation such as the following information provided by the Syrian Arab Republic in their fifth periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (OHCHR, 2017):

*In accordance with article 30 of the Constitution of the Syrian Arab Republic, the teaching of sports is one of the main pillars of society and is encouraged by the State to create a generation that is strong bodily, mentally and morally.*

A process indicator highlights implementation strategies and describes the performance of key activities or processes. The second periodic report of Azerbaijan (due in 1999 and published in 2005) includes this sport-related information in Article 31 (OHCHR, 2005):

*With a view to the rational organization of children's leisure and recreation and providing them with opportunities for cultural and creative activity, the State established and is operating an extensive network of out-of-school institutions and sporting and cultural establishments for children and young people, as well*

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport *as other places of recreation; it also established rules for the use of these facilities free of charge or on preferential terms.*

Outcome indicators refer to the results achieved for the beneficiaries following the implementation strategies. The fifth periodic report of New Zealand to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (OHCHR, 2015) provides a good example:

*Notably, the 2011 Young People's Survey found that of the 17,000 young New Zealanders surveyed (aged between five and 18 years old), nine out of 10 young people spend three or more hours a week taking part in sport and recreation.*

Taking into account the emerging themes in the State Party reports, most of the information provided relates to structural indicators and process indicators, whilst information relating to outcome indicators were very limited.

Table 14 shows how the relationship between our thematic analysis and structural, process and outcome indicators can be represented. The contextual relevance and acceptability of this approach for implementing children's rights has been illustrated by Rico and Janot (2019) for the development of structural, process and outcome indicators in the area of play. Kim et al. (2020) emphasise the importance of assessing risk factors, as well as both positive and negative indicators of children's well-being in order to make them more contextually relevant; and of inculcating the use of indicators into routine practice. We argue for the use of indicators as praxis (accepted practice or custom) which should also be co-developed, applied and evaluated by those whom we hope will be the ultimate beneficiaries from their use; especially where these are marginalised groups. Without the active involvement of those marginalised by mainstream society, in the development and use of indicators, they may simply become further disenfranchised (Huss and MacLachlan, 2016) through having their rights undermined.



	<b>Structural Indicators</b>	<b>Process Indicators</b>	<b>Outcome indicators</b>
State Party Reports	Legislation and Policies Enablers of Sport Key Agents	Sport Programmes School-based sport Interdisciplinary approach	Miscellaneous (Statistics)
List of Issues	-	Information to ensure that vulnerable children were not left behind Further details to ensure that abuses and human rights violations were adequately addressed by State parties	
Recommendations	Legislation and Policies Enablers of Sport Key Agents	Sport Programmes School-based sport Interdisciplinary approach Miscellaneous	-

*Table 14. Relationship between types of indicators and thematic analysis*

The request of more information by the CRC Committee in the List of issues to State Parties requires more data related to process and outcomes indicators, and these initiatives that aim to involve the sport sector in national reporting may support and enhance not only State Party Reports, but also facilitate that the Committee, through direct reference in guidance notes and or list of issues, include significant content related to physical education, physical activity and sport.

Recommendations had a wide geographic spread among state parties and were made to countries from all regions and development stages showing that the Committee do not view it as an area of concern only for countries who have already achieved a certain level of development.

The primary place for recommendations to be made is in relation to Article 31, with Articles 23 (children with disabilities), Article 24 (health) and Articles 28 and 29 (education) also featuring regularly. While the CRC makes many recommendations on child protection overall (Article 19), there have only been two mentions of child protection in relation to physical education, physical activity and sport. In 2014, Germany received the following recommendation from the Committee:

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*The Committee urges the State party to strengthen coordination between all actors in the protection system and to allocate all the necessary human, technical and financial resources to ensure: (a) The prevention of sexual violence against children, especially in schools and facilities for children with disabilities, and in youth welfare facilities and other institutions, such as in the clerical, sports and cultural sector (CRC, 2014).*

Discrimination in accessing PEPAS related rights is referenced, however the gender aspect is largely absent with only four references to exclusion of girls throughout and only two where gender was the primary focus (Iran and Saudi Arabia). For example, in 2016, the Committee recommended to Iran:

*The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, and urges the State party to stop discriminating against girls in access to these rights, and to ensure that they are guaranteed the same rights to enjoy cultural, artistic and sports activities on equal terms with boys (CRC, 2016).*

In several recommendations on promoting physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle, the focus was on weight-loss and obesity, rather than a more holistic understanding of the benefits of physical activity.

When comparing the themes reported by State Party Reports and the concluding observations and recommendations delivered by the Committee (see Figure 18), in general the topics are very similar, but the percentage of mentions differ significantly in certain themes. For instance, the theme “enablers of sport”, which include the subthemes “Sport facilities and equipment”, “Funding sport” and “Build capacity on professionals”, is the most reported area by the Committee to States.

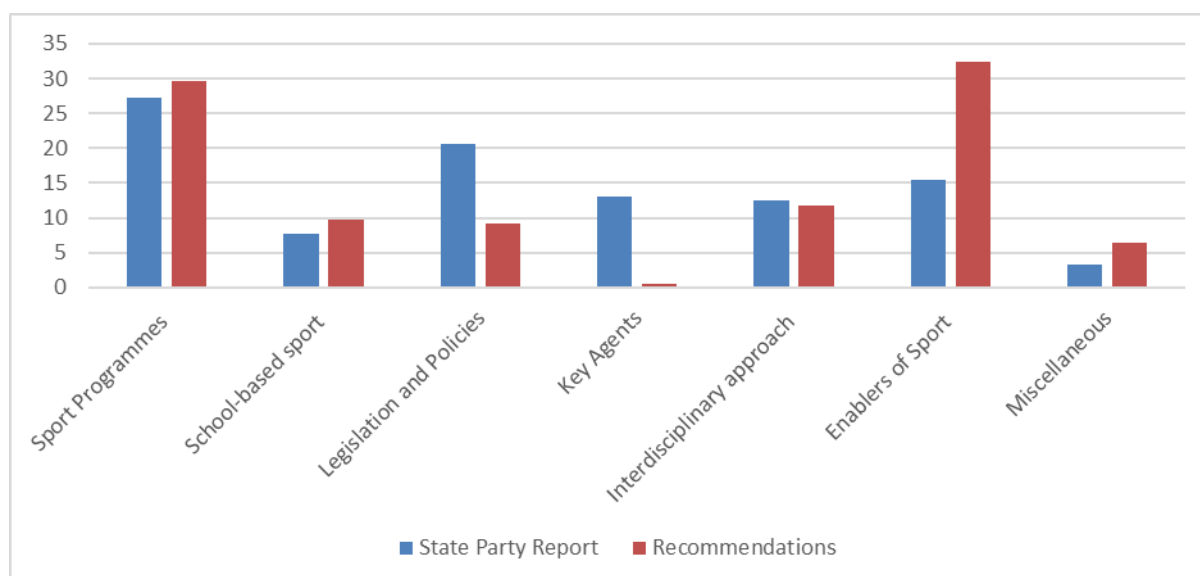


Figure 18. Comparison of State Party Report themes and Recommendation themes (in percentage)

In both mechanisms, aspects related to the provision of sport programmes targeting children have a great relevance (over 27 per cent). Yet, school-based sport only directs less than 10 per cent of their comments, which represents a potential for improvement, considering that schools are settings where healthy lifestyles can be introduced and risk factors for chronic diseases can be addressed (Pulimeno *et al.*, 2020). On the contrary, State Party reports mention Key agents, which include national entities that are promoting PEPAS, with certain frequency (13 per cent), whereas the Committee barely makes any comment in this domain (0.5 per cent).

## 5.6. Conclusions

Physical education, physical activity and sport are relevant and definitive reporting areas that should be addressed in order to achieve the rights envisioned by the UN CRC. States, as the primary duty bearers for rights implementation, need to ensure coherence in implementation across the breath of international sports policies, maintaining a rights-based approach with their human rights treaty commitments at the core of their delivery of sports policy. To further develop the understanding of sport as a human right at international level, share good practice, and receive expert commentary

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport on their policies, States will need to increase and improve their reporting to the Treaty Bodies, including CRC, on physical education, physical activity and sport.

Increased questioning of States with regards to their implementation of the right to sport, the issuance of sport-based recommendations and guidance on how to achieve this right from the Treaty Bodies, would assist in solidifying understanding of sport as a human right and increase the impetus on states to act in support of physical education, physical activity and sport provision. In General Comment No. 17 the Committee on the Rights of the Child noted that the Comment, ‘only touches tangentially on the issue of sport, as it is a major issue in its own right’ (CRC, 2013). In line with this acknowledgement of the significance of sport, a separate General Comment from the CRC Committee dedicated specifically to sport as it relates to Article 31 as well as tangentially to Articles 23 (children with disabilities), 24 (health) 28 and 29 (education) and 19 (child protection), would offer useful guidance to States regarding their obligations in relation to children’s rights and sport and on how best to implement these obligations.

It is imperative that as we move towards advancing practice in and through sport under the auspices of human rights and the SDGs, to ensure those with the greatest support needs are not left behind. This will require commitment from a number of actors including states, the Treaty Bodies and the sports sector.

Sport is a highly visible and influential social institution (Frey and Eitzen, 1991). For this reason, everyone shaping this sector should adopt leadership for leveraging its popularity among the general public as a vehicle to advocate, invigorate and embrace human rights in and through sport. As Eleanor Roosevelt (1995) declared, human rights ‘carry no weight unless the people know them, unless the people understand them, unless the people demand that they be lived’. The current sports

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport policy conjuncture with human rights indicates that now is the moment – the opportunity and the obligation – for the sport sector to embody human rights.

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*End of published paper – All references are included at the end of this thesis*

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### 5.7. Key findings in the overall context of the thesis

This study examines one of the causal mechanisms highlighted in study 2: The national mechanism for reporting and follow-up to international and regional human rights bodies. Figure 19 depicts this idea.

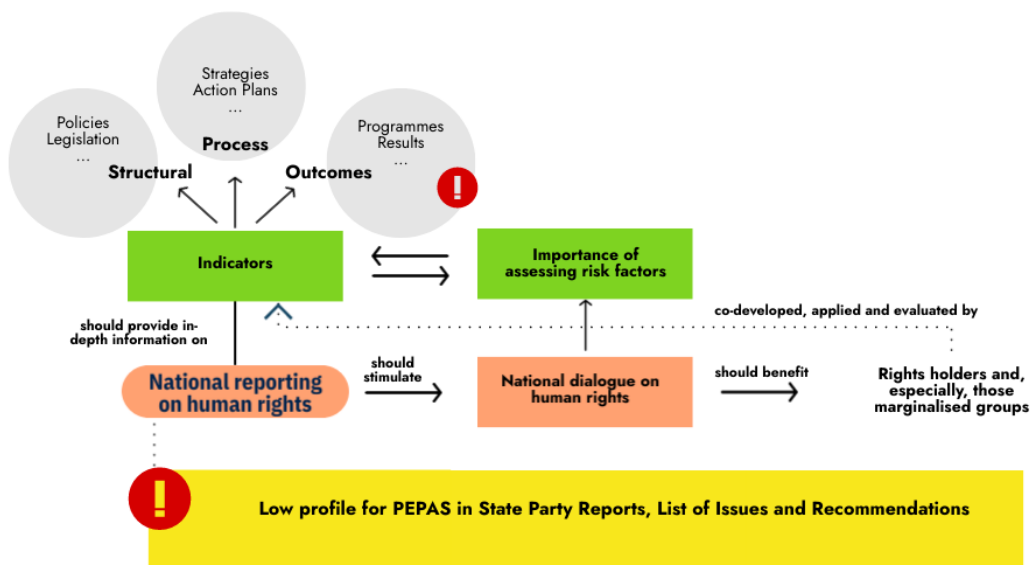


Figure 19. Key findings of study 3

The main issue identified is the low profile for PEPAS in State Party Reports, List of Issues and Recommendations arising from the CRC Committee. In order to address this low prevalence and quality of the information, more emphasis should be placed in the development of indicators and their associated data sources for use by PEPAS stakeholders. The results show that there is scattered information on structural and process indicators, and details on outcome indicators are lacking. For this reason, a set of comprehensive indicators should be developed to ensure that children’s rights are

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport being fulfilled. A national dialogue on human rights should identify and assess risk factors to human rights abuses and, in response, develop strategies and tools to monitor and evaluate these. In addition, these indicators should be co-developed, applied and evaluated by children and youth, who are the ultimate beneficiaries from their use.

This study builds on the conclusions presented in study 2 and highlights the importance of monitoring and evaluation indicators in the domain of human rights in and through sport. It also contributes to increase understanding among the sport sector and to promote their engagement with Treaty Bodies.

## **Chapter six: Study 4**

### A qualitative exploration of sport policy implementation in Mauritius and its connection with human rights in and through sport

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#### **6.1. Abstract**

The Republic of Mauritius launched the National Sport and Physical Activity policy in 2018, which aims to address four core areas: economy, health and well-being, individual development, and culture and identity. In the context of this new policy, eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with sport practitioners to learn more about how they saw progress, opportunities and barriers in Mauritius for vulnerable groups to access sport-related services. These interviews were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. Seven themes emerged from the analysis: the meaning of sport; sport policy; sociocultural factors in Mauritius influencing participation; ongoing actions; barriers to participation; opportunities for improvement; and professional development. The enactment of the policy by the sport sector and allied stakeholders is still at an early stage. A collective vision has been established, yet resources to operationalise this are required, such as a monitoring and evaluation framework, training of professionals and coherent allocation of resources to sport organisations. The results highlight the need to ensure that social change to promote participation in sport for all requires that macro, meso and micro actions operate in tandem, are resourced,

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport and are linked through specific goals the realisation of which is monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Keywords: human rights, education, policy, physical education, disability.

## **6.2. Introduction**

The Republic of Mauritius is an island state located in the Indian ocean. It has over 1.2 million inhabitants (Statistics Mauritius, 2020) and an upper-middle-income economy (Musango et al., 2020). Mauritius is a country where eastern and western heritages coexist and complement each other, being perceptible on people's worldviews, ethnic backgrounds, languages and religions (Samuel & Mariaye, 2020). Mauritius, due to its British colonial past, is a member of the Commonwealth. According to Chepyator-Thomson (2014), this fact is significant as it influences the understanding of physical education and sport and public policy.

In this article, we will refer to sport as the generic term described in the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017: 1), "comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms". Sport, in our broad definition, also encompasses physical activity and some aspects related to physical education, defined as the "planned, progressive learning that takes place in school curriculum timetabled time and which is delivered to all pupils" (AFPE, 2020).

Mauritius launched the National Sport and Physical Activity (NSPA) Policy 2018- 2028 (Ministry of Youth & Sports, 2018), aiming to address four core areas: economy, health and well-being, individual development and culture and identity. One of the ambitious goals is to increase Mauritian's participation in physical activity and sport from a 23%, in 2015 to 35% in 2028. The sport policy acknowledges the opportunity for the country to maximise the contribution of sport and physical activity to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015).



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Sherry et al. (2019) conducted a study on sport policy of 40 states, including the Republic of Mauritius, to measure the current alignment of national sport policies to the SDGs, following the recommendations established by the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017) and the 8th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting. One of the research findings was that “policies largely appear ill-defined due to a lack of targets being set” (p.1). Mauritius sports policy objectives aligned with SDGs by 42%. Key SDGs were SDG 8 “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”, SDG 16 “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” and SDG 3 “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (Sherry et al., 2019).

Mauritius is a current active member of the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS), an independent advisory body on sport policy issues. Also, it is one of the pilot countries of Action 2 of the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017), which aims to develop a measurement framework and model indicators to support countries to measure and evaluate the contribution of sport to prioritised SDGs and human rights. The Kazan Action Plan was adopted by UNESCO’s Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport and connects sport policy development with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. It pivots around three policy areas: Access for all, contributions to SDG, and integrity. In alignment with the core principles of the SDGs of “starting with the most vulnerable” and “leaving no one behind”, inclusion features across the policy framework as a significant area to be addressed.

Giulianotti, et al. (2019) outline how sport can contribute to development by being more inclusive and outward focused; more inter and multi-disciplinary, and broader politically, economically, theoretically, and methodologically. Kiuppis (2018,

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport p.18) highlights the right of everyone to get involved in sport, as a prerequisite to improve participation for all:

The guiding principle of inclusion requires approaches to improve participation, beyond the question of 'who', in the process-oriented sense and in accordance with the fundamental right to participate in physical education and sport, as proclaimed in UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education and Sport.

Jeannes et al. (2019) found that community sports clubs presented some resistance to modifying existing structures and developing more inclusive practices despite existing structures and increasing policy ambitions around social inclusion. A scholarly debate regarding the extent to which community sport initiatives contribute to achieving the policy goal of "sport for all" continues to be contested (Schailleé et al., 2019). Related to this is the question of how can the policy enactment process be improved? Suzuki (2017) suggests placing more attention to meso and macro-level analyses, as institutions are challenged across these levels and transformed through processes of legitimation within the institution and across the general population. Psychosocial change may therefore be seen as operating across intersecting micro (individual), meso (organisations or institutions) and macro levels (policy) (MacLachlan and McVeigh, 2021) – the social and behavioural linkages of which are carefully and clearly delineated. Perceptions of how individual practitioners perceive policy innovation to influence macro and micro-level behaviours is therefore important.

In a complementary way, Miller et al. (2019) argue that, through social influence, international norms such as human rights treaties contribute to changing state actors' behaviour. Human rights monitoring mechanisms oblige states that ratify one treaty to regularly report on the progress of each of the articles included, some of which cover aspects of sport (Rutherford, 2018). The sport sector can advocate for human rights implementation and, consequently, actively stimulate and support actions by

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport governments (Masdeu Yelamos, 2020). This requires a level of awareness and understanding of human rights - in and through sport - by practitioners.

In the field of sport for development and practice, Gadais (2019) identified six axes of tension between theory and research (see Table 15). These are: Programme evaluation, critic/support; management; finality/use; training/workshop; method/tools.

Axis of tension	Practical needs of Sport for development	Needs for research or theory
Programme evaluation	Evaluate effects or impacts of the SDP projects	Need for indicators/criteria to conduct evaluation
Critic/ Support	Projects are imperfect and need he improve	Need to critic projects but also support actors and organizations
Management	Reinforce administration team and management work	Need to reinforce management elements of projects
Finality/ use	What is the finality/use/form of sport-related interventions?	Need to identify the types of sport-related interventions and needs about themes
Training/ workshop	What is the qualification/training of SDP personal/staff	Need for research on training
Method/ tools	Reality field could be unsecure, unstable, complex, dangerous	Need to improve quality of research and have adapted tools for investigation

*Table 15. Tensions between practice and theory on Sport for Development*

In the light of recent policy developments in Mauritius and considering the six axis of tension suggested by Gadais, this study explored the following question: How do sport practitioners in Mauritius perceive the application of human rights in and through sport in the frame of the new sport policy? The purpose of this article is to explore the views of physical education teachers, sport coaches and university lecturers about the implementation of the NSPA policy in Mauritius and its contribution to human rights.

### **6.3. Methodology**

#### **6.3.1. Design, recruitment and sample**

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a qualitative methodology used to explore participant's perception of their personal and social world (Smith & Osborn, 2012). IPA is appealing to a wide diversity of knowledge fields, such as sport

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport and exercise sciences (Smith, 2018; Rajasinghe, 2020), as it allows to understand phenomena from a first-person perspective as well as it focuses on subjective knowledge as a mean for psychological understanding (Eatough & Smith, 2017)

Based on an IPA methodological framework, our research question and Patton's guidelines (2014), this research used a purposeful sampling of participants. Participants (n=8, four female and four male) were recruited from a training course offered at Mauritius Institute of Education and delivered by the UNESCO Chair Munster Technological University. A researcher from the UNESCO Chair Munster Technological University acted as a gatekeeper (Singh & Wassenaar, 2016) and invited participants to participate in this study. The gatekeeper was functional in the identification of key stakeholders from diverse organisations and roles in Mauritius as well as with the establishment of communication between participants and researchers. Participants had diverse educational backgrounds, but they were all adults in the physical education, physical activity and sport sector for more than five years, either as policymakers, PE teachers, lecturers or coaches and they all had experience working with marginalized groups. This group was specifically targeted by the authors as they were currently implementing sport-related programmes in Mauritius. Therefore, they could provide valuable insight into opportunities and barriers that sport practitioners in Mauritius have around human rights. Before commencing the study, the ethics committee of Maynooth University and Mauritius Institute of Education reviewed and approved this research.

### **6.3.2. Data Collection**

This study used semi-structured interviews, which are the exemplary method for IPA studies (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Following guidance on how to undertake qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017), the interviewed protocol covered five areas: 1) introductory opening questions; 2)

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport contribution of sport to people's lives; 3) approaches and strategies to inclusive access for all in sport policies in Mauritius; 4) implementation of inclusive sport programmes in Mauritius; 5) closing questions.

Due to COVID-19 constraints, interviews were conducted online at a mutually convenient time. They ranged from 30 minutes to 60 minutes and were digitally recorded, with the explicit consent of participants, and transcribed for the later analysis. Data saturation was achieved with the last participant interviewed, as only two new sub-themes were created.

### **6.3.3. Data Analysis**

The qualitative coding and thematic analysis were carried out with the software *NVivo*. The thematic analysis followed the following six phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006): 1) Familiarisation with the data: The author listened to each interview and read the transcripts several times while noting down initial ideas; 2) Generating initial codes: Initial iteration of coding for each interview; 3) Searching for themes: Patterns were identified, and codes were grouped into emerging themes; 4) Reviewing themes: Generating a thematic “map” of the analysis by linking the themes to the coded extracts and the entire data set; 5) Defining and naming themes: Refining the specifics of each theme and creating clear definitions and names for each theme; and 6) Writing up: Selection of significant quotes to be added in the discussion of the article.

Authors obtained “textural description”, which refers to “what” the participants in the study experienced with the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013, p.194). Afterwards, authors described “how” the experience of participants was, or in other words “structural description.” This analysis will be reflected in the following sections.

## **6.4. Results**

The analysis revealed seven overarching themes related to how sport practitioners, in the frame of the NSPA policy in Mauritius, experienced the

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport developments around human rights in and through sport (see figure 20): the meaning of sport, sport policy, sociocultural factors influencing participation, ongoing actions, barriers to participation, opportunities for improvement and professional development. Codes for each theme and the frequency of mention are available in Appendix 4.

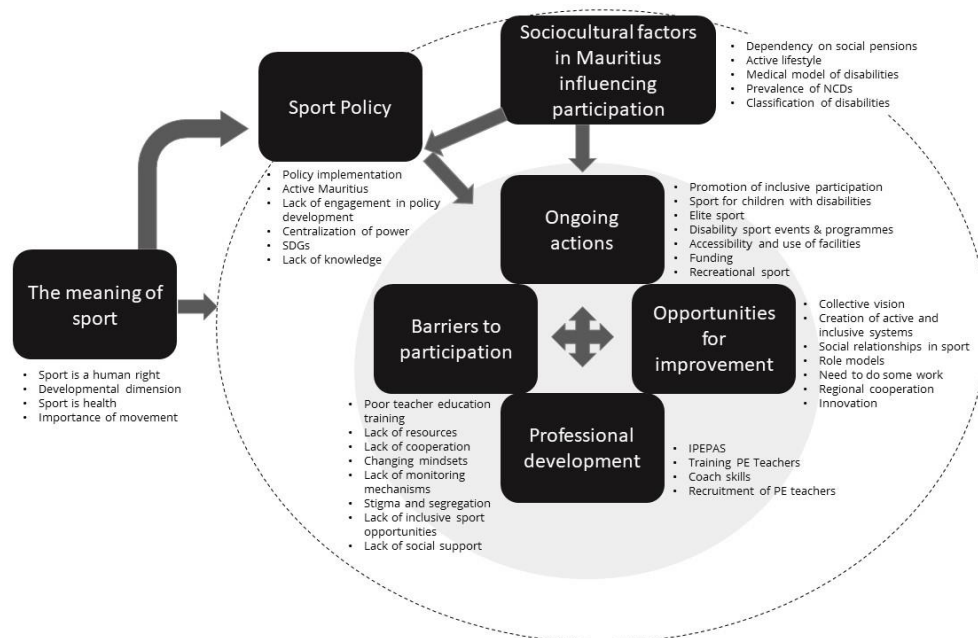


Figure 20. Thematic map of data analysis

#### 6.4.1. The meaning of sport

All participants highlighted sport as a significant activity for personal development, such as a means to acquiring motor skills or keeping physical fitness and social development.

I've been coaching deaf athletes and athletes with visual impairments in sports. These athletes have travelled abroad just for that training. It is a personal development.

The benefits of sport participation for individuals and society are well established. In this sense, participants considered access and participation in sport a human right, which should be promoted and fulfilled for everyone.

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Everybody, like all the human rights that we have, must be able to have the opportunity to participate in sports. All women must have the opportunity to participate in sports and also all people with disabilities must have the opportunity to participate in sports.

Likewise, sport is also perceived as a contributor to other human rights. In particular, participants emphasized the close relationship between sport and health. Involvement in sport and being physically active are key components of having a healthy lifestyle, which has important outcomes for individuals and the community. These aspects play an important role in understanding sport and influence the way participants perceive sport policy and the reality in the sector, as outlined in the following sections.

#### **6.4.2. Sport policy**

The implementation of sport policies in Mauritius is perceived as a complex process that could be improved at certain levels. Participants appreciate the good intention of policymakers, yet they recognize challenges in their application.

I think there's a lot of good intention, there is a lot of good effort, but I would say that there is some insularity in operation.

The policy cycle is perceived as a centralized process led by the government. Participants are aware of this and call for more coordinated action by the central government to facilitate involvement in the different stages of the policy development.

I believe that it should come from the parent Ministry, the minister of Youth and Sports. The parent Ministry should be doing something more concrete to involve people with disabilities, like we have training for students after school hours and so on, they should have the same mean.

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The perceived lack of engagement in policy development was a recurrent topic mentioned. Participants consider that more stakeholders should get involved in the development of policies to have a better overview of the current reality in Mauritius.

The consultation is done at a certain level. It's not done for everyone to assist or for athletes to give their views about it, but speaking it's only taken by a small number of organisations, a few persons involved which we think are involved in sports activities, so it's not like a consent over everyone. And the idea of everyone putting it together or even [undertake] market research about the reality of Mauritius, it's not to be dismissed.

There was some lack of knowledge of key sport-related policies by some participants. Nonetheless, most of them were familiar with Active Mauritius, a strategy developed and implemented by the Mauritius Sports Council and aligned with the National Sport and Physical Activity Policy 2018-2028. There was a general consensus that they are doing “a great job”.

Active Mauritius also is doing something for that [inclusion] and hopefully in the future, each and every people with disability, whatever the kinds or categories, or level of disability, will be able at some point to do some physical activities and/or sport activities.

The challenge of bridging policy and practice is not only an issue of the central government, but many sport practitioners also face it. A PE Teacher acknowledged the significance of the SDGs but reckoned not knowing how to integrate them into their daily work.

I think that we all know about it but putting it in practice it's a bit more difficult. Yeah, we try to, because we know so much about the SDG's too. To work on, for example, quality of education is something. But giving it back to the societies and everything, so we try to. So, it's always like a theory like you are aware of that, but like then putting things into practice are like more challenging. Really challenging.



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This fact highlights the need to offer mechanisms that support the

#### **6.4.3. Sociocultural factors influencing participation.**

The Republic of Mauritius has an effective and robust social security system, which supports their citizens in areas such as housing, education, employment, and transport. Nonetheless, this is perceived as a double-edged sword, as it also creates dependence on the State pensions and becomes an obstacle for the personal development of youth.

You're going to find out that our system is causing an obstacle, because the children are given pension when they are at school. And they start depending on that pension and what happens? They don't come out of their potential. So, they know that this money is going to be available for them, so they get reassurance and they start living in life of dependency. [...] And this demotivates them, their potential. They will not go for exercising sports, they will not go for learning high studies.

Also, the high prevalence of non-communicable diseases is an issue in Mauritius. Consequently, the promotion of physical activity and sport has emerged as a solution. This idea was already identified in the meaning of sport for participants. Lifelong sport activities are seen as a way to preventing and addressing health-related issues such as sedentary behaviour and drug abuse.

We are putting much more emphasis on doing sports because of many non-communicable diseases which are present.

Regarding disability inclusion, some participants pointed out that the medical model disability is still prevalent in many spheres. It is arguably due to current legislation on disability and inclusion.

Legislation has made provision for the medical model to exist.

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This issue is also transferred to the sporting field, where the classification system determines and influences the participation of athletes in certain sport disciplines and modalities.

I am at T32, 30<sup>4</sup>, I don't remember, in wheelchair, and of course the person at T54 will be more at ease than me, faster than me. So it is more athletes who are classified T54, that are doing para-athletics.

#### **6.4.4. Ongoing actions**

Participants provided a wide range of examples of inclusive sport-related programmes and events, including various sport disciplines. Most of them target an adult population but also some specific to children with disabilities.

During one event done by Active Mauritius in Côte-d'Or, I think it was a partnership of Active Mauritius with the Ministry of Sport, there was a parent who brought his child with disability and the child was able to participate in the activities done at that place.

One aspect to highlight is that disability sports are progressing thanks to the support and promotion provided by National Sporting Bodies. Participants acknowledged the role that sport federations can play to democratize access to sport. One participant provided the following example of the Mauritius Tennis Federation.

So since last year there has been some kind of inclusiveness. In almost all tournaments that the Mauritius Tennis Federation is organizing there is a competition for wheelchair tennis. And we have almost all the facilities like the tennis players, so this is something that is being done.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on Paralympics classification, please refer to International Paralympic Committee (2019). Explanatory guide to Paralympic classification. Paralympic Summer Sports. Available here: <https://gtimg.tokyo2020.org/image/upload/production/n4fd9qx81mgkd9hjllgd.pdf>

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The accessibility and usability of facilities is also a recurring topic. Even though there are many sport facilities across the country, usage could be improved.

I think we can do better also, especially in the field of opening facilities to our citizens here. Sometimes we do have facilities in rural places, but the procedure of getting those facilities, to access the facilities, it becomes very tough thing for them to do.

There is a funding process related to the use of facilities. This was an area that sparked a controversy among participants. The Ministry provides funding to sport federations according to the number of athletes that they enrol in competitions. Therefore, sport federations need to have sport licenses in order to increase the funding receive.

The Swimming Federation allocates the swimming lanes. Normally when we get swimming lessons at the pool is full competition. Is the number of swimmers to take off in the competition? According to that we receive the number of lanes. So many pauses for Federation, they just put on competition, competition and competition.

To address this issue, participants advocate for more investment at the grassroots level. This way recreational sport could be better resourced and promoted among all citizens.

I wish they should invest more on the development of sports at the level of the schools. Because just a few are benefited from this [current funding model].

In Mauritius, there is a prevailing approach to sport focused on competitive and elite sport rather than recreational sport. This seems to be rooted in the sport culture of the country, yet it seems that this is currently changing, triggered by the Active Mauritius strategy.

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I think there is still an elite mentality. But now with the MSE coming up with this policy and its philosophy. We are gradually having some local clubs pushing people a bit more with this “sports for all” philosophy. But as far as the Ministry is concerned, it's more concerned about elite sports.

#### **6.4.5. Barriers to participation**

The most mentioned barrier to participation in inclusive sport activities is the lack of training of physical education teachers and coaches for working with marginalised groups, such as individuals with disabilities.

Working with children with disabilities is not the same as working with children without disabilities. There are things to take into consideration before engaging in these activities. So, one of the challenges for implementing inclusive sport opportunities is the lack of preparation of professionals.

Also, there is consensus that more resources should be invested in promoting sport activities for marginalised populations. Lack of resources includes a shortage of human capital, as mentioned earlier, and economic resources, equipment, funding, etc.

Participation is scattered in various sports federation, budgetary constraints, lack of information and infrastructure not adapted, finance, mindset, resource person, willingness, lack of facilities.

There is also a lack of cooperation between the government and national sport governing bodies, sport clubs, schools and civil society. Similarly, there is poor collaboration between departments within the government, leading to inefficiency in the use of resources.

But it doesn't coordinate with the Ministry of Health, so they're also spending on the same thing, Ministry of Education is spending on the same thing. What happens is that you've got a disconnected way of approach that is more causing loss of resources, loss of expertise, loss of time, loss of money.

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Most participants identified certain mindsets and approaches as the main barrier to participation for many vulnerable groups.

The first challenge will be changing the mentality of the people, that is making each, even some of the offices, aware that people with disabilities can do things, people with disabilities can do sport, whatever the disability and whatever their level of disability.

Stigma around disability and segregation of people with disabilities is still an issue in many spheres of life, not only in sport. People with intellectual disabilities are still stigmatized and families are afraid to discuss openly this with other people. Some families are not aware of the benefits that physical activity and sport can provide to their children.

Sometimes, families do not accept the children. Disability is a taboo subject. I won't say, they look down the society, but it is... It is for some parents very difficult to talk about this kid having an intellectual disability. A child with a disability. There is still stigma around this topic.

#### **6.4.6. Opportunities for improvement**

Many participants throughout the interviews emphasized the need to build a collective vision for the future. Despite acknowledging that some changes are starting to take place in the country, there is a shared belief that more work needs to be done in a more coordinated way.

As usual, it is quite slow. The progress is quite slow. I won't say there is no progress, but there is some work being done in that. I fear that it is quite slow. Then it needs to have a push.

One way to enable and accelerate progress is the creation of systems that foster inclusion, promote physical activity for all and prevent sedentary behaviour. To

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport encourage the general population to be more physically active, athletes from marginalised groups and other public figures should become role models.

It's a simple example. We do have women today standing on some videos saying "Yes we are women. We should stand up for ourselves". Things like that. We don't have a Mauritian athlete or Mauritian athlete with a disability coming and saying "yes, I have a disability, but I can still do things and I'm happy about doing that just to motivate others and say "yes, I do have a disability but still I can do things. So why not you?" It's a simple example. I don't know a role model for people with disabilities standing for herself and saying yes I can do everything and you can do the same.

Through sport, people can get to know new people and become part of the community. Building social relationships in sport is an important motivator to get involved in sport activities and, at the same time, a mechanism to sustain regular participation in sport.

In some clubs there are people with disabilities of different degree of disability. So each one, I am a wheelchair tennis player, but I was happy to see my friends with a higher level of disability doing some boccia, and playing some table tennis.

On the other hand, participants perceived the current ongoing actions in Mauritius as an opportunity to cooperate with other countries in the region. Coordinated and unified action around human rights in and through sport based on the progress done in Mauritius is an opportunity for development.

Instead of Mauritius doing something, Madagascar doing something, Comoros Island doing something or Mayotte Land doing something, why don't we specialize in these things and we make it become something that it's really cross-action? And make it something that is more effective in terms of returns and output.

#### **6.4.7. Professional development**

The theme "professional development" stood out as a distinctive theme, yet it is related to the previous themes "opportunities for improvement" and "barriers to participation".

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This theme refers to the education of sport practitioners, either pre-service or in-service training, in core aspects related to human rights in and through sport. For example, disability inclusion was not an area addressed for many years, but it has recently been included in the curriculum of PE teachers.

But now we do have a module of teaching for people with disabilities, like adapted physical education. We have included it now. More officially, so it's part of the curriculum.

Also, participants were very positive about the course “iPEPAS” they attended at Mauritius Institute of Education, which focused on increasing the capacity and self-efficacy of practitioners to operate inclusively.

I have learned many things. But also I have seen, I have read about, many things that had occurred that I know about, but I didn't know that it had some structure, you see? I knew about it, I have gone through it and I say 'Yes, it is a cause that is not only theoretical, it is mostly on how do you base on, it is mostly based on reality.' It is based on the reality of the world of a person with a disability in sports, in and outside sports, this is one.

This course gathered a multidisciplinary group, which has benefited from the contents of the course and facilitated the creation of a collective vision and establishing partnerships.

The language that people speak is very much something that emanates from the heart. It's something that is natural, so they have got a will, they have got a vision they want to get things done. They want to see it in reality, how it is going to transcribe, and I think this is something that is more than, not encouraging, but more than promising for the future, because already with a little group that we have, you've seen that there is a transformation in outlook and there is more collective vision that we've been called for.

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Another aspect is the recruitment of PE teachers, it is important that they have a positive mindset and are willing to work with vulnerable groups. Theoretical knowledge is needed but also social and emotional skills.

And what would be important is the mindset of the physical education teachers as well, all the physic people in sports: they have to be more confident, they have to be more forceful and they have to do it with the heart.

## **6.5. Discussion**

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (2018) launched in 2018 the NSPA policy, which sets “two overarching vision statements for community and elite sport”. As it may be too premature to appreciate the impact of the new national policy, this article explores the perception of sport practitioners in Mauritius on the new vision and opportunities and barriers around the application of human rights in and through sport.

Previous sport policies in Mauritius were mainly focused on elite sport and the prevention of non-communicable diseases (Veerasamy, 2013). Both considerations are still present in the new policy, nonetheless, participants emphasized the need to acknowledge access to sport as a human right and the contributor role of sport to fulfil other rights such as health and education. This perspective focuses not only on the competitive side of sport but also on recognising recreational sport and sport for all as right, as it is endorsed in many international and regional human rights normative instruments (Masdeu Yelamos et al., 2019).

Research undertaken in Scandinavian countries on implementing sport for all policies indicated that finding a balance between sport for all and elite sport is “extremely difficult” due to the established structures and institutional relationships (Skille, 2011). This seems to be an issue too in Mauritius, where the sports agenda remains central to the government and the funding processes and sport facilities usage depends on the number of competitive licenses provided by sport federations. This



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport highlights the need to reconfigure systems and establish new interdepartmental and cross-sectoral collaboration to transfer policy intentions to specific actions that can be measured, as reflected in SDG 17 “Strengthen and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”. Musango et al. (2020) identified two challenges – at the macro level- hindering the expansion of interventions to prevent non-communicable diseases: inadequate interagency cooperation and lack of priority setting approaches. These two challenges also align with the findings of this research. They reinforce Masdeu Yelamos et al. (2020) claim that by strengthening collaboration between governments and the sport sector, both can mobilise their respective capacities to fulfil human rights, to benefit both parties and, above all, those left behind. Deprivation of sport-related services directly impacts marginalised groups and contributes to reproducing and perpetuating “the other pandemic of system inequity” (Gray, et.al., 2020), which highlights inequity in access and enjoyment of social determinants of health and well-being, such as in sport. Ramtohul (2010, p.104) claimed that “in Mauritian sports, gender and class interact with ethnicity in determining who participates in competitive sports as well as in which disciplines” – thus highlighting the role of meso and micro factors too. Participants also mentioned many other barriers for people with disabilities, as identified in the literature, including lack of accessible facilities (Rimmer, et al., 2017); lack of competence and negative attitudes of sport practitioners (Calder, 2018 & Reklaitiene, et al., 2016). As for this last point, the training and education of sector professionals in inclusive practices was highlighted by participants and is a topic that needs close attention (Carty, et al., 2021; Kasser & Lytle, 2018; Lyon, et al., 2017). Across the world, stigma around disability is remains as a systemic issue that needs to be addressed. The global campaign “#WeThe15” (2021) was launched at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games to tackle this. This campaign is the “sport’s biggest ever human rights movement to end discrimination against persons with

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport disabilities”. It aims to make visible 1.2 billion persons with disabilities who represent 15% of the global population and should be considered as active members of an inclusive society.

With a backdrop of intersectional inclusion, the new sport policy aims to address inequity and strives to “create a sport landscape which equally represents and fosters participation of people from all gender, race, disability, age and faith” (p.16). To achieve this ambitious goal, specific policies and instruments to implement, monitor and evaluate the impact are required. The Active Mauritius strategy is a good example of how to operationalize this policy into tangible sport programmes, yet the development of a monitoring framework to measure the impact of this initiative to all citizens is still not available. This mechanism would contribute to a) address a global issue such as the lack of disaggregated data on sport participation (Carty et al, 2021; Masdeu Yelamos, et al., 2019, Ramtohul, 2011) b) outline key performance indicators to facilitate measurement of impact against specific policy actions and international normative instruments, such as the SDGs or human rights treaties; c) assign clear roles and responsibilities among multiple stakeholders and d) address the perceived feeling expressed by participants that “progress is slow” or “more work needs to be done” by providing state-of-art insights into good practices.

Active Mauritius is an example of a good ongoing initiative in Mauritius which align to the new sport and physical activity policy, the SDGs and potentially to human rights instruments. To expand and mainstream this development, the government should invest in developing systems that foster collaboration between national sport governing bodies and grassroots sport clubs. The mainstreaming of inclusive service programming, together with the socialization of human rights in and through sport, and a coherent allocation of resources for the sport sector might help to accelerate the achievement of positive outcomes for the new sport policy. In parallel, an increase of awareness of human

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport rights by sport practitioners might legitimate this shift towards “sports for all” and increase the social influence to hold the government accountable for guaranteeing the right to access sport and physical education for all without any discrimination.

The findings obtained in this study are related to the axis of tension of Gadais (2019). To overcome these issues, Table 16 outlines some actions that can be undertaken with a view of advancing the national sport policy in alignment with human rights in and through sport.

<b>Axis of tension</b>	<b>Actions to be undertaken</b>
Programme evaluation	The development of a monitoring and evaluation framework is of critical importance to capture the performance of the policy.
Critic/ Support	Provide adequate funding and managerial support for sport federations and civil society to promote recreational sport and democratize access to sport. Use a human rights-based approach to improve sport provision.
Management	Create systems that foster inclusion, promote physical activity for all and prevent sedentary behaviour. Assign clear roles and responsibilities among multiple stakeholders to guarantee inclusive processes related to sport participation.
Finality/ use	Map and target ongoing sport provision based on the nature of intervention (elite sport, recreational, rehabilitation, promotional, etc.) and the target group (e.g., children, adults, women, people with disabilities, etc.)
Training/ workshop	Promote professional development of sport practitioners, both pre-service or in-service training, in core aspects related to human rights in and through sport.
Method/ tools	Provide tools and resources to build capacity on sport organisations. Establish cooperation networks to share lessons learned with neighbour countries and become a regional champion in human rights in and through sport.

Table 16. Key axis of tensions and potential actions

Finally, participants in this study acknowledged the importance of SDG16 and SDG 3 relating to the role of sport as a contributor to health and well-being and social inclusion. Nonetheless, a wider understanding of how to put into practice SDGs and human rights principles require further elucidation.

## **6.6. Conclusions**

The NSPA policy represents an opportunity for addressing some pressing issues affecting Mauritians, such as the high prevalence of non-communicable diseases or the inequality of access to sport and health-enhancing services. The vision set out in the policy is underpinned by the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. In this line, this new policy has moved from a normative instrument primarily focused on elite sport, to one that embraces sport for all principles and inclusion. In this transitory process, new opportunities emerged, and some tensions still prevail, as acknowledged by participants' voices. This study contributes to identify relevant themes perceived by sport practitioners in Mauritius around the application of human rights in and through sport in the frame of the new sport policy.

The implementation of the policy by the sport sector and allied stakeholders is still at an early stage. Participants recognized the value of the new approach, which strives to be more inclusive. However, there is a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities for the implementation as well as a shortage on resources. A generalised understanding of roles and responsibilities related to human rights is required. It should move towards inclusive actions, advocacy, and investments across multiple sectors (Carty, et al., 2021), including the education and sports sectors. Training, goal-setting and linked resources are meso-level activities. Until macro-level policy aspirations match micro-level practitioners enthusiasm and meso-level mechanisms then the effectiveness of the policy will be undermined and may inadvertently frustrate, exclude and disempower the marginalised populations it is intended to benefit.

One of the main barriers is the lack of training on inclusion for physical education teachers and sport professionals. Socialization of human rights among the educational and sport sectors is of paramount importance to uphold fundamental rights and transform practice. A coherent plan to allocate resources and coordinate collective

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport actions would be beneficial to bridge the policy-practice gap and facilitate implementation across national stakeholders. Likewise, the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework is of critical importance to capture the performance of the policy.

Further research to measure the impact of the sport policy in Mauritius against key reporting indicators on sport is desirable. These findings while focused on the context in Mauritius, may also help support current global actions to increase the realisation of human rights in and through sport. Likewise, these findings may contribute to consolidating a human-rights based approach to sport, which could be applied in the Indian Ocean region and other regions.

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*End of submitted paper – All references are included at the end of this thesis*

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## **6.7. Key findings in the overall context of the thesis**

This study contributes to highlight effective ways to apply a human rights-based approach to sport, which is the third aim of this thesis. It also broadens the knowledge of one of the causal mechanisms highlighted in study 2: The socialization of human rights among the sport sector. Figure 21 depicts the findings obtained.

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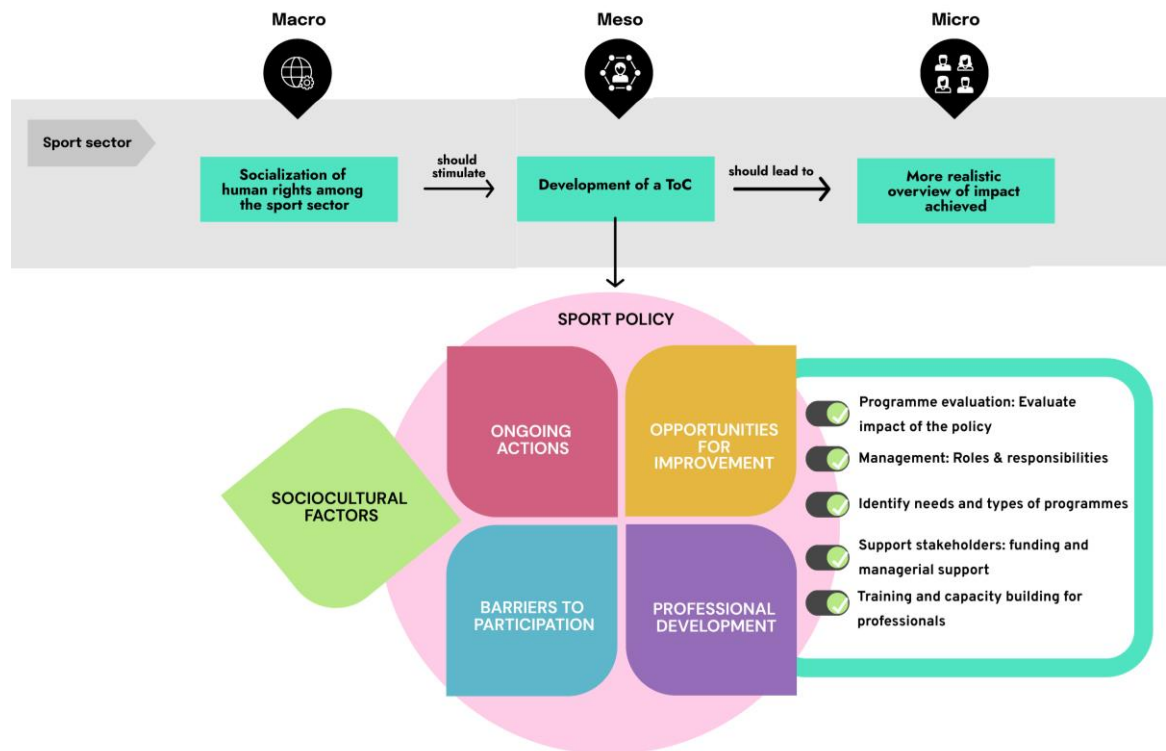


Figure 21. Key findings of study 4

Based on the need to socialize human rights among the sport sector, it is argued that the development of a theory of change at organisational level (meso) should be a mechanism to bridge the policy-practice gap. In this study, we identified 6 key areas to be considered in the development of a ToC: 1) Sociocultural factors; 2) Sport policy; 3) Ongoing actions; 4) Barriers to participation; 5) Opportunities for improvement; and 6) Professional development. Based on these areas, and the six axes of tension between theory and research identified by Gadais (2019), there are some relevant actions that need to be put in place to advance the implementation of national sport policies that are in line with human rights. For example, programme evaluation mechanisms to assess policy impact; at managerial level, define roles and responsibilities to advance specific actions; map current programming and identify needs and types of programmes to be offered; support key stakeholders with funding and collaborative approaches; and offer training and capacity building initiatives for practitioners.

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It is worth noting that participants of this study had signed up for an introductory online course to upskill them in the area of inclusion in and through sport. For this reason, their level of awareness of human rights approaches and their insights were probably influenced by this course. Findings obtained might have been different if participants did not have any previous training, but as described in the limitations section of this thesis, this option was not possible due to COVID related constraints. Nonetheless, the fact that participants were at an early stage of an introductory training course is also relevant as it informs of the potential of this training course to change participants' attitudes. Further research on this area is required to advance the implementation of human rights approaches among sport professionals.

## Chapter seven: Study 5

The role of human rights in sport education: A call towards a new curriculum.

This chapter includes the submitted version of the following publication:

Masdeu Yelamos, G.; MacLachlan, M.; Carty, C. & Carney, S. (2022). The role of human rights in sport education: A call towards a new curriculum. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*. Under Review.

### 5.1. Abstract

The role of sport as a contributor to sustainable development and human rights is well-established. Yet, evidence sport professionals understanding of its contribution and their readiness to maximize its impact in this field is insufficient. This research aims to ascertain sport 'practitioners' understanding and application of human rights principles in and through sport. An international sample of 151 sport-related practitioners (56% male, 43% female and 1% preferred not to say) ranging from age 18 to over 65 including teachers, coaches, and academics completed three validated questionnaires on sport and human rights. They were designed for the study (RITES-Q, RITES-SE and RITES Challenges). They included standardized measures of social dominance and personality (the SDO-7 scale and the 10-item personality inventory) and some open-response questions. Factor analysis established the suitability of the questionnaires for use in the study. Results show that while sport practitioners acknowledge sport's impact in promoting human rights, there were significant differences based on age, gender, educational level, personality traits, and social dominance orientation. Given the situational and dispositional variation in responses, it is important to establish a systematic approach to include human rights principles in the education curricula of



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport sport-related professionals. Suggestions for some of the key elements that should be addressed in such a curriculum are presented.

Keywords: Sport policy, sustainable development, intersectionality, physical education, rights.

## **5.2. Introduction**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) is a milestone document in the history of humanity, as it outlines the rights and freedoms to which every human being is entitled. These rights are inalienable, universal and indivisible. This means that everyone is entitled to all of them, at all times, everywhere. However, some rights are not upheld equally or as easily for some marginalized groups. For this reason, in the last decades, many additional international human rights conventions were created or supported by the United Nations to articulate these rights better. Nine core instruments monitor the implementation of these rights (OHCHR, 2006).

The Olympic Charter recognizes the practice of sport as a human right (IOC, 2020). Also, participation in sport is acknowledged as a right and can be found in multiple articles of these human rights instruments. For example, article 10 (g) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (UN, 1979) says:

"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: (g) The same Opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education".

Under international human rights law, State Parties that sign and ratify these treaties are obliged to periodically report on the implementation at the national level to the relevant Committee. Masdeu et al. (2020) found that while States Parties acknowledge the significance of sport and, as part of the national mechanism for

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Despite the still persistent difficulties of defining sport in academic literature (Fry, 2016), in this article, we will refer to sport as the generic term comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms" (UNESCO, 2017, p.1).

Participation in sport is a human right and, at the same time, participation in sport can lead to the achievement of other rights such as the right to education, health and employment. The preamble to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015) acknowledges sport as an enabler for the goals:

*"Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives".*

The advent of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development led to the development of convergent global policy frameworks that leverage sport and physical activity to advance key global issues: the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO, 2017), the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (WHO, 2018) and the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace 2018–2020 (United Nations General Assembly, 2018). A human rights-based approach is at the core of all these policies and they constitute a call to action to start with those further behind – to provide access to sport for the most marginalized.

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Sport is a global phenomenon subject to multiple constraints from politics, culture, economics and society (Krüger, 2021) but it also enshrines relational, social and moral features that contribute to the self-improvement of people throughout their lifespan (Isidori & Benetton, 2015), as highlighted by the preamble of the Sustainable Development Goals. The field of sport for development and peace champion this approach (Schulenkord, et al., 2016). Many organisations use sport-based interventions for advancing development goals, such as empowering individuals (Gould & Carson, 2008) and fostering active citizenship (O'Donovan, et al., 2010). This article will focus our attention on human rights education in and through sport.

Article 2 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011) defines human rights education as:

*All educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing, inter alia, to the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights.*

Human rights education develops an understanding of everyone's common responsibility to make human rights a reality in their community. It encourages people to uphold their own rights and the rights of others.

Swami, et al., (2012) found that personality traits and dispositional attributes such as right-wing authoritarianism predict attitudes toward human rights and civil liberties. There is extensive literature exploring the relationship between sport and

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Similarly, to investigate dispositional attributes towards human rights, this study will focus on social dominance orientation, which Sidanius & Pratto (1999, p. 48) defined as the "degree to which individuals desire and support group-based hierarchy and the domination of "inferior" groups by "superior" groups". Based on this notion, people with a high social dominance orientation are prone to maintain current social structures and are resistant to social justice measures (Peachey, et al., 2015). O'Brien et al. (2013) found that authoritarianism and social dominance orientation were significant predictors of anti-gay and anti-lesbian prejudice on the sport field. In this study, social dominance orientation will be explored as a predictive attribute of sport 'professionals' understanding and adoption, or lack thereof, of human rights in their practice.

There is extensive literature that explores the relationship between human rights and sport (Giulanotti, 2004; Donnelly, 2008; & Masdeu Yelamos, et al., 2019) and related areas such as mega sporting events (Adams & Piekartz, 2015; Horne, 2018; Schofield, et al., 2018; & McGillivray, et al., 2019); children rights (David, 2004; Donnelly, et al., 2016; Masdeu Yélamos, et al., 2021) and safeguarding and remedy mechanisms (Naidoo & Grevemberg, 2022; Gauthier & Alford, 2019; Cornu, et al., 2018; Cooper, 2010).

In remedy mechanisms, the United Nations (2011) Guiding Principle 30 on businesses and human rights states that: "Industry, multi-stakeholder and other

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport collaborative initiatives based on respect for human rights-related standards should ensure that effective grievance mechanisms are available." Under this framework, sports organisations have responsibility to protect, respect and offer access to remedy in case of human rights violations. A systematic multiagency approach to reduce tolerance or rights violations and to prevent abuses is advocated by many scholars (Mountjoy, et al., 2016). Caudwell & McGee (2018) argue that the sport sector should shift its focus of documenting violations and abuses towards an action-oriented approach that guarantees protection through prevention and supports research and advocacy to address the moral imperative of a human rights approach.

For sport educators and athletes to be able to claim their rights and stand up for the rights of themselves and others, they must first understand that they have rights and what these rights are. A new instrument to test athletes' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about rights in sport was recently validated (Tukali-Wosornu, et al., 2021). Goutos et al. (2021) found that athletes' knowledge and perception of their own rights are not fully understood. Likewise, the acknowledgement of these rights did not automatically transfer to defending those rights during real-life sport experiences.

This evidence supports the continuing endeavours within the sector to identify gaps and challenges to guarantee the fulfilment of human rights for all. Human rights education in and through sport requires development, adoption and mainstreaming among sport stakeholders. There have been no studies to identify sport educators' knowledge of their rights and responsibilities. This research aims to examine sport 'practitioners' understanding of human rights in and through sport. It also explores how human rights principles are being applied in service delivery by sport educators and their level of perceived self-efficacy in effectively delivering education on these.

### **5.3. Methodology**

This study was undertaken as part of a European project that aims to develop an innovative educational programme on human rights in and through sport and, ultimately embed a human rights approach in sport education. A mixed-method approach was applied to acquire a comprehensive overview of sport 'practitioners' understanding of human rights in and through sport. This research proposal received ethical approval from the Social Research Ethics Sub-Committee of Maynooth University (Ireland).

#### **5.3.1. Participants**

Participants were sampled using a snowballing sample technique as well as convenience sampling. The recruitment was undertaken using social media channels and email invitations to relevant sport-related organisations and higher education institutions. The inclusion criteria were that participants are above the age of 18, they are connected to sport and can read in English.

The sample included 151 individuals who completed the questionnaire (56% male, 43% female and 1% preferred not to say), from across the world and with representation from across the age range. In the sample, 42% of participants had a master's degree, 30% a bachelor's degree, 19% finished secondary school or lower education, 7% had a PhD and 3% vocational training. Participants ranged from physical education teachers (17%), outside of school sport coach (13%), volunteer in a sport club (12%), academic in a sport-related field (10%), school sport coach (10%), higher education student (8%) and members of a sport advocacy group (6%). From the whole sample, there were rightsholders from marginalized groups who identified themselves as being people with disabilities (8%), members of disadvantaged communities (7%), member of the LGBTIQ+ community (5%), members of ethnic minorities (3%) and asylum seekers and refugees (2%).

### **5.3.2. Materials**

A bespoke online questionnaire was specially designed for the study (see Appendix 5). This included quantitative and open (qualitative) response options and was divided into six sections, as each section assessed a specific theme relevant to the research objectives. Section 1 focused on the knowledge of Human Rights In and Through Empowering Sport (RITES-Q). Section 2 and 3 included the standardized SDO-7 scale and the 10-item personality inventory (TIPI). Section 4 focused on exploring the self-efficacy of sport practitioners in RITES (RITES-SE). Section 5 related to the application of human rights-based approach principles in sport interventions (RITES-PANEL). Finally, section 6 contained quantitative and qualitative questions about challenges experienced when applying a human rights-based approach in sport (RITES-Challenges).

Ho et al. (2015) developed and validated the SDO-7 measure, which improved previous research on social dominance orientation (Sidanius et al., 2015). In this questionnaire, SDO consists of four factors: SDO-Dominance (SDO-D) and SDO-Egalitarianism (SDO-E), each one with a pro-trait and con-trait. The validation of the SDO-7 obtained sound psychometric properties of SDO-D and SDO-E, with no compromises to the general predictive validity of SDO.

As for the 10-item personality inventory (TIPI) Gosling, et al. (2003) developed this brief instrument to measure the Big-Five personality dimensions (or Five-Factor Model). This instrument is recommended when short measures are needed and personality is not the primary topic of interest, as the psychometric properties are somewhat diminished. The authors (University of Texas, 2022) acknowledge that this instrument may obtain low coefficient alphas or poor factor structures obtained in factor analyses, but this is because it measures broad domains with few items.

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The SDO-7 scale and TIPI use a scale from 1=Strongly disagree/oppose to 7=Strongly Agree/favour. Whereas responses for the RITES-Q; RITES-SE and RITES Challenges were on a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree.

### **5.3.3. Data Collection and Data Analysis**

An online questionnaire assessed knowledge gaps, self-efficacy of sport educators and practitioners and their level of adoption of human rights-based principles.

Quantitative responses were analysed using SPSS. Firstly, factor analysis was undertaken to reduce data and affirm an appropriate measurement model. Following this, we used descriptive statistics to obtain an overview of results and determine if the analysis of statistical inferences was feasible. In this case, we used the following non-parametric statistical analysis techniques: Mann-Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis. Following this, we undertook hypothesis testing of key relationships between the variables where appropriate.

NVivo software was used for qualitative coding and content analysis. The thematic analysis followed the following six phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006): 1) Familiarisation with the data: The researcher read the responses several times while noting down initial ideas; 2) Generating initial codes: Initial iteration of coding for each question; 3) Searching for themes: Patterns were identified and codes were grouped into emerging themes; 4) Reviewing themes: Generating a thematic map of the analysis by linking the themes in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set; 5) Defining and naming themes: Refining the specifics of each theme and creating clear definitions and names for each theme; and 6) Writing up: Selection of significant quotes to be added in the discussion of the article.



## 5.4. Results

### 5.4.1. Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with a varimax rotation was undertaken for each section of the questionnaire, using data gathered from 151 participants. The procedure followed seven steps (Samuels, 2016): 1) Run an EFA with orthogonal (varimax) rotation; 2) Remove items with communalities less than 0.2 and re-run; 3) Optimize the number of factors based on Kaiser's criterion (eigenvalue > 1) and re-run; 4) remove any items with no factor loading >0.3 and re-run; 5) Remove any items with cross-loadings > 75% starting with the one with the lowest absolute maximum loading on all the factors and re-run; 6) check that the total variance percentage, KMO, Barlett's test, correlation matrix and Cronbach's alpha are suitable; 7) Interpret results and label factors.

In the following subsections, the final EFA for each of the sections will be outlined.

#### *Section 1: Rights In and Through Empowering Sport (RITES -Q)*

The pattern matrix in Table 17 revealed factor one to consist of seven items. This factor was labelled "Human rights through sport" and demonstrated a high internal consistency. The second factor consisted of 4 items and was labelled "Human rights belong to everyone". Factor three was identified as "Human rights in sport" and consisted of 3 items.

<b>Items</b>	<b>Human rights through sport</b>	<b>Human rights belong to everyone</b>	<b>Human rights in sport</b>
Sport can contribute toward the right to independent living	.864		

Sport can contribute toward the right to education	.853		
Sport can contribute toward the right to assembly and association	.819		
Sport can contribute toward the right to employment	.776		
Sport can contribute toward the right to non-discrimination	.751		
Sport is a human right	.749		
Sport can contribute toward the right to health	.748		
Human rights in sport apply mainly to elite sport		.802	
Human rights apply only to national citizens	-.317	.746	
Human rights are only relevant for marginalized groups.		.735	
The competitive focus of sport compromises human rights		.691	
Sport organisations in my country actively promote human rights			.858
Sport federations offer training and educational resources to learn more about human rights in and through sport			.841
Human rights violations are being redressed by sports organisations in my country			.638
Percentage of Variance	32.875	17.737	13.931
Eigenvalue	4.602	2.483	1.950
Cronbach's Alpha	.908	.743	.702

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

*Table 17. Factor loadings of RITES-Q*

### **Section 2: SDO-7**

Although the SDO-7 scale has been previously factor analysed, our sample was quite distinctive, geographically spread, with diverse identities and multi-lingual. Rather than using confirmatory factor analysis to test the imposition of a structure, we sought to determine the most efficient factor structure for the current sample through exploratory factor analysis. In fact, the 4-factor structure identified by Ho et al., (2015) coincides with the factors obtained with our sample: Egalitarianism (4 items), Dominance (3 items), Anti-dominance (2 items) and Anti-egalitarianism (2 items). The

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport Cronbach's alpha for anti-egalitarianism is 0.5, which is slightly lower than the minimum commonly accepted (0.6), this indicates low internal consistency for this factor. Still, we decided to keep it with a view of aligning results with the original questionnaire. As shown in Table 18, two items were omitted as they had insufficient loading and would therefore diminish the instrument's reliability. Thus, this modified SDO-7 has the same structure, but is shorter.

	<b>Egalitarianism</b>	<b>Dominance</b>	<b>Anti-dominance</b>	<b>Anti-egalitarianism</b>
CE3	.917			
CE1	.896			
CE4	.864			
CE2	.846			
D2		.877		
D3		.840		
D1		.681		.333
CD3			.882	
CD4	.340		.736	
E2				.850
E1				.677
<b>Percentage of Variance</b>	30.993	19.462	13.173	12.944
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	3.409	2.141	1.449	1.424
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	.931	.775	.605	.500

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Table 18. Factor loadings of SDO-7

### ***10-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)***

An exploratory factor analysis was undertaken for the TIPI for reasons indicated above. Factor analysis revealed two factors: factor one was labelled "Open and engaging" and composed of four items. The second factor, composed by five items, was named "neurotic and indulgent" (see Table 19). Note that each factor included negative and positive loadings, reflecting the phrasing of the original questions.

<b>Items</b>	<b>Open and engaging</b>	<b>Neurotic and indulgent</b>
Extraverted, enthusiastic	.828	
Open to new experiences, complex	.764	
Sympathetic, warm	.680	

Conventional, uncreative	-.657	
Disorganized, careless		.736
Calm, emotionally stable		-.695
Dependable, self-disciplined		-.657
Anxious, easily upset		.631
Critical, quarrelsome		.493
Percentage of Variance	25.702	24.411
Eigenvalue	2.313	2.197
Cronbach's Alpha	.723	.659

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Table 19. Factor loadings of TIPI

***Practitioners' self-efficacy to implement Rights In and Through Empowering Sport (RITES-SE)***

This scale was developed based on a list of key competencies and behaviours to implement RITES created by authors of this article. The resultant items were submitted to exploratory factor analysis. For the items on self-efficacy, one factor resulted comprised of 13 items which represented 62.44% of the variance (eigenvalue 8.117) and demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha= .947). Table 20 shows the component matrix.

<b>Items</b>	<b>Self-efficacy</b>
I am able to advocate for sport as a human right in my organisation	.884
I can use a human rights approach to deliver sport education and training	.847
I am able to use human rights education through sport	.843
I am able to value and explain sport as a human right and the potential of sport to progress human rights	.830
I understand how a human rights approaches in sport intersects with global, regional, and national policy objectives	.826
I understand how a human rights approach can deliver better outcomes in and through sport.	.819
I can ensure my practice in sport addresses the needs and rights of all including minority groups.	.803

Table 20.

I am able to reflect on my programmes/ activities to ensure the needs of minority groups are addressed	.799
I recognize my rights, duties and responsibilities	.792
I can advocate a human rights-based approach to sport in my organisation from a rights holder and duty bearer perspective	.728
I understand the mechanisms to collaborate with governments and international institutions to advance human rights	.696
I can leverage mechanisms to collaborate with governments and international institutions to advance human rights in and through sport	.690
I acknowledge the need to respect human rights	.683

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

*Component matrix of practitioners' self-efficacy*

***Application of Human Rights-Based Approach Principles in Sport (RITES-PANEL)***

The five items for the RITES-PANEL are the five key human rights principles underpinning a Human Rights-Based Approach: (ENNHRI, 2022) Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality – PANEL. Exploratory factor analysis revealed five items composed this single-factor questionnaire with high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha= ,947). Table 21 shows the component matrix.

<b>Items</b>	<b>HRBA Principles</b>
Empowerment	.875
Non-discrimination	.859
Legality	.780
Participation	.730
Accountability	.688
<b>Percentage of Variance</b>	<b>62.394</b>
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>3.120</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>.839</b>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 21. Component matrix of RITES-PANEL

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***Rights In and Through Empowering Sport Challenges (RITES-Challenges)***

Items of this scale were proposed by the authors of the article based on academic literature. Two factors were identified in this questionnaire on RITES Challenges:

Factor one was labelled "individual factors" and consisted of 3 items and factor two was labelled "organisational factors" and it was composed of 3 factors too. Table 22 shows the factor loadings and relevant measures.

<b>Items</b>	<b>Individual factors</b>	<b>Organisational factors</b>
Lack of interest	.858	
Lack of knowledge	.792	
Lack of time	.703	.409
Insufficient funding		.786
Collaboration with external organisations (public authorities, civil society, etc.)		.776
Insufficient strategic planning	.377	.736
Percentage of Variance	33.419	32.252
Eigenvalue	2.005	1.935
Cronbach's Alpha	.722	.686

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Table 22. Factor loadings of RITES-C

Finally, we used three criteria to examine the factorability of the items: The correlation index (see Appendix 6), the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure, Barlett's test of sphericity. To facilitate the most efficient structure, we selected the items that correlated 0.4 with at least one other item for the factor analysis. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was higher than the recommended 0.6 in all cases (Pallant, 2002) and Barlett's test of sphericity was significant in all cases as  $p < .05$ . All these indicators pointed that factor analysis was suitable with all items. Table 23 summarizes the results obtained.

<b>Section</b>	<b>KMO</b>	<b>Barlett's test</b>
1. Knowledge related to human rights in and through sport	.802	$\chi^2 (91) = 1035,749$ $p < 0.001$
2. Social Dominance Orientation -7 (SDO-7)	.851	$\chi^2 (120) = 1179,780$ $p < 0.001$
3. 10-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)	.783	$\chi^2 (36) = 282,459$ $p < 0.001$

Table 23. *KMO and Barlett's test results of all sections*

4. Practitioners' self-efficacy	.936	$\chi^2 (78) = 1554,053$ p<0.001)
5. Application of Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) Principles	.827	$\chi^2 (10) = 317,908$ p<0.001)
6. Human Rights-Based Approach Challenges	.777	$\chi^2 (36) = 435,033$ p<0.001)

**5.4.2. Results of statistical analysis**

The resulting evidence showed a non-normal distribution. Therefore, we proceeded to undertake non-parametric statistical analysis: descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U Test for comparing 2 samples (e.g., male/female and personality groups) and Kruskal-Wallis for comparing 3 or more samples (e.g., age groups or education levels). The hypothesis testing of key relationships between the variables in each questionnaire are in the Supplementary Material (Appendix 6).

**RITES-Q**

Table 24 shows the results in percentages obtained in the RITES-Q. Most of participants (85% strongly agreed and 12% agreed) acknowledged the positive role that sport can have in promoting human rights or, in other words, human rights through sport. They recognized that sport is a human right and a contributor towards other rights such as education, health and independent living. Only 3% of participants were neutral in this domain.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Human rights THROUGH sport	85%	12%	3%	0%	0%
Human rights IN sport	10%	49%	27%	11%	4%
Human rights belong to everyone	65%	22%	12%	1%	0%

Table 24. Results RITES-Q in percentages

When it comes to the accountability of the sport sector to uphold human rights, 10% of respondents strongly agreed and 49% agreed that the sport sector has obligations, whereas 27% did not have an opinion, 15% did not agree and 4 strongly disagree about this idea.

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Regarding the notion that human rights belong to everyone, 87% agreed (65% strongly agreed and 22% agreed) that human rights belong to everyone, whereas the rest 15% where neutral or did not agree to this.

	Gender*	Education level**	Personality		SDO		Age*	Marginalized groups*
			Open and engaging*	Neurotic and indulgent*	Egalitarianism*	Dominance*		
Human rights THROUGH sport	-	p=,041	-	-	↑ Egalitarians p=<,001	↑ Non-dominants p=,001	-	-
Human rights IN sport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Human rights belong to everyone	↑ Female p=,009	-	↑ Open and engaging p=,003	↑ Not neurotic p=,039	↑ Egalitarians p=<,001	↑ Non-dominants p=,002	-	-

\* Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test / \*\* Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test

Table 25. RITES-Q hypothesis testing.

When comparing results between groups, there were significant differences as it can be seen in Table 25. Female participants had, in general, higher scores than males in the three factors but the difference was only significant around human rights belonging to everyone (p=,009). Also, participants with a bachelor's degree had lower scores than those with a PhD (p=,041) in human rights in sport. Regarding personality, those open and engaging (p=,003) and not neurotic (p=,039) had better knowledge in human rights belonging to everyone. Finally, in social dominance orientation – egalitarians and non-dominants had better knowledge on human rights belonging to everyone (egalitarians, p=<,001; non-dominants, p=,002) and in human rights through sport (egalitarians, p=<,001; non-dominants, p=,001). We did not find any significant difference regarding age and members of marginalized groups.

### **RITES-SE**

The results of the practitioners' self-efficacy (see Table 26) are presented in a scale of 5 (I feel very competent) to 1 (I don't feel competent at all). 38% of respondents



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport felt very competent in RITES; 31% reported a high-level of self-efficacy and 28% were moderate-high about their beliefs to implement human rights in and through sport-based interventions effectively. Only 3% of participants reported a low level of self-efficacy (2.5 and below).

Mean Range	Number of participants	Percentage
5 - 4.5	58	38%
4.49 - 4	47	31%
3.99 - 3.5	25	17%
3.49 - 3	17	11%
2.99 - 2.5	3	2%
2.5 - 2	2	1%
Less than 2	1	1%

Table 26. Results of RITES-SE

We run some hypothesis testing of key relationships between the variables and the results can be observed in Table 27.

	Gender *	Education level**	Personality		SDO		Age**	Marginalized groups*
			Open and engaging*	Neurotic and indulgent*	Egalitarianism*	Dominance*		
RITES-SE	↑ Female p=,028	-	↑ Open and engaging p=,003	↑ Not neurotic p=,017	↑ Egalitarianism p=,003	↑ Non-dominants p=,012	↓ 18-24 p=0,30	-
* Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test / ** Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test								

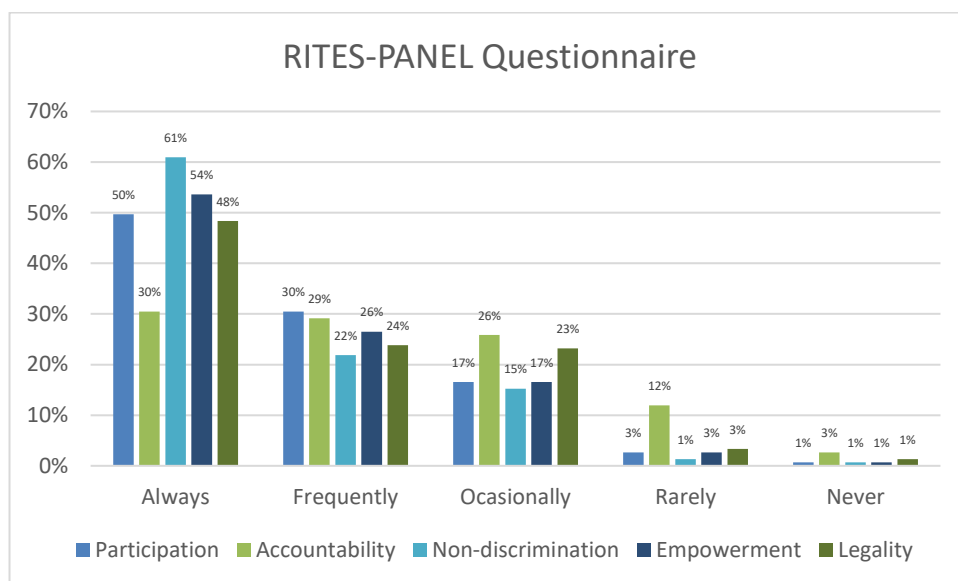
Table 27. RITES-SE Hypothesis testing

Comparing groups, female participants had a significantly higher score (p=,028); those between 18-24 scored significantly lower than those 45-54 (p=0,30); egalitarians and non-dominants scored significantly higher than non-egalitarians (p=,003) and dominants (p=,012); and those open and engaging (p=,003) and not-neurotic (p=,017)

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport also scored higher in self-efficacy. There were differences between education levels and members of marginalized groups, but they were not significant.

### ***RITES-PANEL***

Participants rated how often they considered the PANEL principles while planning, designing, and implementing sport-based interventions (See Figure 22). 61% of respondents indicated that they always considered non-discrimination, followed by empowerment (54%) and participation (50%). Accountability, which refers to someone being held accountable for failing to fulfil their obligations towards rights-holders, was the least applied principle: 12% of participants indicated that they rarely use it, 26% do it occasionally, and only 30% always considered it. The principle of legality was always applied by 48%, frequently by 24% and occasionally by a 23% of respondents.



*Figure 22. RITES-PANEL results*

Table 28 summarizes the results obtained in applying PANEL principles when comparing different groups based on gender, age, educational levels, members of marginalized groups, social dominance orientation and personality traits. There are significant differences based on gender, egalitarian ideologies and not neurotic personality traits. Females scored significantly higher than males in all principles except accountability. Similarly, non-neurotics scored significantly higher in all principles

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport except accountability. Those open and engaging had higher scores in empowerment, whereas non-dominants in participation. Finally, egalitarians obtained significantly higher scores in all principles compared to non-egalitarians.

		<b>Participation</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Non-discrimination</b>	<b>Empowerment</b>	<b>Legality</b>
<b>Gender</b>		↑ Female (p=<.001)	Non-significant	↑ Female (p=<.050)	↑ Female (p=<.007)	↑ Female (p=<.003)
<b>Age</b>		Non-significant differences				
<b>Education levels</b>		Non-significant differences				
<b>Marginalized groups</b>		Non-significant differences				
<b>Social Dominance orientation</b>	<b>Egalitarianism</b>	↑ Egalitarians (p=<.009)	↑ Egalitarians (p=<.011)	↑ Egalitarians (p=<.032)	↑ Egalitarians (p=<.048)	↑ Egalitarians (p=<.039)
	<b>Group dominance</b>	↑ Non-dominant (p=<.029)	Non-significant differences			
<b>Personality</b>	<b>Open and engaging</b>	Non-significant differences			↑ Open and engaging (p=<.049)	Non-significant differences
	<b>Neurotic</b>	↑ Not-neurotic (p=<.003)	Non-significant differences	↑ Not-neurotic (p=<.005)	↑ Not-neurotic (p=<.002)	↑ Not-neurotic (p=<.003)

Table 28. Results of comparison between groups in the application of PANEL principles

### ***Experienced RITES Challenges***

Challenges derived from organisational factors are more prevalent than individual factors (see Figure 23). When applying a human rights-based approach, the most reported challenge is insufficient funding: 19% of participants always experience this challenge and 42% frequently. Insufficient strategic planning is a barrier to effectively implementing RITES (11% always experience it and 36% frequently). Likewise, collaboration with external organisations is another organizational factor that 39% of participants always or frequently experience.

Regarding individual factors, 42% consider that lack of time is frequently a challenge for them, whereas for 32% it was occasionally. It is worth highlighting that 49% of respondents indicated that their lack of knowledge occasionally becomes a challenge to overcome. Finally, lack of interest was reported by 21% as a frequent challenge whereas 26% experienced it occasionally and 26% rarely.

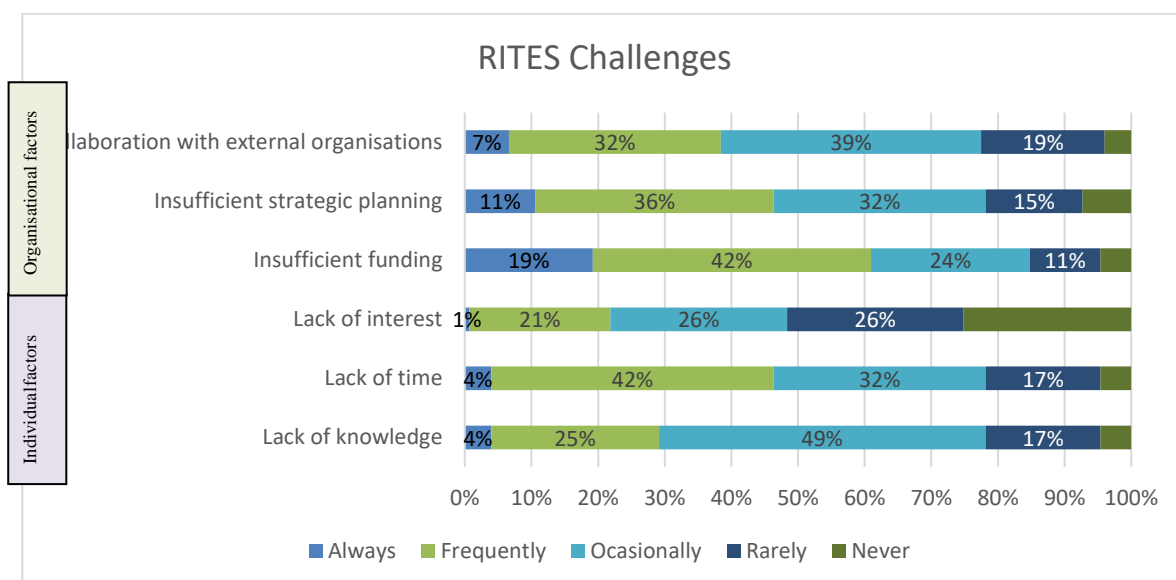


Figure 23. Experienced RITES challenges

We did not find any significant difference between groups based on gender, age, members of marginalized groups, social dominance orientation and personality. The only significant difference was found comparing individuals with primary/secondary and individuals with a master's degree, as the first ones did report to experience more organisational challenges ( $p=,035$ ).

Similar themes to the ones included in the RITES Challenges questionnaire emerged from the analysis of open-ended questions. These were: 1) Collaboration difficulties with external stakeholders (14%); 2) Funding issues (14%); 3) Social inclusion (12%); 4) Lack of human rights ethos (10%); 5) Lack of education/training (9%); 6) Lack of knowledge (9%); 7) Lack of accessibility (7%); 8) Lack of time (7%); 9) Discrimination and lack of integrity (7%); 10) Lack of awareness (5%).

Collaboration difficulties with external stakeholders and funding issues were the most prevailing challenges. These two themes are identified as organisational factors. One of the participants reported that RITES works well but sometimes it encounters resistance when connecting with other organisations:

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*"The challenges faced are linked to our diverse target audiences, partners, environment. The human rights approach in my daily work is not a problem, but sometimes it is difficult to spread such approach in our networks in some countries."*

When it comes to funding, many professionals reported having financial challenges acquiring inclusive equipment, such as wheelchairs, or guaranteeing accessible transportation to sporting venues to enable participation of people with disabilities and other marginalized groups. An example of insufficient funding:

*"Some field trips must be partly supported by students; those who can't afford it will not go".*

Many participants highlighted that inclusion of those left behind, especially people with disabilities, should be considered in the delivery of services by mainstream agencies. Lack of accessibility in sport facilities and the unavailability of assistive technology to enable participation were mentioned:

*"People with disabilities have the right to participate in sport but do not have access to the assistive technology, they need to do so."*

Participants also pointed out the lack of a human rights ethos as something to be redressed. In particular, the tensions emerging when competition is considered important. A participant from Ireland provided the following example:

*"The 'Go Games' were introduced in 2004 to ensure that every child gets a 'Go' for the entire 'Game' at U.7, U.9 & U.11 age-grades in Hurling & Gaelic football. Some Coaches ignore the underlying ethos when they select teams on the basis of competitive ability and/or favouritism".*

A human rights ethos should be instilled with education, yet participants also identify a lack of education and training opportunities as a primary barrier to being more inclusive. This fact is directly connected with the reported lack of knowledge of many sport-related professionals and lack of awareness. As one PE teacher reports:

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*"Sometimes a challenge is trying to include everyone in the physical education class when there are sometimes a mix of different abilities and disabilities".*

In other cases, the issue lies on time constraints to address the demand of those left behind. For instance:

*"The needs of our refugee clients cannot always be met due to time restrictions; we simply do not have the time to help everyone in the best way possible".*

Finally, the status of human rights in local, regional or national contexts influences the sporting domain, where discrimination and integrity issues such as corruption are not being redressed.

*I, being a resident of Kashmir, here is always violation of huma rights at every step.*

#### ***Summary of significant differences between groups***

The analysis of the principal components of this study revealed significant differences between group members. Table 29 summarizes these differences. The following section explores the implication of these differences.

	Human Rights and Sport			Practitioner s' Self-efficacy	Application of HRBA Principles					HRBA Challenges	
	HRI S	HR TS	HR BE		P	A	N	E	L	I	O
<b>Gender</b>			↑ Female	↑ Female	↑ Female		↑ Female	↑ Female	↑ Female		
<b>Age</b>			↓ 18-24								
<b>Education levels</b>	↓ Bachelor's degree										↑ Primary/ Secondary education
<b>Marginalized population</b>											
<b>Social Dominance Orientation</b>	<b>Egalitarianism</b>			↑ Egalitarians	↑ Egalitarians	↑ Egalitarians	↑ Egalitarians	↑ Egalitarians	↑ Egalitarians		
	<b>Dominant</b>		↑ Non-dominant	↑ Non-dominant	↑ Non-dominant						
<b>Personality</b>	<b>Open and engaging</b>		↑ Open and engaging	↑ Open and engaging				↑ Open and engaging			
	<b>Neuroticism</b>		↑ Not-neurotic	↑ Not-neurotic			↑ Not-neurotic	↑ Not-neurotic	↑ Not-neurotic		

Table 29. Summary of significant differences between groups – highlighting those obtaining higher scores (significance level,  $p < .05$ ). Note: HRIS= Human Right in Sport; HRTS= Human Rights Through Sport; HRBE= Human Rights Belong to Everyone; P=Participation; A=Accountability; N=Non-discrimination; E= Empowerment; L=Legality; I=Individual; O=Organisational.



## 5.5. Discussion

The role of sport as a vehicle to promote human rights is well acknowledged by professionals. Sport educators and practitioners recognize the positive impact that sport has in empowering people's lives and fulfilling fundamental rights. As evidenced in our research, sport practitioners feel competent to apply a human rights-based approach in their sports-based interventions. Their knowledge of human rights in and through sport is very high, how rights apply to everyone is also high, but with some variability depending on groups.

One aspect to highlight of the results obtained is the significant differences based on group analysis of applying a human rights-based approach based on age, gender, educational level, personality traits, and social dominance orientation. It is relevant that females have higher scores in self-efficacy and the application of the 5 principles of a human rights-based approach. In a study undertaken by Swami et al. (2012), they did not find sex differences in attitudes toward human rights and civil liberties. One way to interpret this difference is that women and girls involved in sport are more aware of systemic and social challenges, such as classism and objectification (Lemmon, 2019), which lead to neglects and abuses (Bunch, 1990). This can be observed, for instance, in the underrepresentation of female population in many spheres of life such as sport (Weatherford, et al., 2018) and academia (Gabster, et al., 2020). Women's social reality and their lived experience might make them value more the application of human rights in and through sport than males. Further research to delve into the complexity should be undertaken.

Equally, the results obtained in this study show that certain beliefs on social dominance orientation and determined personality traits influence the likeliness to behave considering PANEL principles. Individuals with egalitarian ideals and non-dominant group principles tend to acknowledge and apply PANEL principles. Likewise,

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Open and engaging practitioners and not neurotic are also more prone to integrate  
PANEL principles in their sport-based interventions. In their systematic review, Roberts  
et al. (2017) affirmed that interventions can change personality traits. Not only  
therapeutic interventions can contribute to this, but also allied sectors such arts  
education (Grosz, et al., 2022) and sport (Bessa, et al., 2019) can foster personality  
development. For Stephan, et al. (2014) research shows evidence that leisure-time  
physical activity contributes to personality change in adulthood. It is important to  
elevate Human Rights Education (HRE) in relevant certification to develop greater  
appreciation, address behaviors that challenge a human rights-based approach –  
personality traits, social dominance orientation or cultural factors - and put them into  
practice.

With a view to consolidating and sustaining the convergence between sport and  
human rights over time, there is a need to embed human rights and a human rights-  
based approach into sport education (Heerdts & Rook, 2022). The systematic upskilling  
in post-service education of sport educators in specific aspects of the curriculum, like  
inclusion or human rights, is not an effective solution. A shift towards instilling human  
rights values and a human rights-based approach in and through sport might be needed  
in pre-service education, as these competencies are relevant, applicable and transferable  
to other disciplines. This might also serve to overcome collaboration issues, which  
resulted as one of the most prevalent challenges in our study, as it can create a  
cooperative framework and a common language.

Article 2(2) of the UN Declaration on human rights education and training  
(UNDHRET) (2011) identifies three key elements to be included in human rights  
education and training: About human rights; through human rights and for human  
rights. These three elements are interdependent and need to be addressed all in a holistic  
approach to be compliant with HRE (Struthers, 2015). Learning only about human

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport rights is inadequate as this is insufficient to build a culture of human rights. Likewise, education through and for human rights requires a fundamental knowledge of human rights. Thus, the combination of the three elements is essential. At the same time, the enactment of a human rights approach requires not only the monitoring of rights and the guarantee of protection and remedy mechanisms but also a larger commitment starting from education to achieve human emancipation (Hynes, et al., 2010).

Table 30 shows how these three key elements could be transferred and integrated in sport education curriculum.

<b>UNDHRET framework</b>	<b>UNDHRET Definition</b>	<b>Implications on sport education curriculum</b>
<i>About human rights</i>	Providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;	Sport professionals can understand and share the importance of human rights with athletes, rightsholders, spectators, and other relevant stakeholders. Also, they can identify human rights abuses and direct victims to remedy mechanisms.
<i>Through human rights</i>	Learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;	Sport educators should be able to learn and teach how to deliver sport-based interventions that respect, protect, and fulfil the human rights of all.
<i>For human rights</i>	Empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.	Sport educators should empower athletes and sport practitioners to acknowledge their rights, embody them in sport practice, and help them collaborate with others to uphold their rights.

Table 30. Human rights education framework embedded in sport.

While there is evidence that human rights education in and through sport can advance the rights of certain marginalized groups, a more holistic educational approach might prevent the neglect and abuses of human rights earlier. The Rights Understanding Sport Toolkit (TRUST, 2022) is a practical online educational programme that connects the three critical elements of HRE with sport, physical activity, and play to instil a human rights ethos.

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Article 2 of the International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (UNESCO, 2015) states:

*"When appropriately organized, taught, resourced, and practiced, physical education, physical activity and sport can make distinct contributions towards a wide range of benefits to individuals, families, communities and society at large."*

The contribution of sport to individuals, families, communities, and society is conditional upon the appropriate education of those delivering sport. Thus, neglecting human rights education principles in sport education, diminishes the impact that sport can have at all levels.

A culture change in the sport sector is claimed by many (Goutos, et al., 2021; Krüger, 2016). The understanding and protection of human rights in the sports realm by all -i.e., athletes, sport practitioners, policy makers, spectators, etc.- could enable this transformation led by values, which ultimately will guarantee a sector that responds to societal needs and human rights violations.

### **5.5.1. Limitations**

The empirical results reported herein should be considered in light of some limitations. The COVID-19 global pandemic might have compromised the completion of the online questionnaire as well as the quality of responses. The deadline for completing the questionnaire was extended to allow participants to fill out the questionnaires; however, due to time constraints, we acknowledge that we could not reach a wider sample.

In the questionnaire design, the authors introduced some measures to reduce the social desirability bias related to a human rights thematic. For example, careful question wording, anonymized responses and cross-referencing answers to increase consistency were applied. Despite all these measures, there might have been factors which could have skewed results towards higher feelings competency than the sport sector in

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport general. Based on professional experience of the authors, human rights in and through sport is an unknown area for many sport-related professionals and athletes. The voluntary participation and convenience sampling might have led to the obtention of responses from individuals already more receptive and interested in this field.

Finally, due to the size of the sample, we could not consider intersectional categories in our analysis of the results (e.g. gender and member of marginalized groups or social dominance orientation and educational level). In larger-scale research, this intersectional analysis would be recommended.

## **5.6. Conclusions**

The current study examined the notion of "Rights In and Through Empowering Sport" (RITES) with a view of advancing the mainstreaming of a human rights-based approach within sport education curriculum. The findings show significant differences in the current understanding and application of RITES based on gender, age, education level, personality traits, and social dominance orientation. Given the situational and dispositional variation in responses, it is important to establish a systematic approach to include human rights principles in the education curriculum of sport-related professionals.

The authors advocate for three key elements of human rights education to be included in sport curriculums to bridge the gap between human rights and sport: a) knowledge about fundamental human rights; b) learning through human rights in sports-based interventions; c) empowering for human rights in the sport sector. Despite its limitations, this paper sets a benchmark for other academics and sport practitioners aiming to strengthen and advance the relationship between human rights and sport. Three validated questionnaires (RITES-Q, RITES-SE and RITES Challenges) are made available to the sport sector to advance research and practice in this domain.

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As acknowledged in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable development, sport is an enabler to sustainable development and human rights. Education about, through and for human rights should serve us to continually challenge our assumptions and assess the reality of fundamental rights in our communities. Higher Education Institutions, academics, researchers, and training providers offering sport education programmes (pre-service and in-service) should embrace their duties and transform these abstract ideals into the lived experience of everyone shaping the sport sector. This can impact the experiences of all, especially, those who are being left behind.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

### **Author Contributions**

GMY, MM, and CC collaborated on this article. GMY and SC designed the questionnaire, GMY completed the analysis and led the writing of this manuscript. MM and CC contributed to the overall crafting of the document, providing feedback and suggestions throughout. All authors contributed to the article and approved all edits.

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*End of submitted paper – All references are included at the end of this*

*thesis*

### 5.7. Key findings in the overall context of the thesis

This study delves into one of the key areas emerged in study 5: The professional development of those shaping the sport sector. It highlights the importance of embedding human rights education (HRE) in sport education as a causal mechanism with the potential of advancing the rights of marginalized groups. Figure 24 depicts the findings obtained.

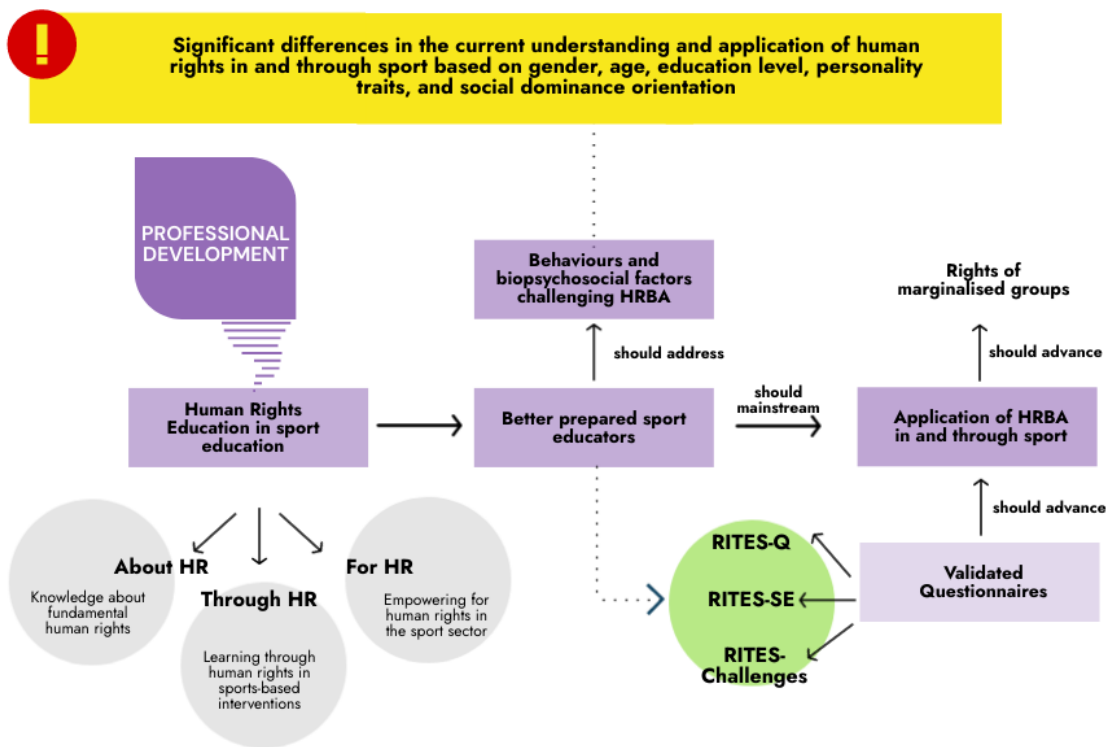


Figure 24. Key findings of study 5

This research found that there were significant differences in the understanding and application of human rights in and through sport based on biopsychosocial factors like: gender, age, educational level, personality traits and social dominance orientation. It is important to remark that correlation is not the same as causation. Even if two variables relate to each other, they do not necessarily have a cause-effect relationship.

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For instance, it cannot be affirmed that individuals with certain personality traits will not be able to apply a HRBA in sports-based interventions. In this case, the identified causative mechanism is the level and quality of education received. Given the situational and dispositional variation towards HR, it is important to establish a systematic approach to include human rights principles in the education curriculum of sport-related professionals in order to better prepare them to address attitudes and behaviors and that hinder the application of a HRBA. It is argued that content related to HRE should include a) Knowledge about human rights; b) Strategies to learn through human rights in sports-based interventions; c) empowering for human rights in the sport sector.

In addition, another key contribution of this research is the validation of three questionnaires: the RITES-Q, the RITES-SE and the RITES-Challenges. Each questionnaire can be administered in less than 5 minutes, which helps keeping the interest and attention of participants. As their factorability has been tested, these three questionnaires can already be used in targeting capacity building efforts. In other words, the RITES tools should contribute to advance research and practice of a HRBA in sport, by helping to assess the knowledge and readiness of sport professionals towards HR as well as their challenges experienced in applying a HRBA in their practice. In the future, further testing with larger samples might be useful to add potential new factors not included at the moment.

In summary, this study assessed sport practitioners' understanding of human rights in and through sport and evaluated the application of human rights principles in service delivery by sport educators. These findings are useful to suggest effective ways to advocate for applying a human rights-based approach to sport.



## **Chapter eight: Discussion**

This final chapter comprises the following sections: (1) an outline of the key events and mechanisms identified in the multiple levels of the studies presented; (2) a presentation of the RITES Model, a theoretical framework to align policy, practice and education in sport environments; (3) a discussion of the main implications of this research at policy and practice level; and (4) a summary of the conclusions.

### **8.1. Overview of the key events identified in the studies.**

In the studies presented in the previous chapters, the notion of human rights in and through sport and its relationship with sport policy development has been explored at different levels and through various methodologies. As outlined in chapter 2 and 3, there is a limited amount of academic literature covering this academic field, from a meta-system perspective, as this is an emerging phenomenon. Despite its limitations, researching emerging phenomena creates the opportunity to map how deeper causal processes function and relate to each other (Kozlowski et al., 2013).

Considering the overall CR approach adopted in this thesis, each study's key events and mechanisms were identified and are visually represented at the end of this chapter. This section provides a brief outline of the main events considering their relevance at macro, meso and micro level. Figure 25 summarizes the key events and mechanisms identified.

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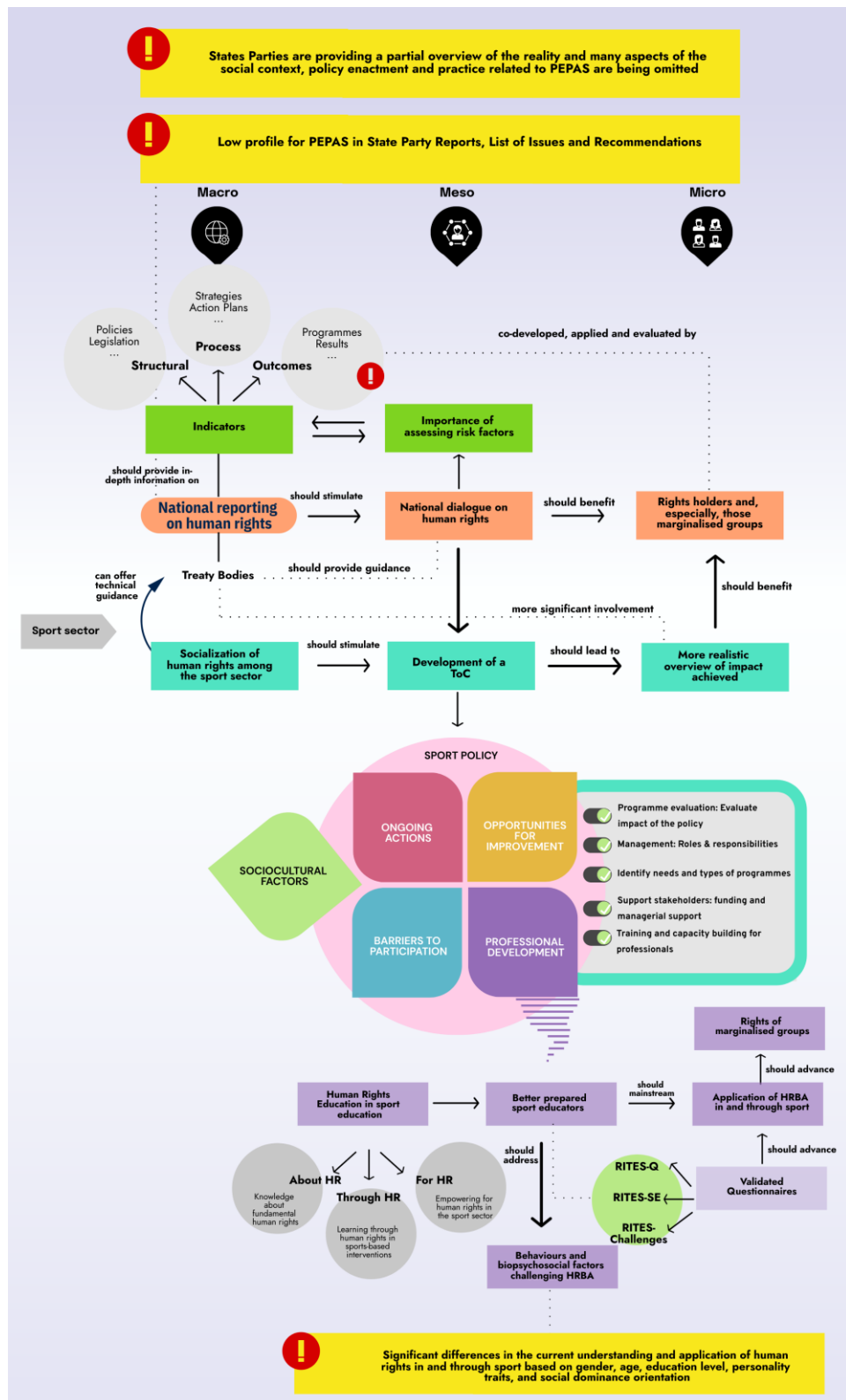


Figure 25. Summary of key events and mechanisms identified in the 5 studies.

### **8.1.1. Macro Level**

In study 1, the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is highlighted as a catalyst for change across sectors. The SDGs provide an opportunity for revisiting defining characteristics of sport to align policy and practice for better outcomes across multiple sectors. As a response, multiple frameworks at the UN level emerged to maximise the contribution of sport to systemic issues. Two major frameworks, endorsed at governmental levels, have been pivotal in driving and coordinating progress to date on progress toward the SDG solution namely the Kazan Action Plan and the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030.

Studies 2 and 3 examined the national mechanism for reporting and follow-up mechanism. The articles scrutinized the significance of physical education, physical activity and sport in reports prepared by State Parties and Treaty Bodies. The documentary analysis found a very low prevalence of the concepts of physical education, physical activity and, to a greater extent, sport. While State Parties report on sport, this process is selective; it is neither systematic nor exhaustive. On the other hand, guidance the Treaty Bodies gave on articles related to sport was appropriate and had a cross-cutting intersectional approach, although limited in scale. The human rights reporting mechanism allows for sport organisations to actively engage on human rights dialogue with States. To improve this process and ensure the fulfilment of rights in and through sport, national dialogues on human rights with sport stakeholders present should be established. This will also contribute to the socialization of human rights across the sport environment.

### **8.1.2. Meso Level**

Study 4, reported on a case study in the Republic of Mauritius. The aim was to explore the views of physical education teachers, sport coaches and university lecturers

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport about implementing the National Sport and Physical Activity Policy in Mauritius and its contribution to human rights. Building upon the collective vision generated by the SDGs and relevant sport frameworks, the national sport policy aims to address four core areas: economy, health and well-being, individual development and culture and identity. Despite being at an early stage of implementation, practitioners identified some aspects to be improved. Firstly, resources to operationalise the policy are required, such as a monitoring and evaluation framework, training of professionals and coherent allocation of resources to sport organisations. The Active Mauritius strategy is a good example of operationalising this policy into tangible sport programmes.

The results highlight the need for macro, meso and micro-actions to operate in tandem, be resourced, and linked through specific goals that are monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. Training, goal-setting, and linked resources are meso-level activities. Developing action plans and theory of change strategies can increase the effective implementation of a national policy.

### **8.1.3. Micro Level**

Study 5 show significant differences based on group analysis of applying a human rights-based approach based on age, gender, educational level, personality traits, and social dominance orientation. For example, it is worth highlighting that females have higher self-efficacy scores and apply the five principles of a human rights-based approach (Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Empowerment and Legality -PANEL). Likewise, the results obtained in this study show that certain beliefs on social dominance orientation and determined personality traits influence the likeliness to behave, considering PANEL principles. Due to these significant differences, intersectionality should be considered in all policy process stages and in the design, implementation and evaluation of sport-based programmes.

## **8.2. RITES Model**

The RITES model is a research output that stems from the findings of the five studies presented in the previous chapters and a critical review of literature. The RITES model aims to highlight key multi-level mechanisms influencing the implementation of human rights in and through sport. For this reason, it is relevant for any stakeholder involved in the field of sport, such as sport educators, managers and policy makers, to ensure that the breadth of their work aligns with human rights ethos.

RITES comprises seven elements that interact at different levels, as depicted in figure 26. Inspired by the meta-system of macropsychology, mesopsychology and micropsychology (MacLachlan & McVeigh, 2021), the RITES model is portrayed as a system with three levels (macro, meso and micro), each of them composed of dynamic mechanisms - depicted as spirals -that are intertwined and move across levels. At the macro level, there are 1) the contextual constraints and influences; 2) a national dialogue on human rights; and 3) sport-related policies. At the meso level, there are 4) monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; 5) capacity development; and 6) ongoing actions. Finally, at the micro level, where all these elements take shape and are perceived differently by individuals, there is 7) intersectionality.

The development of this diagram went through different stages, which can be seen in Appendix 10. In the following sections, each element is described, and the underpinning theories elucidated.

## rites MODEL

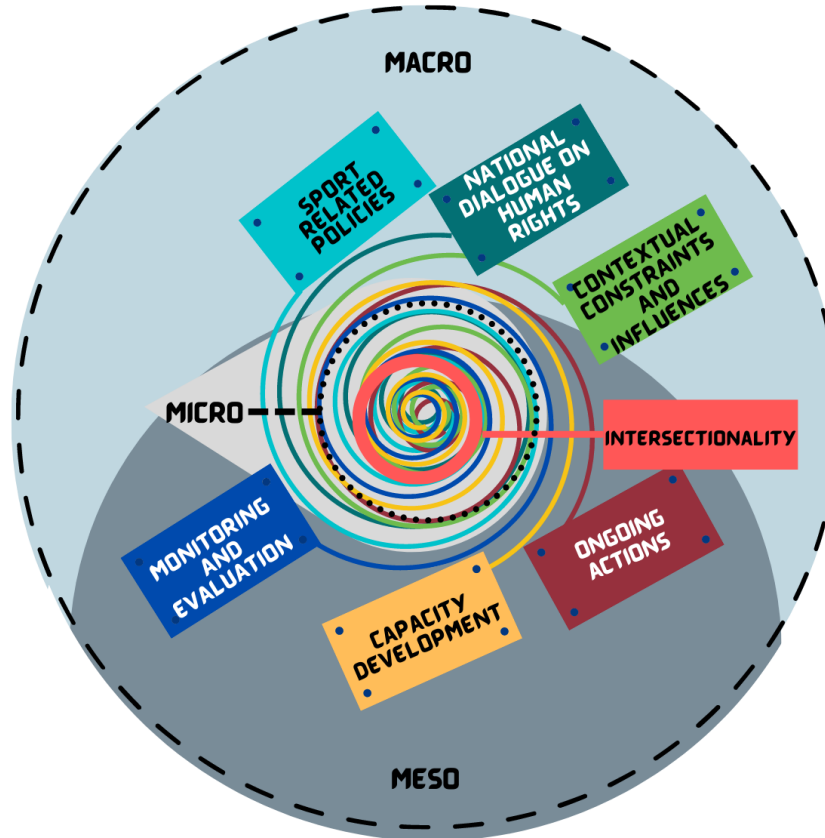


Figure 26. RITES Model

### 8.2.1. Contextual constraints and influences

Contextual factors are dynamic processes of critical consideration as, at the higher level, they shape and constraint the process of development of specific phenomena (Kozłowski et al., 2013). The more complex a system is, the more demanding the change process becomes (Morgan, 2005). For this reason, exploring contextual factors in complex environments such as human rights and sports is of great importance.

In the case of sport, environmental determinants include access to sport facilities, provision of safe areas to practice sport (e.g., parks and cycling paths) or transportation to sport clubs, which is one of the most reported barriers to sports participation for people with disabilities (Beyzak, et al., 2020; Jaarsma, et al., 2014). In the last decades, there has been an increased focus on making public spaces more

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport attractive and suitable for sports participation (Deelen, et al., 2018). This was reflected in the findings of study 4. The Republic of Mauritius has many sports facilities across the country, including in rural areas, with the aim of promoting sport participation. However, a participant complained that accessibility and usage of these facilities by the general population were challenging due to inefficiencies derived from booking procedures.

On the other hand, social environmental determinants to sport and physical activity participation are also important, including income, social support, occupation, availability of sport programmes, attitudes toward sport and level of preparation of sport educators, etc. (Somerset & Hoare, 2018; Breuer et al., 2011).

Physical and social environments are critical to the fulfilment of human rights. In the interrelationship between sport and human rights, determinants to fulfil human rights should be explored and considered for promoting a RITES approach. For example, egalitarian communities, which offer social trust and are less likely to discriminate marginalised groups, can offer a social environment conducive to promoting human rights (Wilkinson, 2005).

One of the key determinants of human rights and their application at the international, national and local level is legislation. Gostin et al. (2019, p.1858) claim that “laws that are poorly designed, implemented, or enforced can harm marginalised populations and entrench stigma and discrimination”. There is significant evidence on how legislation hinders or inhibits the rights of marginalised groups, such as people with mental and psychosocial disabilities (Drew, et al., 2011). However, Footer et al. (2018) recognize the role of “legal empowerment” in addressing socio-structural determinants of health and promoting the well-being and human rights of vulnerable populations. In this approach, they point out that engagement with law can facilitate rights advancement. This case exemplifies how a contextual factor, such as legislation,

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport can be identified either as a constraint or as a positive influence on advancing human rights.

In the case study of Mauritius (study 4), several aspects relating to the social, economic and cultural environment were identified as relevant for understanding the contributor role of sport to human rights. Also, these same factors were used as key informants of the National Sport and Physical Activity policy, which was built around four specific areas that needed improvement: economy, health and wellbeing, sustainable development, and culture and identity.

Also, one of the key findings in study 5 shows that challenges derived from organisational factors are more prevalent than individual factors. Therefore, aspects such as insufficient strategic planning, lack of external funding and inefficient collaboration with other organisations are challenges experienced by sport practitioners.

Considering all the study findings, it is important to emphasize that while human rights are universal, a one-size-fits-all approach to human rights in and through sport is not an option. Context emerges as a significant influencer (or inhibitor) in the promotion of RITES. For this reason, there is a need for contextually relevant analysis, which should inform the other RITES elements (sport-related policies, ongoing programmes, capacity development, etc.). This way, suitable and aligned interventions can be collectively planned, implemented and evaluated.

### **8.2.2. National Dialogue on Human Rights**

As outlined in chapters four and five, studies 2 and 3 found that State Parties reported some significant aspects of sport to Treaty bodies in the national reporting mechanism. In general, there was a lack of evidence or data to evaluate the impact of national actions to those for whom the actions are intended. For this reason, establishing a dedicated network to discuss human rights issues and strategies at the national level, should enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and the identification of implementation



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport gaps. Ultimately, this can contribute to build a sustainable structure with the capacity to create and disseminate evidence-based information to support the protection and fulfilment of human rights for all.

The collaboration with NHRIs is an effective mechanism to advance the promotion, protection and redress of human rights. However, other processes may be complementary and should advance the positioning of sport in this national dialogue on human rights. For example, the “quintuple helix model of innovation” (Carayannis & Campbell, 2010) is a theoretical model that focuses on the exchange of knowledge at a national level between key agents, their relationship with the environment and how their relationships can generate new knowledge about specific phenomena. The TRUST Ireland initiative (2022) adapted this model to implement in Ireland as a unique approach in the field of human rights in and through sport (see Figure 27). They held national dialogues with a) government departments with responsibilities related to sport and human rights and state bodies; b) sport sector (i.e., national sport federations, local sport partnerships); c) academia; and d) rightsholders (e.g. women and girls, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+, migrants and refugees). The outcomes of this dialogue with multiple stakeholders include a better understanding of the sporting reality by rightsholders and the establishment of collaborative pathways to maximise the impact of sport at multiple levels.

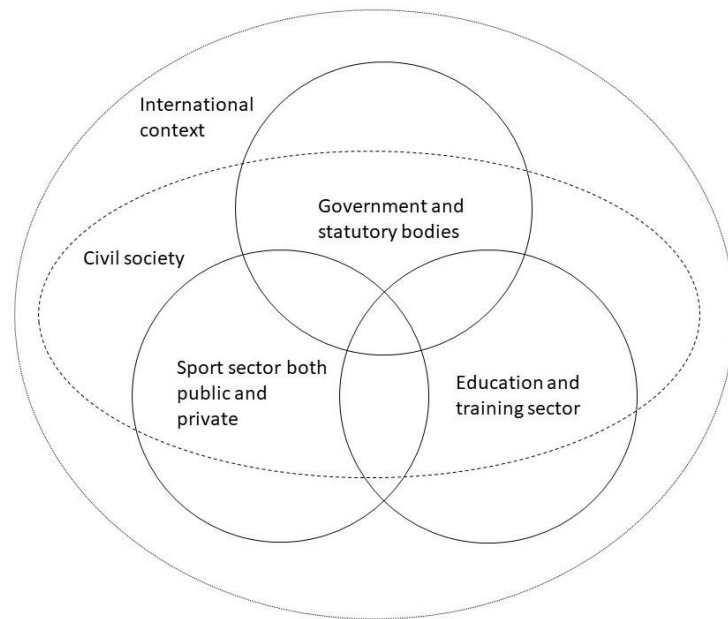


Figure 27. *Quintuple Helix innovation model (ref TRUST Ireland report)*

Regardless of the chosen setting and procedure to establish a national dialogue, promoting sport as a human right and of rights in and through sport requires a multistakeholder approach. As the contextual influences and constraints vary at national level, the best mechanism should be explored and tested. Nonetheless, it is highly recommended that the sport agents collaborate with their NHRI. Likewise, creating a sport and human rights forum would be desirable to maintain a sustained dialogue and set the vision to advance this field.

### **8.2.3. Sport related policies**

Sport-related policies were examined in study 4, on a case study of the National Sport and Physical Activity policy of the Republic of Mauritius, but also in study 1, where the status of sports policy frameworks in the UN system of relevance to the sport sector generally were explored through critical literature review.

Sport-related policies have the potential to interact with other development sectors and to advance global agendas, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Lindsey & Darby, 2019). In the last decades, the development in broader social policy has positively impacted sport and in most Western countries, the status of

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport within governments has improved (Tacon, 2018). Nowadays, the value and cross-cutting impact of sport policies is well-evidenced as, for instance, sport can contribute to building cohesive communities and address social exclusion (Coalter, 2007; Haudenhuyse, 2017). However, at the international level there is a general failure to recognise sport as a human right (Veal, 2022), and the relationship between sport policy and human rights is in its infancy or non-existent.

How can we bridge this knowledge gap? One key aspect to be considered to maximise the contribution of sport across multiple disciplines is policy coherence, which has taken a pivotal position since the launch of the SDGs. Optimizing intersectoral policymaking and addressing complex policy issues such as social inclusion, public health and climate change, requires coherent mechanisms and cross-sectoral policy processes. (Righettini & Lizzi, 2022). Ashoff (2005, p.11) defines:

*“The term "policy coherence" is used in two senses ... on the negative side, it means the absence [removal] of incoherencies, i.e., of inconsistencies between and the mutual impairment of different policies. ... on the positive side, it means the interaction of policies with a view to achieving overriding objectives”.*

Taking this definition as a starting point, both sides-the positive and negative-have been previously discussed in this thesis. The literature review evidences the negative side, as work is absent in this domain and very few studies that explore this phenomenon. Likewise, the results obtained in the case study in Mauritius (chapter 6) identified this inconsistency between policies and intergovernmental cooperation. As one of the participants said:

I think there's a lot of good intention, there is a lot of good effort, but I would say that there is some insularity in operation.

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This “insularity in operation” exemplifies a lack of mechanisms to enhance the interaction of policies to achieve mutual objectives, as stated in the positive side of the definition of policy coherence. To improve this process, Nilson et al. (2012) propose a policy coherence framework that is useful in multi-level systems as well as in intersecting fields of policy. This is composed of three steps, which analyse how policy objectives, instruments and implementation practices interact between areas.

SDG	CEDAW	CRPD	CRC
	Article 12 - Health	Article 25 – Health Article 26 – Habilitation and rehabilitation	Article 24 – Health Article 23 - Rights of children with disabilities
	Article 10 - Education	Article 7 - Rights of children with disabilities Article 24 - Education	Article 28 and 29 – Education Article 19 - Freedom from violence, abuse, and exploitation Article 23 - Rights of children with disabilities
	Article 10 – Participation on economic and social life	Article 6 – Women with disabilities	Article 19 - Freedom from violence, abuse, and exploitation
	Article 11 – work and employment	Article 27 – Work and employment	Article 19 - Freedom from violence, abuse, and exploitation
		Article 8 - Awareness raising by states	
	Article 2 – non-discrimination Article 14 – rural women	Article 5 - Equality and non-discrimination	Article 2 – non-discrimination
	Article 10 – Participation in economic and social life Article 14 – rural women	Article 9 – Accessibility Article 19 – Independent living Article 20 – Personal mobility Article 30 - Participation in sport and leisure	Article 31 - Right to play and recreational activities
	Article 8 – participation at international level	Article 30 -Participation in sport and leisure Article 7 - Rights of children with disabilities Article 16 - Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse	Article 19 - Freedom from violence, abuse, and exploitation
		Article 8 - Awareness raising by states Article 31 – Statistics and data collection	

Figure 28. Inventory of policy objectives of SDGs and human rights treaties

The first step is to create an inventory of policy objectives and instruments. In the field of sport and human rights, the UNESCO Chair MTU has done this mapping analysis relating the SDGs to which sport contributes and the articles of various human

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport rights treaties; this is depicted in figure 28. Another example of a matrix I created relating SDGs and human rights instruments is available in Appendix 9. The second step is a screening matrix of the overall interactions between main areas of policy activity and policy objectives. Finally, the third step is a more in-depth key interaction, which can be carried out through case studies. In our research, studies 2 and 3 do not specifically analyse the interaction between policy areas, yet they contribute to informing about some practical aspects. For illustrating policy coherence in a policy-analytical framework, Nilson et al. (2012, p.397) use the following illustration (Figure 29).

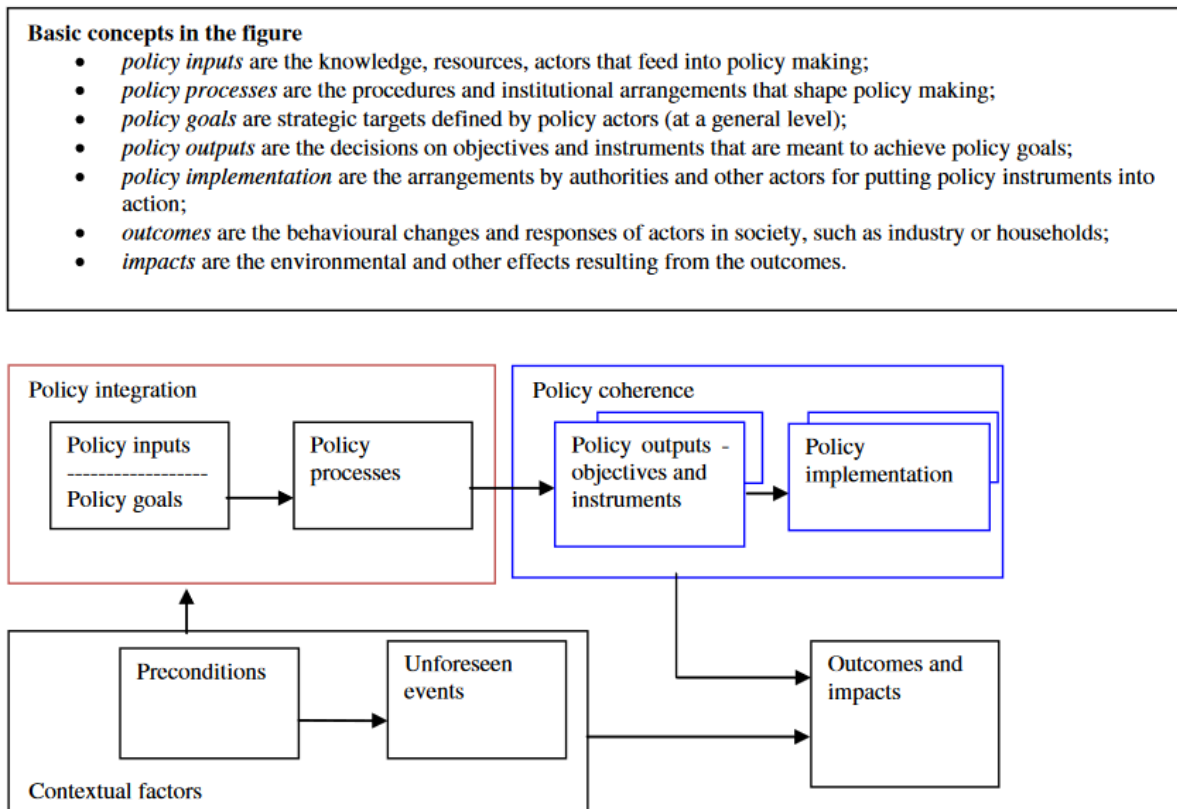


Figure 29. Policy coherence in a policy-analytical framework

As shown in Figure 29, there is a chain of mechanisms operating at different levels which contribute to certain outcomes and impacts. The policy integration phase, which precedes policy coherence, include policy inputs and processes. In this phase,

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport legitimating acts connect all other sport policy phases, such as policy implementation in an iterative way (Strittmatter, 2018).

Regarding policy coherence, there are two aspects to be considered; the first one is policy outputs, which relate to the objectives and instruments that should enable the achievement of the policy goals. The second one is policy implementation. This area is another aspect of great importance to align policy and practice. In many cases, national sport policies are launched together with a national action plan or strategy to facilitate the roll-out of activities to achieve the policy goals. Taking the case of the Republic of Ireland, in 2018, the National Sports Policy (Government of Ireland, 2018) was launched from 2018 through 2027. In order to operationalise the implementation of this policy, a triennial Sports action plan (Government of Ireland, 2021) was launched to offer tailored, sport-specific solutions to advance policy objectives. Sport Ireland, the statutory agency for sport in Ireland, is currently undertaking a research project that involves “Mapping the Irish National Sports Policy (2018-2027) to the United Nations Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals” in order to capture and highlight the contribution of the National Sports Policy towards the Sustainable Development Goals (Government of Ireland, 2022).

Based on the findings of this thesis, I argue that sport action plans -based on theory of change- are the glue that bind policy goals and the implementation of practical solutions. For this reason, to strengthen policy coherence around human rights and sport, we need to bring together the two other macro elements of the RITES model: contextual constraints and influences at an early stage, to define the policy objectives; and the national dialogue on human rights as a policy output. These elements should inform the development of a national sport action plan. Also, the sports action plan should be based on three cornerstones: 1) Monitoring and evaluation; 2) Capacity

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport Building and 3) Ongoing actions. These are the three meso-level elements of RITES that will be described in the following sections.

#### **8.2.4. Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are the first elements of the RITES model at the meso level. The measurement of the contribution of sport to advance human rights – in and through sport- is of paramount importance to legitimise the sport sector and ensure adequate funding allocation, among other arguments. Therefore, a monitoring and evaluation framework that includes a set of human rights indicators to ascertain the impact at multiple levels is required.

In the context of the RITES model, I will refer to RITES indicators, as their application is in the field of sport, yet these share the same meaning as human rights indicators, which are defined as:

*specific information on the state or condition of an object, event, activity, or outcome that can be related to human rights norms and standards; that addresses and reflects human rights principles and concerns; and that can be used to assess and monitor the promotion and implementation of human rights (OHCHR, 2013, p.2)*

As argued in the findings of study 3, quantitative and qualitative indicators should be co-developed, applied and evaluated by those who will be the ultimate beneficiaries, especially marginalised groups (Huss and MacLachlan, 2016). In this case, it is important that the process of developing indicators, it is not only about answering “which indicators are required to measure impact?”, but also questions like “who are they targeting” and “how will these be developed, applied and evaluated?” should be discussed.

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To answer the first question, I advocate for using Donabedian's framework (1980), which identifies three domains in quality assessment and monitoring: structure, process, and outcome. Structure indicators refer to the adoption of legal instruments and institutional mechanisms -i.e., policies- deemed necessary for the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of human rights. Process indicators measure the on-going efforts to transform statements into desired results. In study 3, examples of process indicators related to sport programmes and interdisciplinary activities implemented at national level. Finally, outcome indicators refer to the results of an implemented action (OHCHR, 2013). As identified in studies 2 and 3, State Parties do not provide enough information on outcome indicators. There are multiple reasons affecting the quality of reporting, as outlined in the discussion of study 3, such as the difficulty of identifying performance indicators in complex environments based on the sources of information available.

Action 2 of the Kazan Action Plan aims to develop common indicators for measuring the contribution of physical education, physical activity, and sport to prioritized SDGs. The Commonwealth (2019), as part of its commitment to this action, has developed model indicators for this purpose. These are currently being tested and refined in various countries with the collaboration of governments, such as Japan, Jamaica, and Mauritius (study 4). As human rights are at the core of the SDGs, some of these indicators could be used as RITES indicators due to their cross-cutting nature. Nonetheless, a mapping exercise should be undertaken to align these indicators to Human Rights instruments. This task has been initiated and promoted by the UNESCO Chair MTU, who is developing advocacy tools in the field of sport and human right as part of Action 1 of the Kazan Action Plan.



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A practical guide developed by OHCHR to support effective state engagement with human rights mechanisms, recommends the use of these three types of indicators and the disaggregation of data.

*National mechanisms for reporting and follow-up need to build capacity to provide in-depth information, not just on laws and policies (structural indicators) but on their actual implementation (process indicators) and on the results achieved for the beneficiaries (outcome indicators). This will require disaggregated data and indicators on the effective use of public resources for giving effect to relevant policies (OHCHR, 2016, p26)*

The disaggregation of data is another key aspect to be considered. There is a need for monitoring the participation -and lack of participation- of people in sports in a disaggregated manner. This would provide a reliable assessment of the inclusion needs of individuals, especially those marginalised, considering their intersectional identities.

The use of aggregated data can be problematic, researchers and policymakers use this to set policy agendas (Holland & Palaniappan, 2012). In the first global physical activity guidelines for people living with a disability, Carty et al. (2021, p.92) point out the disaggregation of data as an area to advance inclusive policy, practice, and research in physical activity:

*Mechanisms to gather disaggregated data on participation in physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and disability are essential to monitor progress in participation on all levels—local, national, and international. An increased volume and quality of research exploring barriers and enablers to physical activity and its effects, along the disability continuum and across the domains of functioning (including life activities and participation), are needed to inform effective inclusive policy solutions and public health interventions.*

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Disaggregating data is probably the most important contribution that could be made by human rights indicators, as it operationalizes the principle of non-discrimination and helps to tackle discrimination (De Beco, 2008). Human rights treaty bodies encourage the disaggregation of data based on potential grounds of discrimination, including: sex, age, economic and social situation, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability, health status, nationality, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, place of residence, and other status (OHCHR, 2016).

Based on the findings obtained, I argue for using indicators as praxis (accepted practice or custom) which should also be co-developed, applied and evaluated by those whom we hope will be the ultimate beneficiaries from their use; especially where these are marginalised groups. Although indicators and disaggregated data are essential for ensuring that implemented actions are effective and efficient, they should not be considered ends in themselves but rather tools to ensure that policies and programmes are reaching their goals and outcomes (Schumann, 2016).

### **8.2.5. Capacity Development**

In study 5, the notion of capacity development was thoroughly examined, and some recommendations were suggested, including the integration of human rights education in sport education curriculum.

Capacity development is defined as:

*The process by which individuals, groups and organisations, institutions and countries develop, enhance and organise their systems, resources and knowledge; all reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives (OECD, 2006).*

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Human rights in and through sport is a relatively emergent theme that needs to gain traction within the sector. Despite some ongoing efforts in bridging these two fields, like in the case of organising mega sporting events under the application of human rights principles (Horne, 2018; Schofield, et al., 2018), a more holistic and cross-cutting approach needs to be implemented across the sector to fulfil the rights of all rightsholders. For this reason, capacity development becomes a key mechanism to bridge the policy-practice gap and accelerate the implementation of actions aligned with human rights frameworks.

In the RITES Model, capacity development is placed at the meso level, as it usually takes places within an organisation. However, as the definition indicates, this mechanism expands across levels, which is essential to ensure that a set vision transfers down to coherent practice. A review of UNESCO's capacity-building function shows how some of their initiatives are aimed at the micro level – i.e., training individuals-; at the meso level -i.e., developing institutions-; and at the macro level – i.e., strengthening national capacities (UNESCO, 2007).

While individual training and workshops are included in capacity development plans, they are not sufficient to guarantee sustained change over time. At the individual level, capabilities can be acquired in a short timeframe. However, a comprehensive understanding of a topic like human rights in and through sport may require a longer collective process for generating awareness and understanding. The knowledge of what constitutes “acceptable” practice is an on-going process developed and negotiated within a group or sector (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Consequently, to advance RITES, I advocate for multilevel capacity development based on systems thinking approach to help those that shape the sport sector gain awareness of the big picture and understand the interrelations of sport with human rights (Morgan, 2005). It is essential to provide coherent and coordinated capacity development actions with all relevant stakeholders

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport involved in the management and delivery of sport-based interventions, including governments, private sector, national governing bodies of sport and academia. Berliner et al. (2015) found that the combination of state capacity and political will resulted in improving workers' rights in global supply chains. Therefore, the development of state capacity in sport and the willingness to align with human rights principles should lead to improved rights of all rightsholders involved – or with the potential to be involved- in sport. This is an area that needs to be further explored.

As identified in the elements of monitoring and evaluation and national dialogue on human rights, States should consider developing the capacity of their national mechanisms systems to collect and analyse disaggregated data related to human rights in and through sport. Also another key aspect to consider at the state level is the development of capacity in the field of governance and integrity. In the frame of action 3 of Kazan Action Plan, guidelines on integrity in sport were developed (Council of Europe, 2020), providing evidence-based knowledge relevant for sports ministries. In this resource, the concept of integrity encompasses the notion of human rights and is sustained in three pillars: 1) the integrity of people, including safeguarding from violence, abuse and harassment; 2) the integrity of competitions, including the fight against doping and match-fixing; 3) integrity of organisations, including good governance.

As Sen (2017, p.318-319) defends:

*the move from a reason for action to help another person, which is easy to see in a consequence-sensitive ethical system, to an actual duty to give reasonable consideration to undertaking such an action might appear, at least at first sight, to be a rather gigantic jump". (Sen, 2017, p.318-319).*

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For this reason, capacity development actions in the RITES field should cover all the agents involved – from the top -e.g., governments- to the bottom -e.g. grassroots coaches and volunteers. Many potential topics should be covered in the development of capacities. Some are more relevant for particular groups and others are more suitable for others. For example, information on practical adaptations in sport-based interventions to include marginalised participants is highly relevant for sport educators, but not necessarily for policymakers, who might be more interested in evidence-based reports that inform policy development. However, following the recommendation of the UN Declaration on human rights education and training (UNDHRET) (2011), any of these initiatives should include a holistic approach that covers knowledge a) about human rights; b) through human rights and c) for human rights (see Table 30, included in the discussion chapter of study 5)

<b>UNDHRET framework</b>	<b>UNDHRET Definition</b>	<b>Implications for sport education curriculum</b>
<i>About human rights</i>	Providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;	Sport professionals can understand and share the importance of human rights with athletes, rightsholders, spectators, and other relevant stakeholders. Also, they can identify human rights abuses and direct victims to remedy mechanisms.
<i>Through human rights</i>	Learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;	Sport educators should be able to learn and teach how to deliver sport-based interventions that respect, protect, and fulfil the human rights of all.
<i>For human rights</i>	Empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.	Sport educators should empower athletes and sport practitioners to acknowledge their rights, embody them in sport practice, and help them collaborate with others to uphold their rights.

Table 30. Human rights education framework embedded in sport.

Finally, the role of higher education institutions is of great importance to instil a human rights-based approach to the future sector professionals. Higher Education Institutions have a generalised lack of capacity and knowledge on integrating human

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport rights principles into all aspects of education and learning (Fleacă, et al., 2018). By not taking a stance on mainstreaming human rights education, higher education institutions are arguably perpetuating a system of discrimination where the future workforce does not have the knowledge, abilities and skills to work in alignment with human rights principles. As Carty, et al. (2020, p.337) clearly articulate:

*We can choose to wait for governments to mobilise their obligations or for legal challenges seeking remedy or pragmatically use the opportunity that the inclusion of physical education, physical activity and sport in human rights instruments affords us to advocate for the resources needed to facilitate it*

For this reason, higher education institutions and training providers are called to revise their curricula to align policy, practice and education. There are some free resources available that might be useful for this purpose. For example, the TRUST resources (2022), can be used for pre-service (initial) and in-service (continuous) teacher education and training.. This resource includes a sample module descriptor aligning the online modules to level six of the European Qualifications Framework. Also, another free resource is the teaching note developed by the Centre for Sport and Human Rights (2021), which offers guidance and practical resources for integrating human rights into sport-related education.

Considering the lack of human rights education in capacity development initiatives across the sport environment, the RITES model presented in this thesis can be helpful in guiding innovative educational processes across the sector.

#### **8.2.6. Ongoing Actions**

This RITES element refers to all types of actions that any stakeholder in the sports ecosystem can implement in the frame of human rights in and through sport.

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Many types of actions can be organised, ranging from sports-based programmes to awareness-raising events or advocacy campaigns.

The sports ecosystem is multidisciplinary and reaches a broad number of stakeholders at various levels. The Centre for Sports and Human Rights (2022) illustrates the sport ecosystem as a network of symbiotic relationships, where athletes are at the centre (see Figure 30). This reinforces the notion that people and rights should be at the centre of any action. Also, this model exemplifies how stakeholders' interactions impact – positive or negative- the individuals and communities.

The UN guiding principles on business and human rights (UN, 2011) provide guidelines for companies – including any stakeholder in the sports ecosystem- to align their work in the “protect, respect and remedy” framework. Based on this framework, also known as Ruggie principles, there are three aspects to consider when offering any service. Firstly, many actions can be undertaken to protect the human rights of all rightsholders involved in sport. For any organisation aiming to mainstream this process, human rights due diligence can be instrumental, as this is an inductive process to identify, prevent, and mitigate how their activities and/or relationships with stakeholders can cause or contribute to adverse human rights impacts (OHCHR, 2011).

Some work has been undertaken in Mega-Sporting Events (MSEs), especially in integrating human rights considerations into the bidding requirements for MSEs (McGillivray, et al., 2019). Sport governing bodies such as FIFA and the IOC have started to embrace this approach. However, this ongoing commitment should be mainstreamed by all sport governing bodies and its multilevel impact further examined (Byrne & Lee Ludvigsen, 2022). Athleten Deutschland (2022) published a discussion paper in advance of the Winter Olympics in Beijing to reflect on human rights responsibilities of sport stakeholders in sport events. As part of this paper, they reinforce the need to comply with human rights due diligence obligations:

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“Compliance with the human rights due diligence obligations of sports federations must be the foundation of the integrity of sport and a prerequisite for a responsible approach to the autonomy granted to sport. In the future, state funding for sport must be linked to compliance of federations with their human rights due diligence obligations” (p.3)

As identified in the RITES model, the contextual constraints and influences evolve. Therefore, human rights due diligence should be an ongoing process. In this way, emerging human rights risks that may take place as part of an organisation’s activities and changing contexts can be timely addressed.

The second pillar of the framework refers to the obligation to respect human rights. I suggest that more capacity development and advocacy work should be undertaken in this domain,. Sport professionals and educators acknowledge sport's impact in promoting human rights, as identified in study 5. However, significant differences are observed on basis of sex, age, gender, education level, social dominance orientation and personality traits. In this study, we found that accountability or being held accountable for obligations towards rights-holders, was not duly implemented: 12% of participants indicated that they rarely use it, 26% do it occasionally, and only 30% always considered it.

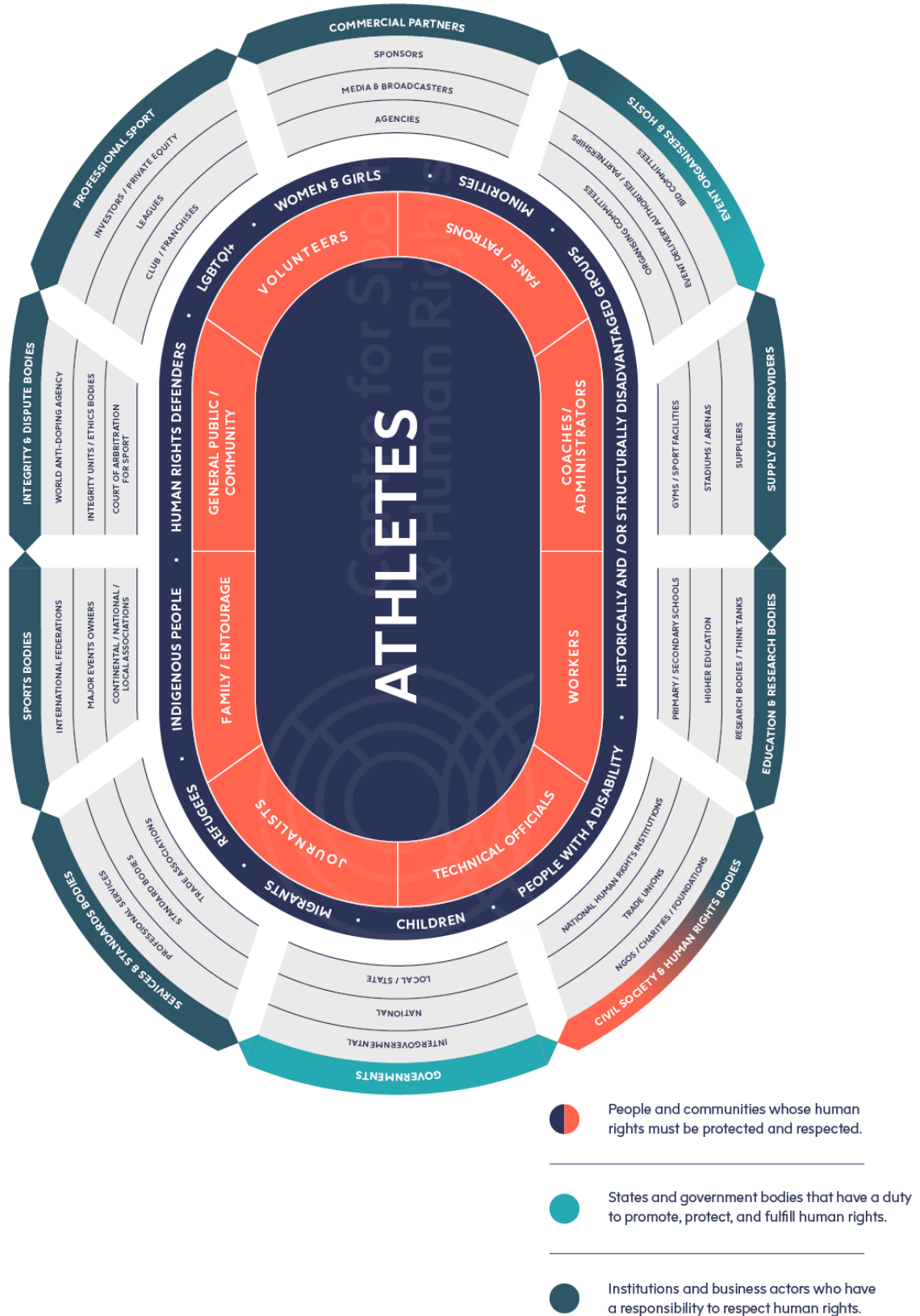
As indicated in the previous RITES element, capacity development in the sector is required to build a rights-based ethos within the sector. Also, acknowledging the obligation to respect human rights should be an integral part of practice. A better understanding of the duties and responsibilities to respect human rights can result in major accountability for the sector to align practice with human rights principles.

Finally, the third pillar of the framework refers to remedy. Human rights violations related to sport have not been addressed by UN human rights bodies, neither on their initiatives nor by the request of potential victims (González, 2022). Likewise,



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport governing bodies have been criticised due to its lack of action towards setting mechanisms to offer response to human rights violations. West (2019, p.2) claims, “the current system for adjudicating human rights complaints in sport lacks cohesion, effectiveness and credibility; it is consequently a *phantom regime*”. More work is needed to develop complaints and redressal mechanisms to ensure that rightsholders in a vulnerable position or that experience abuse -in and through sport- can be safeguarded. These mechanisms should integrate legislation, but they should go beyond that and align redress with other actions such as policy coherence and capacity development, as legislation on its own is not a guarantee. The human rights framework protecting gender rights is well established, yet this becomes a “regulatory riddle” for the sports ecosystem, as there are insufficient mechanisms to access legal remedy and sport bodies are not being accountable (Pattel, 2021).

Figure 30. The Sports Ecosystem (CSHR, 2022).



### 8.2.7. Intersectionality

At the micro level of the RITES model, there is only one element: intersectionality. This concept was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) to demonstrate how multiple identities interact and shape distinct and complex experiences and struggles, particularly for those who experience discrimination on the basis of disability, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity or socio-cultural or economic background. The concept of intersectionality is widely used in critical studies and the social sciences. The definition has expanded to include all social identity structures, which result in the unique social advantages and disadvantages that every individual experiences (Gopaldas, 2013).

In the field of sport, intersectionality is an emergent concept that needs to be studied further (Gearity & Metzger, 2017). Similarly, there is little evidence in the academic and policy literature on how intersectionality and human rights are connected (Clark, et al, 2018). In order to explore the intertwined relationship of individuals and the social environment in which sport and physical activity happen, “thinking intersectionally” is a useful methodology to be explored (Watson & Scraton, 2013). Some researchers advocate promoting intersectionally inclusive practice to address social justice (Dagkas, 2016) and to ascertain who is being included in sport and in what manner (Kalman-Lamb & Abdel-Shehid, 2017). Lim et al. (2021) conducted a systematic review of the operationalization of intersectionality and physical activity and sport. Their conclusions denote alarming findings to be improved by the sport sector. As they mentioned:

*Sport appears to be a unique context where complex processes of social and structural forces create a space that is unwelcoming of and even harmful for certain groups based on their membership in various social categories (Lim et al., 2021, p.7)*

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In the RITES Model, intersectionality is placed at the micro level because it is at that level where multiple interlocking identities are observable. However, as depicted in the model, all the multiple and interlinked elements at macro and meso levels are influence and shape the reality at the micro level. For this reason, intersectionality transcends the three levels and should be used as lenses to explore the impact of the RITES elements at a micro level. For example, the experience of policies is distinct by all individuals and some significant differences and needs should be considered when developing, implementing and evaluating public policy (Hankivsky & Cormier, 2011).

From most policy and research, a key omission is recognising and acknowledging multiple intersecting identities (Bowleg, 2012). Accordingly, it is important to undertake multi-level analyses that bring together individual experiences to broader systems and structures for to better understand how power relations are shaped and experienced. As Dasgupta et al. (2020, p.4) sustain:

*The canvas of enquiry and campaigning has to be much broader than it is at the moment; it must simultaneously recognize the multiple axes of alienation and seek to reimagine state-society relations.*

The sport sector should strive to continually analyse through intersectional lenses participation in sport and rights through sport. There are certain axes that have received some attention in the literature, such as race, disability, gender, sexuality and class (Norwood, 2019; Dagkas, 2016; McDonald, 2014; Seal, 2012). The findings obtained in study 5 indicated significant differences in the current understanding and application of RITES based on gender, age, education level, personality traits, and social dominance

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport orientation. Although intersectionality was not analysed due to a limited sample size, this is an aspect that should be taken into consideration and further researched.

As indicated earlier, contextual influences and constraints are dynamic processes and, therefore, new challenges and forms of discriminations may emerge. For example, the appearance of COVID-19 and the related legislation to control the expansion of the pandemic, might have created restrictions in participation for those with lower socioeconomic levels and not vaccinated, a newly created identity layer. Therefore, intersectionality should be an on-going process to analyse how multiple identities interact with interlinked macro and meso elements.

### **8.3. RITES Exploratory Checklist and Toolkit**

The RITES model was designed with the aim to inspire and support all those who shape the sport sector to adopt human rights principles in alignment with their practice. In order to facilitate this process, some practical resources have been developed with a view of reinforcing the value of RITES. Based on the stages of change model (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1983), many sport related professionals and volunteers are unaware of the benefits that can be reaped by aligning human rights with their practice (pre-contemplation stage). Therefore, the RITES Exploratory checklist is a tool that will support sport-related professionals to measure their level of understanding of the main elements of the RITES model. In this way, they will become aware of some gaps in their understanding and application of RITES (contemplation stage). Then, the RITES Toolkit has been created to encourage a transition towards a determination to act and increase their self-efficacy in this field (see Appendix 12). This resource is built around the RITES elements and contains basic information to reflect and develop the capacity for embracing human rights in and through sports-based interventions. The ultimate goal is that the RITES Model and

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport associated resources guide action towards bridging the gap between sport and human rights (action stage), and this human rights-based approach is consolidated and becomes the norm in the sector (maintenance stage).

When human rights are presented in isolation, they are usually perceived as abstract concepts and they do not produce any effect, unless they are translated to fit their realities (GTZ, 2001). These resources are designed to introduce the notion of human rights in a language digestible for those that shape the sport sector.

### **rites exploratory checklist**

The RITES exploratory checklist will help you gain awareness of implementing RITES elements in practice. Please complete the following checklist. At the end, for all the questions where you answered “No” or “I don’t know”, please refer to the RITES Toolkit to find further details.

<b>Contextual constraints and influences</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
1. Has your country signed and ratified the following human rights treaties?			
a. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights			
b. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women			
c. Convention on the Rights of the Child			
d. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities			
2. Are you familiar with national legislation related to sport?			
3. Have you undertaken a needs assessment to identify the physical and social environmental determinants of sport participation?			
4. Do you consider contextual factors before developing and implementing sport-based interventions?			
5. List two contextual influences and constraints related to sport and human rights in your country			

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National dialogue on human rights	Yes	No	I don't know
6. Is there a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in your country?			
7. If yes, have they engaged in any project where sport was the primary theme?			
8. Is there any existing sports-related national network to discuss human rights issues?			
9. Is there any national human rights network to discuss sport-related issues?			
10. Do you see the replication of the TRUST Ireland approach in your country/region as feasible?			
Sport-related policies	Yes	No	I don't know
11. Do you know how sport contributes to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development?			
12. Do you know how sport and human rights relate at the policy level?			
13. Does your national sport policy align with the SDGs and/or human rights instruments?			
14. Does your national sport policy have a national action plan to support implementation, where you can contribute?			
15. Are you aware of the inclusion of human rights in policies and/or regulations of international governing bodies (e.g., FIFA, World Athletics, FINA, etc.)?			
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	No	I don't know
16. Do you use a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the impact of your sport-based interventions?			
17. Do you include human rights indicators?			
18. Do you measure the impact of your interventions against sport-related policies?			
19. Do you use quantitative and qualitative indicators that are disaggregated?			
20. Do you use structure, process and outcome indicators?			
Capacity development	Yes	No	I don't know
21. Are you aware of capacity development programmes to learn more about RITES?			
22. Do you know where to learn more about governance and integrity in sport?			
23. Do your capacity development programmes include information “about, for and through” human rights?			
24. Do higher education institutions and training providers in your country/region offer mainstreamed human rights education?			

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25. Do you regularly take part in capacity development initiatives?			
<b>Ongoing Actions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
26. Do you implement awareness-raising initiatives related to human rights in and through sport?			
27. Do you have a mechanism to redress human rights violations and abuses?			
28. Do you advocate for RITES within your community?			
29. Do you consult with your participants to find out more about their needs?			
30. Do you undertake a risk assessment to safeguard the rights of marginalised groups?			
<b>Intersectionality</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
31. Do you understand the concept of intersectionality?			
32. Do you analyse sport participation with intersectional lenses?			
33. Do you collaborate with rightsholders advocacy groups (e.g. LGBTQ+, disability, ethnic minorities, etc.) to support their participation in sport?			
34. Do you make adaptations to facilitate the participation of marginalised groups? (e.g., women with disabilities, children from lower socioeconomic groups, etc.)			
35. Do you use disaggregated data to monitor, understand and analyse intersectional participation?			

#### 8.4. Limitations of the research

With a view to offering transparency and a rigorous assessment of this research, this section outlines the limitations and difficulties experienced during the research process.

The merging of human rights in and through sport with the domain of sport policy is an emerging theme which has not received enough attention in the academic literature. The study of these two topics from a meta-system perspective was an ambitious endeavour. A narrower scope of the study would have eased the research process. Reframing the research to examine a more specific part of this phenomena would have been a legitimate call, yet this would have gone against a gestalt principle. Results would have provided only a partial and limited view of the relationship between the alignment between human rights, sport



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport policy and education, which could not be explained from a holistic approach. Therefore, starting from an open-systems perspective, the adoption of a CR ontology and epistemology was a congruent decision that enabled the use of mixed methods in a valid and reliable manner. Despite the limitations related to the ambitiousness of the research question, the use of mixed-methods and the triangulation of results have usefully informed the research questions.

On the other hand, as outlined in chapter one, this research was significantly disrupted by the global pandemic of COVID-19. This new context brought multiple difficulties at different stages of the research process. Firstly, the lockdown situation derived from COVID-19 provoked the initial postponement of data collection and, ultimately, the reconfiguration of an adequate methodology to adapt my research to a new context. As I was not able to travel to Mauritius, I had to rely on a gatekeeper to access participants for study 4 and conduct online interviews. This fact limited the sample for this study, which could have been more specific (e.g., only sport coaches or policymakers). Nonetheless, by using a wider inclusion/exclusion criterion, and through the application of an IPA methodology, the findings provided a first-person experience of the policy implementation.

The COVID-19 not only affected the research design, but also might have influenced participation in the studies. For instance, the completion of the online questionnaire in study 5 as well as the quality of responses might have been compromised. The increased use of videoconferencing and online working has been challenging (Karl, et al., 2022). Some measures were put into practice to facilitate participation, such as the extension of the deadline for completing the questionnaire. Nonetheless, due to time

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport constraints, the authors decided to finalise the response period after several months and a wider sample could not be reached.

The development of the RITES model was informed by a) extensive interdisciplinary literature review; b) findings obtained in each of the five studies conducted and included in this thesis; c) multiple discussions held with academics; d) my own personal experience as a researcher and adapted physical activity instructor. A wider consultation with academics and rightsholders during the appraisal phase could have resulted in a richer proposal, but this was not achievable within the scope of the current research. For this reason, the validation of the RITES model and examination of its applicability in a sport governing body is a potential study to be explored in future research.

### **8.5. Implications of this research**

This mixed-method research underpinned by a critical realist approach provides a comprehensive review of evidence on how to maximise the impact of sport by aligning human rights principles and capacity development efforts. The RITES Model results from an interdisciplinary multi-level analysis that aims to increase the understanding and use of a human rights-based approach in sport. It is important to remark that the RITES model is not all-encompassing, as there might be other relevant elements than the seven multilevel elements that emerged from the retrospective analysis of the findings obtained. Nonetheless, these seven elements are considered essential in the effort to align policy, practice and education around sport and human rights.

While the specific findings from the five studies and the RITES model have been outlined, this section addresses general recommendations for policymakers, training providers, academia, sport educators and the global public.

### **8.5.1. Implications for policy development**

This research provides evidence-based knowledge on how to advance the promotion and fulfilment of human rights in the sport sector and through sport-based interventions. The studies in this thesis, acknowledge two mechanisms by their importance in advancing RITES, which can be optimized by policymakers: The national mechanism for reporting and follow-up to international and regional human rights bodies; and the creation of policy coherence.

State parties have critical moments for reporting concerning human rights treaty obligations and the SDGs, such as the State Party reports to each of the treaty bodies, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the Voluntary National Review (VRN). These reporting mechanisms represent relevant data-sharing opportunities between the sport sector and policymakers. To improve the quality and effectiveness of these mechanisms, qualitative and quantitative indicators to assess the effective implementation of sport-related policies are required. For this reason, the development of RITES indicators, which can be informed from available data sources and indicators, should be developed, used and evaluated to measure the impact of policy and practice at local, regional and national level.

As argued in this thesis, RITES indicators should be composed of structure, process and outcome indicators to obtain a more holistic overview of the human rights reality in a given place. Creating RITES indicators may facilitate the development of benchmarks to track and review targeted performance (De Beco, 2008). This can be a sustainable system to monitor their achievements. For example, the following structure might be applied:

<b>Leading agencies</b>	<b>Indicator type</b>	<b>Benchmarks</b>
Governmental bodies	Structural	National reporting to human rights bodies
Sport Governing Bodies	Process	National port action plans
Sport clubs and civil society organisations	Outcomes	Reporting to

*Table 31. Sample operationalisation of RITES indicators*

RITES indicators can be instrumental for multiple stakeholders, including State Parties, NHRIs, Treaty bodies and civil society (i.e., sport governing bodies, clubs). Collaboration and data sharing between these agents at national level can help improving the reporting process (see Figure 31) and, ultimately, advance the implementation of human rights in and through sport at all levels.

On the other hand, this thesis calls for major policy coherence in intersectoral policymaking as well as in cross-sectoral policy processes. The RITES model can be instrumental to identify key mechanisms to be considered at different stages of the policy making process. The seven elements of the RITES model can be tailored to specific contexts to obtain evidence that can help shape policy and practice, via the development of national sport action plans. Sport-related policies need to be clear and understandable to the sport environment. While all agents may not need to know all the detail of every policy, short explanatory documents can be helpful to facilitate buy-in and alignment with programmes. These national sport actions plan, based on theory of change, can become the glue that binds policy goals and implements practical solutions.

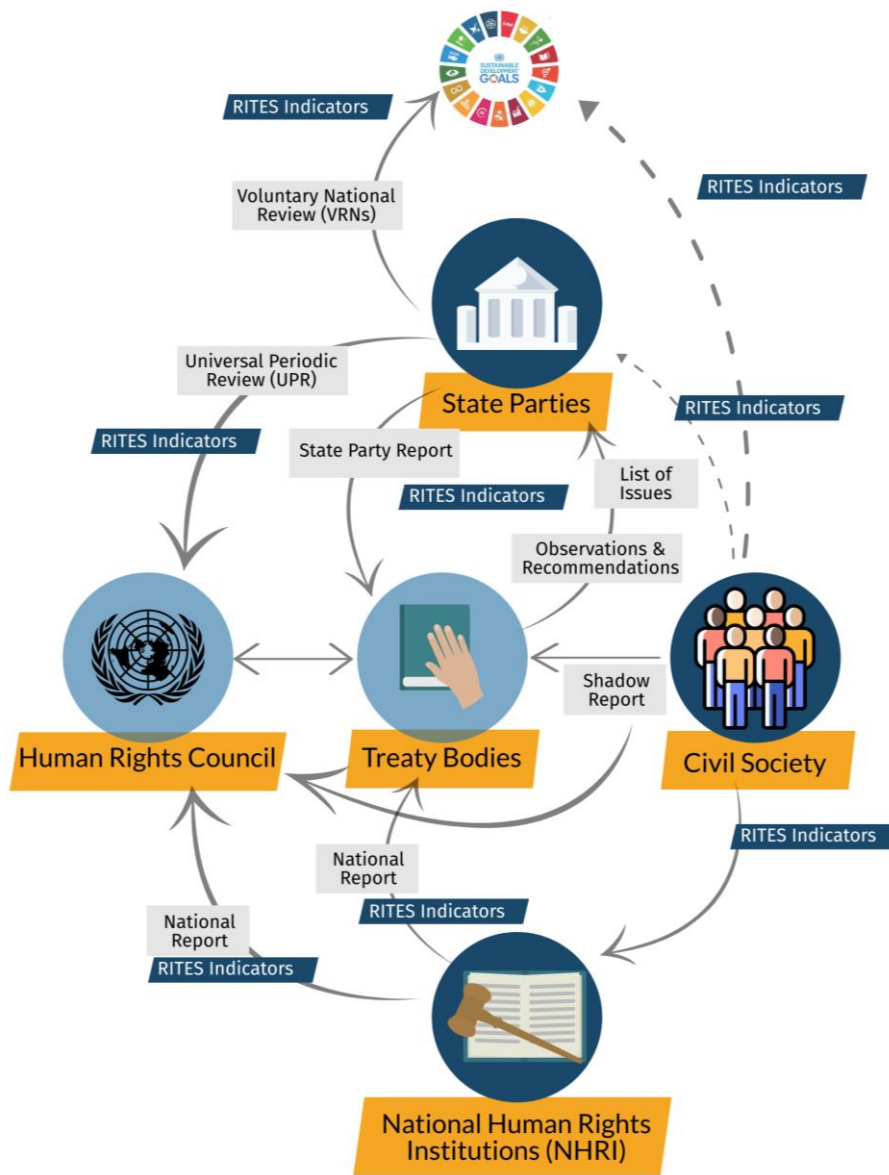


Figure 31. RITES Indicators and potential reporting mechanisms

### 8.5.2. Implications for education institutions and training providers

The universality of human rights is currently not being enshrined in the offer of higher education at the pre-service and in-service level. One of the key elements of the RITES model is capacity development. Education and training in the field of human rights in and through sport is of paramount importance to help sport environment agents gain

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport awareness of the relationships between systems and understand the cross-cutting contribution of sport with human rights.

Higher education institutions must integrate human rights and diversity and equality training throughout their curricula. Education in human rights should provide knowledge about human rights mechanisms that help protect, respect and fulfilment of human rights. Also, in the case of educational courses for sport practitioners, these should consider the skills and abilities needed to implement a rights-based approach in sport and through sports-based interventions.

The lack of human rights education in sport education – as well as in other disciplines- is arguably perpetuating a dysfunctional system, as the available workforce do not necessarily have the knowledge, abilities and skills to work in alignment with human rights principles. If all graduates in sport related disciplines (e.g., sport science, physical education, kinesiology, etc.) received human rights education as part of their studies, this could be ground-breaking for the sector, as its capacity to respond to these topics would increase significantly. For this reason, HEI and training providers are encouraged to follow the recommendation of the UN Declaration on human rights education and training (2011): Sport-related curricula should include a holistic approach that covers knowledge a) about human rights; b) through human rights and c) for human rights.

On the other hand, practitioners working within the sport sector may need to upskill retroactively through training courses and similar initiatives. The roll-out of capacity development initiatives at organisational level requires change management in their own organisations to bring about the necessary shifts and adaptations in policies and organisational practice. For instance, mandatory child safeguarding training is required by many sports governing bodies. In this line, RITES training could soon be considered

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport mandatory and include mechanisms to overcome human rights issues. Sample themes to be covered are anti-racist training, disability-awareness training, gender mainstreaming, and the application of HRBA principles.

It is important to provide coherent and coordinated capacity development actions with all relevant stakeholders involved in the management and delivery of sport-based interventions, including governments, the private sector, national governing bodies of sport and academia. There are a range of educational and training resources that can be used to develop capacity among key agents related to sport. In this thesis, the RITES Exploratory Checklist and the RITES toolkit are outlined and made available to facilitate lifelong learning opportunities. In addition, the development and validation of three questionnaires (RITES-Q, RITES-SE and RITES Challenges) can support other researchers to replicate this same study with different cohorts and/or expand the field of study using these instruments.

### **8.5.3. Practical implications**

The RITES model is a theoretical construct that recognises seven key multi-level mechanisms influencing the implementation of human rights in and through sport. All agents shaping the sports environment (see figure 28) can benefit from the guidance provided by this model, whose objective is to support the alignment of policy, practice and education of human rights in and through sport. The RITES model points to critical action areas, which need to be examined and applied considering the needs and opportunities in context.

The implementation of the RITES model over time can be an effective way to bridge the policy-practice gap. Figure 32 depicts the operationalisation of the RITES model over time. As identified in the diagram, contextual constraints and influences and the

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport national dialogue on human rights, at the macro level, are ongoing processes that should be considered and revised continuously. National dialogue should inform national reporting on human rights, which has a periodicity of 4 years. Also, the national sport policy and the national action plan on sport should be developed considering the contextual constraints and influences.

On the other hand, capacity development is a sustained mechanism that should involve sport practitioners and top levels of sport management and policymaking, especially during the policy design cycle. Finally, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and ongoing actions, are depicted as two converging lines, which are improved and refined over time, resulting in better knowledge to inform the other elements and a major cross-cutting impact at individual and community level. The intersectional lenses will strengthen the implementation and contribute to more data that can contribute develop more cohesive policies to overcome new emerging issues and bridge the policy-practice gap.



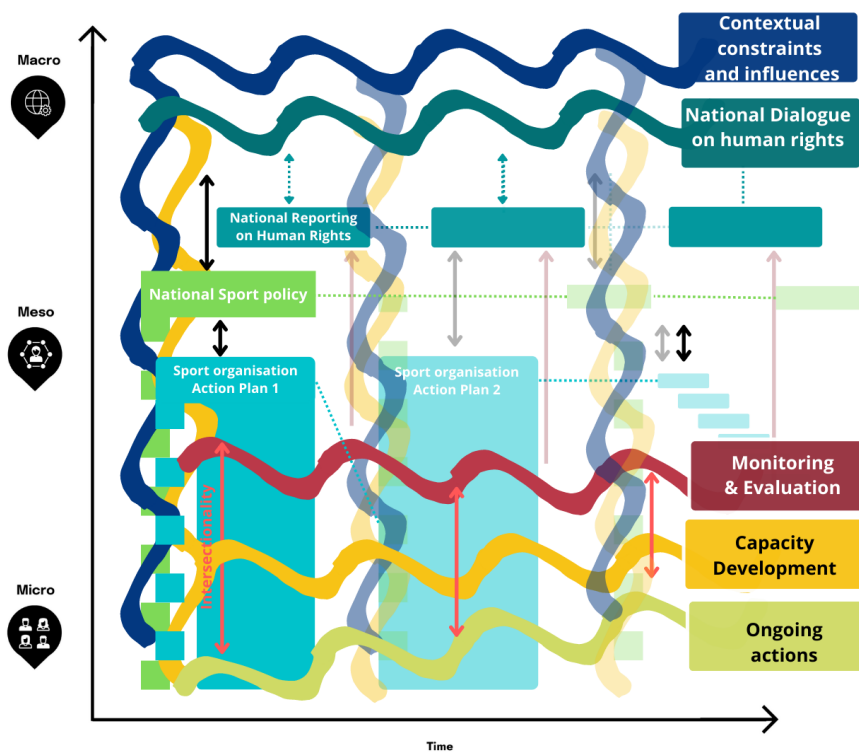


Figure 32. Implementation of the RITES Model over time

### 8.6. Directions for further research

This research contributes to strengthens the evidence base and enhances harmonization of the relationship between human rights in and through sport. To further develop this emerging area, this is a non-exhaustive list of some potential areas for further research of the phenomena herein examined.

1. **Longitudinal analysis of the impact of the RITES model in a sport governing body:** Analyse the intermediate and long-term impact in a sport governing body of aligning human policy, practice and education around human rights in and through sport. This analysis may consider managerial, social, communitarian and financial aspects.
2. **Development of RITES Indicators for sport governing bodies:** Mapping existing national and international framework of indicators (e.g., SDGs) in sport. Based on

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this, initiate a consultation with the sport environment to develop RITES indicators to benchmark the performance of a sport governing body.

3. **Long-term study of the impact of sport-related policies enhancing human rights:**

A case study to measure the impact of sport-related policies in a country/region investing in human rights.

4. **Action research to mobilize community resources to enhance human rights:**

Action research with civil society organisations representing marginalised groups with a view of identifying capital (economic, symbolic, social, and cultural) to advance their rights in and through sport.

5. **Redesigning curriculum for sports education:**

In collaboration with a Higher Education Institution and key stakeholders, revise and redesign sport education curricula to integrate human rights, equality and diversity.

6. **Human rights abuses and redressal mechanisms from an athlete's perspective:**

Development and validation of a multidisciplinary collaborative mechanism to support athletes that experienced human rights abuses.

7. **Women's rights, sport participation and intersectionality:**

Explore the barriers and facilitators to sport participation of women using intersectional lenses (e.g., women with disabilities, women from minority ethnic groups, etc.). Research the impact of sport in their social reality and their lived experience.

8. **Governance and integrity training in sport-based organisations:**

Development of an online training on governance, integrity and human rights with sports professionals and allied stakeholders and test the effectiveness of the training and mid-term impact in the organisations.

## **8.7. Conclusions**

This multi-level research strived to know how and to what extent human rights are applied to sport policy and practice at international, national and local level. For this reason, three questions were raised: (a) what is the nature of the relationship between human rights and sport policy in the literature?; (b) how can those shaping the sport environment increase awareness, understanding, and engagement with human rights treaties to be more accountable for human rights?; and (c) what are effective ways to advocate for the application of a human rights-based approach to sport?. This section outlines a summary of the main findings, considering the above objectives.

### **8.7.1. What is the nature of the relationship between human rights and sport policy in the literature?**

This thesis demonstrates the relationship between human rights and sport policy through a robust interdisciplinary literature review and the development of five studies using mixed research methods.

In chapter two, a critical review of literature on human rights, education, and sport-related policies was undertaken. This exercise presented few academic papers linking these disciplines. For this reason, a study was undertaken to appreciate the interlinkage between human rights and sport policy development. Study one “Sport: a driver of sustainable development, promoter of human rights, and vehicle for health and wellbeing for all”, presents the sports policy frameworks in the UN system of relevance to the sport environment. It strengthens the interlinkage between sport, human rights, health and wellbeing based on critical literature. This study has had a significant impact in the academic sphere and has been cited for 25 other published articles -as of August 2022.

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The ontological and epistemological approach adopted is based on the critical realist perspective. In chapter three, the methodological research design is outlined. This methodology used quantitative and qualitative research methods. Analysis through the lens of critical realist has enabled the coherent and congruent construction of a body of knowledge that explains the relationship between sport policy and human rights. The data collected via multiple data collection techniques were analysed to identify the key events that were taking place in the domain of the real. Then, through a critical process of retrodution, the generative causative mechanisms were identified to bring clarity to the synergies and challenges of linking human rights and sport policy.

The case study in Mauritius, presented in chapter six, offers a practical example and some recommendations on aligning human rights in and through sport. This study identifies some barriers and opportunities to strengthen the connection between sport policy and a human-rights-based approach to sport. It also illustrates the importance of bringing policy coherence into the policy development cycle. Finally, it reinforces the need to accompany sport-related policies with a national sports action plan to support and sustain the implementation of the new set vision.

### **8.7.2. How can those shaping the sport environment increase awareness, understanding, and engagement with human rights treaties to be more accountable for human rights?**

Based on the robust UN framework of national reporting and follow-up to human rights bodies, studies two and three were carried out to examine the relevance of PEPAS in State Party reports, List of Issues and recommendations. The findings showed a low profile of PEPAS in the reporting to treaty bodies related to the CRC, CRPD and CEDAW. In both studies, recommendations were presented to improve the engagement with human rights

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport treaties, including the development of RITES indicators, the establishment of a mechanism to stimulate national dialogue on human rights in and through sport, and the socialization of human rights in the sector. While both articles addressed the same topic, the target audience and - the language used- was slightly different. Study two targeted a sport-related audience, whereas study three was addressed to human rights professionals. In this way, a major awareness and understanding from professionals of both disciplines can be generated.

The RITES model was developed on the evidence outlined in the above section and with the complementarity of the other findings obtained in the rest of studies presented in this thesis. This theoretical construct provides evidence-informed insights into the context of sport and, through its seven elements, outlines mechanisms that can facilitate the alignment of sport-related policies with human rights monitoring mechanisms.

The RITES model presents intertwined multi-level mechanisms that will maximise the contribution of sport towards protecting, respecting and redressing human rights. The RITES exploratory checklist and the RITES toolkit were designed to increase the understanding of these mechanisms and the appealing of the sports environment to engage with it. These resources are expected help in transform abstract concepts into appealing and practical actions that can be mainstreamed among those that shape the sport environment.

### **8.7.3. What are effective ways to advocate for applying a human rights-based approach to sport?**

This thesis contributes to an emerging theme whose demand is increasing across the sport environment: the implementation of human rights in and through sport. The findings from the five studies presented in this research and the research outputs represent an important contribution to the international literature.

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The advocacy of applying a human rights-based approach to sport is gaining traction across the sector. Study 5, presented in chapter seven, highlights the importance of embedding human rights education (HRE) in sport education as a causal mechanism with the potential to advance the rights of marginalized groups. Higher education institutions and training providers can play a central role in supporting the scale-up of a rights-based approach across disciplines.

The lessons learned in each study were used to create the RITES model. This innovative theoretical construct, and related tools (RITES questionnaires, toolkit, etc.) can be transferred to other research programmes and applied in real settings worldwide. RITES can contribute to advancing and establishing a human rights-based approach in the sports environment by activating mechanisms that align forward-looking policies with workable implementation aspects.

The broad overview presented in this thesis paves the way to other research initiatives to further explore specific aspects highlighted in this research and expand the comprehensiveness and application of the RITES model. Likewise, the RITES model can be used as an advocacy tool to advance sport-related policies underpinned by a human rights approach.

The appreciation of the universality of human rights and the well-established system of protection of human rights should encourage the sport sector to work towards improving governance, conditions and quality of services offered at any level, from grassroots sport to elite sport. The cross-cutting contribution of sport to multiple human rights and its social appeal and recognition across communities, can produce a viral effect, advancing the rights of marginalised groups.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1. Letters of ethical approval

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY,  
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND



Dr Carol Barrett  
Secretary to Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

16 October 2020

Gerard Masdeu Yelamos  
Department of Psychology  
Maynooth University

**Re: Application for ethical approval for a Project entitled:** Case study of the investment on sport and physical activity in Mauritius

Dear Gerard,

The above project has been evaluated under Tier 2 process, expedited review and we would like to inform you that ethical approval has been granted.

Any deviations from the project details submitted to the ethics committee will require further evaluation. This ethical approval will expire on 30/11/2021.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Barrett".

Dr Carol Barrett  
Secretary,  
Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

C.c. Professor Mac MacLachlan, Department of Psychology

Reference Number SRESC-2020-2402354
--

**School of Education  
Mauritius Institute of Education**



*Re: Ethical Approval of the research "Case study of the investment on sport and physical activity in Mauritius"*

Having considered the application for ethical approval submitted by Mr. Gerard Masdeu Yelamos to Maynooth University, I, the undersigned, on behalf of the School of Education at the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) confirm that, due to the low risk of this research and the potential practical, academic and societal implications that this project can provide, I would consider that this project have the ethical approval.

Consequently, we support and approve the research study to be undertaken via MIE and will concern inter alia stakeholders as per the procedures described in the application for ethical approval.

Signature:

Name and Surname: Mr. Somrajsingh Dhunnoo

Head of School of Education,

Mauritius Institute of Education

Contact: [s.dhunnoo@mie.ac.mu](mailto:s.dhunnoo@mie.ac.mu)

Date and Place: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020; Reduit, Mauritius



**MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY,  
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND



Dr Carol Barrett  
Secretary to Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

08 June 2021

Gerard Masdeu Yelamos  
Department of Psychology  
Maynooth University

**Re: Application for ethical approval for a Project entitled: The Rights Understanding Sport Toolkit (TRUST) online module evaluation**

Dear Gerard,

The above project has been evaluated under Tier 1 rapid review process and we would like to inform you that ethical approval has been granted.

Any deviations from the project details submitted to the ethics committee will require further evaluation. This ethical approval will expire on 31/12/2021.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Barrett".

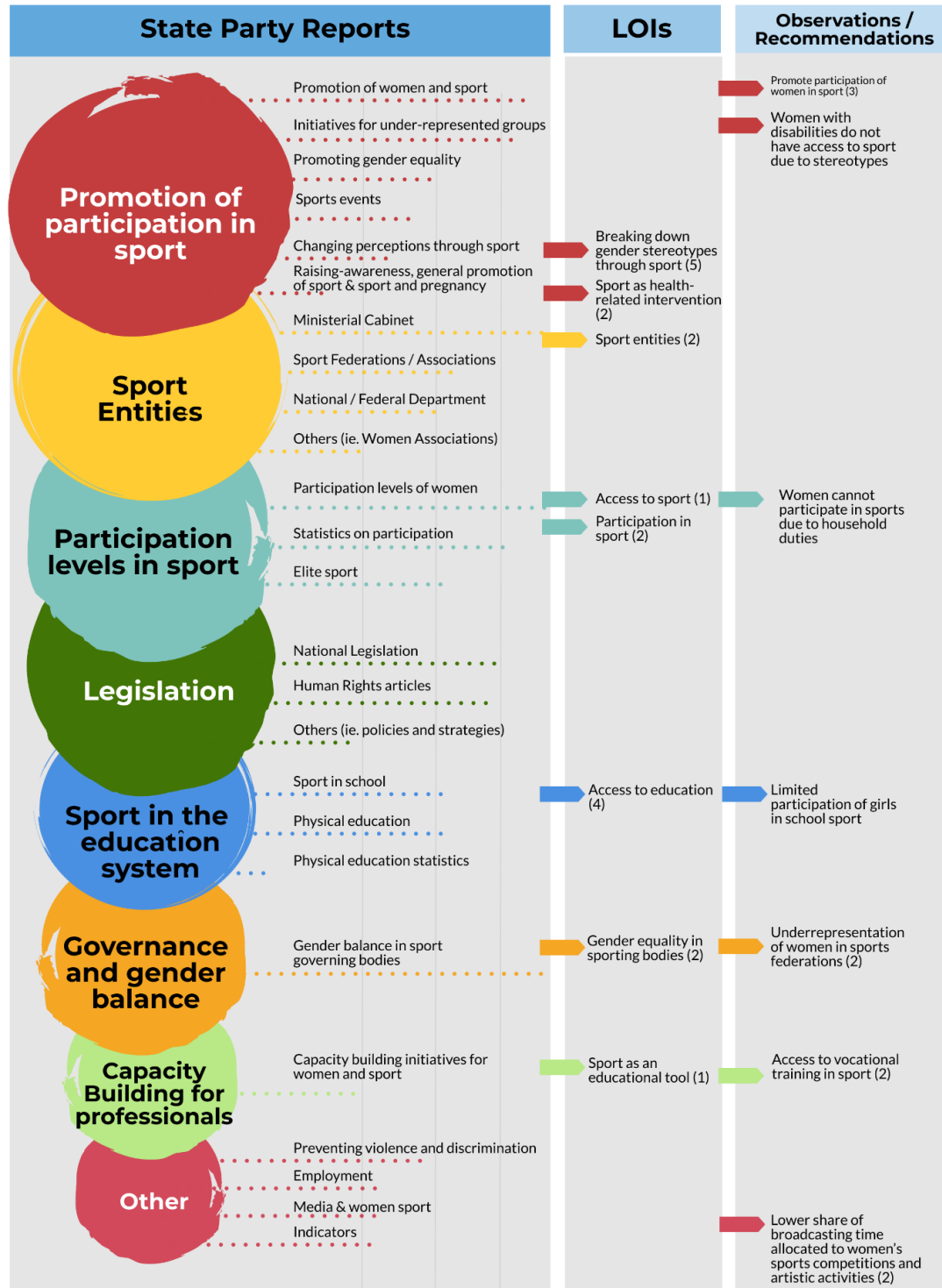
Dr Carol Barrett  
Secretary,  
Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

c.c. Professor Mac Maclachlan, All Institute

Reference Number SRESC-2021-2439659
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**Appendix 2. Results of State Party reports on CEDAW and the asks from the CEDAW Committee via LoIs, Observations and Recommendations (2014-2019)**

related to PEPAS (study 2)



**Appendix 3. Qualitative themes of State Party reports (study 3)**



**Appendix 4. Codes and descriptions of study 4**

<b>The meaning of sport</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
Sport is a human right	12 (3%)	Access and participation in sport activities is considered a human right
Developmental dimension	10 (3%)	Sport is considered a key factor in the individual and social development
Sport is health	6 (2%)	Sport is a component of health
Importance of movement	3 (1%)	Movement is essential for living
Sport is fun	3 (1%)	Fun is a core component of sport
Sport is part of life	2 (1%)	Sport plays an important part in the process of cultural representation
<b>Sport Policy</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
Policy implementation	13 (4%)	Process of implementation of sport policies
Active Mauritius	6 (2%)	Information related to the National Policy “Active Mauritius”
Lack of engagement in policy development	5 (1%)	Lack of engagement of relevant groups in developing sport policies
Centralization of power	5 (1%)	The government has a central power in the policy process
Inclusive education policies	3 (1%)	Mentions to inclusive education policies
Sustainable development Goals (SDGs)	2 (1%)	Mentions to the Sustainable Development Goals
Lack of knowledge of policies related to inclusive sport	2 (1%)	Unfamiliarity of inclusive sport-related policies
<b>Barriers to participation</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
Poor teacher education training	15 (4%)	Physical education teachers do not have enough training on disability inclusion

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Lack of resources	10 (3%)	General scarcity of resources to offer inclusive and high-quality opportunities to participate in sport.
Lack of cooperation	9 (3%)	Shortage of engagement with other entities or departments within an organisation.
Changing mindsets	7 (2%)	Certain mindsets and approaches restrict participation and need to be changed.
Lack of monitoring mechanisms	7 (2%)	Absence of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
Stigma and segregation	6 (2%)	Stigma around disability and segregation of people with disabilities in mainstream settings
Lack of inclusive sport opportunities	4 (1%)	Absence of sport-related opportunities to be physically active
Lack of social support	3 (1%)	Lack of support from family, friends, colleagues, co-workers, etc.
Lack of outreach	2 (1%)	Poor communication of inclusive sport opportunities available
Lack of recognition of sport	2 (1%)	Sport is not recognised and is seen as a non-essential activity
<b>Ongoing actions</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
Promotion of inclusive participation	26 (7%)	Inclusive sport-related programmes and initiatives
Sport for children with disabilities	13 (4%)	Sport-related programmes for children with disabilities
Elite sport	11 (3%)	Participation of elite athletes in sport
Disability sport events & programmes	10 (3%)	Sport-related programmes and events targeted at people with disabilities
Accessibility and use of facilities	9 (3%)	Access and use of sport facilities
Funding	8 (3%)	Investment in sport initiatives or sport programmes.
Recreational sport	7 (2%)	Participation in recreational sport

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Federations and sport-related entities	5 (1%)	National entities that are promoting physical education, physical activity and sport.
Sport for children	3 (1%)	Sport-related programmes for children
Sport for adults	2 (1%)	Sport-related programmes for adults
<b>Professional development</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
IPEPAS	18 (5%)	Comments related to the educational course “iPEPAS”.
Training PE Teachers	6 (2%)	Capacity building and training of PE teachers
Coach skills	4 (1%)	Skills and abilities of coaches working with people with disabilities
Recruitment of PE Teachers	3 (1%)	Process of recruitment of PE teachers
Mindset of PE Teachers	2 (1%)	Mindset of PE Teachers working in mainstream or special schools.
<b>Sociocultural factors in Mauritius influencing participation</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
Dependency on social pensions	4 (1%)	Youth have a dependency on social pensions granted by the government
Active lifestyle	3 (1%)	Promotion of an active lifestyle
Medical model of disability	3 (1%)	Prevalence of the medical model to understand disability
Legislation on disability	3 (1%)	Laws and regulations related to disability
Prevalence of Non-Communicable Diseases	2 (1%)	Incidence and prevalence of non-communicable diseases
Classification of disability	2 (1%)	Influence of the classification of disability to participation in certain sport modalities.
Impact of sport and PE	2 (1%)	General positive impact of sport and PE in people’s lives
<b>Opportunities for improvement</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
Collective vision	9 (3%)	Need to build a collective vision for the future

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Creation of active and inclusive systems	8 (2%)	Development of systems to foster inclusion and promote physical activity and prevent sedentary behaviour
Social relationships in sport	6 (2%)	Importance of the social relationships in sport
Role models	5 (1%)	Athletes with disabilities can become role models for the general population and promote participation in sport
Need to do some work	4 (1%)	Shared feeling that more work needs to be done in this area
Regional cooperation	4 (1%)	Cooperation with other countries in the Indian and Pacific Ocean.
Innovation	3 (1%)	Innovative approaches to promote participation
Proactive approach to inclusion	3 (1%)	Action-oriented initiatives to foster inclusion in and through sport.
Children and youth as stakeholders	3 (1%)	Involve children and youth as relevant stakeholders
Partnerships and collaborations	3 (1%)	Foster partnerships and collaboration with other entities at all levels
Leadership is needed	2 (1%)	Leadership is needed to drive and sustain changes.
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
<i>Code</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>Description</i>
Other topics	19 (5%)	Other topics mentioned only once by one participant

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## **Appendix 5. Questionnaire used in study 5**

### **Purpose of the Study:**

This study aims to explore the understanding of human rights in and through sport and perceived self-efficacy of sport-related practitioners and students.

What will the study involve?

The study will involve completion of a brief (approximately 15 minute) online survey.

Who has approved this study?

This study has been reviewed and received ethical approval from Maynooth University Social Research Ethics Subcommittee. You may have a copy of this approval if you request it.

Why have you been asked to take part?

You have been asked because you are:

- Sport related professionals, practitioners and students
- Over the age of 18
- Able to read in English well enough to participate in an online survey.

Do you have to take part?

No, you are under no obligation whatsoever to take part in this research. However, we hope that you will agree to take part and give us some of your time to complete a brief survey. It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not you would like to take part. If you decide to do so, you may click on the button at the bottom of the page to proceed with the survey.



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This will be considered your consent to use the information you provide within our  
analysis. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving  
a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect  
your relationships with the ALL Institute nor Maynooth University.

### **Consent**

Clicking on the button below to proceed to the survey indicates you agree with the  
following statements and give consent to participate in this study.

I agree to participate in this research study titled “Sport and Human Rights - TRUST”.

Please review the statements below. When you proceed to the next page, you are  
acknowledging these statements. The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to  
me. I’ve been provided with contact details to ask any questions, and they have been  
answered satisfactorily.

1. I am participating voluntarily.
2. I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any  
time, whether that is before it starts or while I am participating.
3. It has been explained to me how my data will be managed and that I may access  
it on request.
4. I understand the limits of confidentiality as described in the information sheet

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that  
you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are  
unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth  
University Ethics Committee at [research.ethics@mu.ie](mailto:research.ethics@mu.ie) or +353 (0)1 708 6019.  
Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

**About You**

1. What is your gender?
  - 1) Female
  - 2) Male
  - 3) Non-binary
  - 4) Prefer not to say
2. What country are you based in?
3. What is your age?
  - a. 18-24
  - b. 25-34
  - c. 35-44
  - d. 45-54
  - e. 55-64
  - f. 65 and over
4. What is your highest level of educational attainment?
  - a. Primary School /Secondary school
  - b. Vocational Training
  - c. Bachelor's Degree
  - d. Master's Degree
  - e. PhD
5. What is your connection to sport? (can select more than one if applicable)
  - a. Sports Policy Development at Government or Federal Level
  - b. Physical education teacher
  - c. School sport coach
  - d. Outside of school sport coach
  - e. Higher education academic on Sport, Physical Activity Physical Education
  - f. Higher education sport science, Sport, Physical Activity and Physical Education student
  - g. Higher Education Sports Programme Coordinator
  - h. National governing body
  - i. Local sport partnership
  - j. Sport advocacy group
  - k. Volunteer
  - l. Other
6. Are you a member of any of the following groups? (Can select more than one if applicable)
  - a. Person with a disability
  - b. Member of an ethnic minority
  - c. Member of the LGBTI+ community
  - d. Asylum seeker or refugee
  - e. Disadvantaged community

**Section1: RITES-Q**

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Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Neutral
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

- a) Sport can contribute towards the right to independent living
- b) Sport can contribute towards the right to education
- c) Sport can contribute towards the right to assembly and association
- d) Sport can contribute towards the right to employment
- e) Sport can contribute towards the right to non-discrimination
- f) Sport is a human right
- g) Sport can contribute towards the right to health
- h) Human rights in sport apply mainly to elite sport
- i) Human rights apply only to national citizens
- j) Human rights are only relevant for marginalized groups.
- k) The competitive focus of sport compromises human rights
- l) Sport organisations in my country actively promote human rights
- m) Sport federations offer training and educational resources to learn more about human rights in and through sport
- n) Human rights violations are being redressed by sports organisations in my country

## **Section 2: 10-item-Personality-Inventory (TIPI)**

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other. I see myself as:

- 1) Disagree strongly
- 2) Disagree moderately
- 3) Disagree a little
- 4) Neither agree nor disagree
- 5) Agree a little
- 6) Agree moderately
- 7) Agree strongly

1. Extraverted, enthusiastic

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2. Critical, quarrelsome
3. Dependable, self-disciplined
4. Anxious, easily upset
5. Open to new experiences, complex
6. Reserved, quiet
7. Sympathetic, warm
8. Disorganized, careless
9. Calm, emotionally stable
10. Conventional, uncreative

### **Section 3: SDO-7**

Show how much you favour or oppose each idea below by selecting a number from

1

to 7 on the scale below. You can work quickly; your first feeling is generally best.

- 1) Strongly oppose
- 2) Somewhat oppose
- 3) Slightly oppose
- 4) Neutral
- 5) Slightly favour
- 6) Somewhat favour
- 7) Strongly favour

#### **Pro-trait dominance:**

1. Some groups of people must be kept in their place.

2. It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are  
at the  
bottom.

3. An ideal society requires some groups to be on top and others to be on the  
bottom.

4. Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.

#### **Con-trait dominance:**

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5. Groups at the bottom are just as deserving as groups at the top.
6. No one group should dominate in society.
7. Groups at the bottom should not have to stay in their place.
8. Group dominance is a poor principle.

Pro-trait anti-egalitarianism:

9. We should not push for group equality.
10. We shouldn't try to guarantee that every group has the same quality of life.
11. It is unjust to try to make groups equal.
12. Group equality should not be our primary goal.

Con-trait anti-egalitarianism:

13. We should work to give all groups an equal chance to succeed.
14. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.
15. No matter how much effort it takes, we ought to strive to ensure that all groups

have the

same chance in life.

16. Group equality should be our ideal.

Note: The con-trait items should be reverse-scored before computing a composite scale mean.

**Section 4: RITES-SE**

Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Neutral
- 4) Agree

5) Strongly agree

- a) I am able to advocate for sport as a human right in my organisation
- b) I can use a human rights approach to deliver sport education and training
- c) I am able to use human rights education through sport
- d) I am able to value and explain sport as a human right and the potential of sport to progress human rights
- e) I understand how a human rights approaches in sport intersects with global, regional, and national policy objectives
- f) I understand how a human rights approach can deliver better outcomes in and through sport.
- g) I can ensure my practice in sport addresses the needs and rights of all including minority groups.
- h) I am able to reflect on my programmes/ activities to ensure the needs of minority groups are addressed
- i) I recognize my rights, duties and responsibilities
- j) I can advocate a human rights-based approach to sport in my organisation from a rights holder and duty bearer perspective
- k) I understand the mechanisms to collaborate with governments and international institutions to advance human rights
- l) I can leverage mechanisms to collaborate with governments and international institutions to advance human rights in and through sport
- m) I acknowledge the need to respect human rights

**Section 5: RITES-PANEL**

In the planning, design, and implementation of your sport-based interventions, how much do you take into consideration the following principles?

- 1) Never
  - 2) Rarely
  - 3) Occasionally
  - 4) Frequently
  - 5) Always
- 
- a) Participation – everyone is entitled to active participation in decision-making processes which affect the enjoyment of their rights.
  - b) Accountability – You are held accountable for failing to fulfil your obligations towards rights-holders. Remedies are in place when human rights breaches occur.
  - c) Non-discrimination and equality – all individuals are entitled to their rights without discrimination of any kind. All types of discrimination are prohibited, prevented and eliminated

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- d) Empowerment – everyone is entitled to claim and exercise their rights. Individuals and communities need to understand their rights and participate in the development of policies which affect their lives
- e) Legality – I adopt approached in line with the legal rights set out in domestic and international laws

### **Section 6: RITES-Challenges**

What challenges have you faced/ might face when applying a human rights-based approach?

- 1) Never
  - 2) Rarely
  - 3) Occasionally
  - 4) Frequently
  - 5) Always
- 
- a) Lack of interest
  - b) Lack of knowledge
  - c) Lack of time
  - d) Insufficient funding
  - e) Collaboration with external organisations (public authorities, civil society, etc.)
  - f) Insufficient strategic planning

Can you describe a specific instance where you have had challenges applying a human rights approach to your daily work?

If you would like to provide more information or thoughts relating to any of the above responses, or the theme of this research in general, please comment here.

## Appendix 6. Hypothesis Testing Summaries of study 5

### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
HR belongs	151	16,78	3,187	4	20
HR in sport	151	9,8278	2,45699	3,00	15,00
HR through sport	151	32,3642	3,75319	21,00	35,00
Self efficacy	151	4,1941	,67276	1,08	5,00
Participation	151	1,74	,875	1	5
Accountability	151	2,27	1,101	1	5
Non-discrimination	151	1,59	,843	1	5
Empowerment	151	1,70	,885	1	5
Legality	151	1,85	,976	1	5
Individual factors	155	9,1871	2,35705	3,00	15,00
Organisational factors	151	7,9338	2,41570	3,00	15,00
Gender	151	1,46	,526	1	3

### Age

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>			
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. <sup>a,b</sup>
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,352
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,158
3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,163
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,018
5	The distribution of Participation is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,981



6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,339
7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,087
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,258
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,021
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,973
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Age.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,006

### **Education**

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>			
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. <sup>a,b</sup>
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,160
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,027
3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,097
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,066
5	The distribution of Participation is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,927
6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,190

7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,848
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,556
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,843
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,339
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Education.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	,049

### **Marginalized Groups**

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>			
	<b>Null Hypothesis</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Sig.<sup>a,b</sup></b>
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,090
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,353
3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,706
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,672
5	The distribution of Participation is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,882
6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,229
7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,530

	across categories of Marginalized_groups.		
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,708
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,431
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,640
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Marginalized_groups.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,180

### Gender

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. <sup>a,b</sup>	Decision
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,009	Reject the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,215	Retain the null hypothesis.
3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,064	Retain the null hypothesis.
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,028	Reject the null hypothesis.
5	The distribution of Participation is the same	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	<,001	Reject the null hypothesis.

	across categories of Gender.			
6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,155	Retain the null hypothesis.
7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,050	Retain the null hypothesis.
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,007	Reject the null hypothesis.
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,003	Reject the null hypothesis.
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,952	Retain the null hypothesis.
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,416	Retain the null hypothesis.
a. The significance level is ,050.				
b. Asymptotic significance is displayed.				

### **Egalitarianism**

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>			
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. <sup>a,b</sup>
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	<,001
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,802

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3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	<,001
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,003
5	The distribution of Participation is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,009
6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,011
7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,032
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,048
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,039
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,068
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Egalitarianism.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,645

**Dominance**

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>			
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. <sup>a,b</sup>
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,002
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,967
3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,001
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,012

5	The distribution of Participation is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,029
6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,634
7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,418
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,353
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,073
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,180
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Dominance.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,229

### **Open and engaging**

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>			
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. <sup>a,b</sup>
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,003
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,252
3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,055
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,003
5	The distribution of Participation is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,093
6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,625

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7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,779
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,049
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,574
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,151
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Open and engaging.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,764

**Neurotic and indulgent**

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>			
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. <sup>a,b</sup>
1	The distribution of HR belongs is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,039
2	The distribution of HR in sport is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,162
3	The distribution of HR through sport is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,085
4	The distribution of Self efficacy is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,017
5	The distribution of Participation is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,003
6	The distribution of Accountability is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,323
7	The distribution of Non-discrimination is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,005
8	The distribution of Empowerment is the same	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,002

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	across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.		
9	The distribution of Legality is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,002
10	The distribution of Individual factors is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,689
11	The distribution of Organisational factors is the same across categories of Neurotic and indulgent.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	,779



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## **Appendix 7. Sport teams up with human rights**

This academic article targets youth between 12 and 15 and it is currently under review by the Frontiers Young Minds journal- Neuroscience and Psychology.

### **Abstract**

Children and adults across the world engage in sport. There are millions of athletes, coaches, volunteers or spectators. The practice of sport is a human right. This means that everyone should be able to enjoy playing sport. While doing sport, you are in company of other people. This is a positive aspect. But sometimes abuses and violence happen in sporting contexts. For example, when coaches do not have a proper behaviour with athletes. To avoid this, it is important that sport teams up with human rights. How should sport team up with human rights? We suggest two aspects: 1) Ensure that everyone can participate in sport in a safe and inclusive environment. 2) Offer the opportunity to learn and advance other rights through sport, like the right to education. Read this article to learn a few tips on how to pair up sport with human rights!

### **Sport brings people together**

Sport is part of our lives. For example, many playgrounds have basketball courts or football pitches. Also, if you watch the news, you will see a section dedicated to sport. There you can learn about sport events and achievements.

Many people engage in sport as coaches, volunteers or spectators. There are people who participate just to have fun or keep fit and healthy. While others do it at an elite level, to compete with other top athletes.

Sport moves a lot of people. If there is an important match, fans travel long distances to support their team in the stadium. Or have you heard about the Olympic and Paralympic

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport Games? These are two of the biggest sport events. Athletes from all nations of the world compete together once every four years.

When we play sport, we are in company of other people. For example, teammates or your coach. For most of the cases, this is a positive aspect of participation called **socialization\***. However, in some cases, the interaction between people can lead to violence or **discrimination\***. For example, a good player can bully a teammate because of his/her level of abilities.

In other cases, some people are not even allowed to play sport. For example, David is a basketball enthusiast! He wants to play basketball in his local club. But the club does not accept him because he uses a wheelchair. The coach doesn't know how to teach him to play basketball. Do you think this is fair? This is a clear example of discrimination that involves human rights. Can you think of a similar case? We will explore some in the next sections, but first: What are human rights?

### **What are human rights?**

We live surrounded by people. This is a positive aspect for everyone. People can help each other. But sometimes people might abuse other people. For example, if they believe to be better than others. In the worst case, this can lead to violence and war. To avoid this, all governments decided to write a set of rules. They published a document called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is one of the most important documents in human's history. Why is it so important? In this document, 30 articles present **rights\*** and freedoms to be enjoyed by all. No matter who they are or where they live. Everyone, only for the simple fact of being alive, have rights which cannot be taken away.

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How should sport team up with human rights? Human rights are present in our everyday life. But they are concepts hard to understand. We will introduce two important scenarios. 1) Human rights IN sport and 2) human rights THROUGH sport.



Figure 33. Human rights in and through sport.

### Human rights IN sport

Everyone has the right to participate in sport activities. Sport can be a source for learning new abilities and sharing great experiences with others. But there is also the potential for human rights abuses in sport. For this reason, we all should respect, protect, and promote human rights in sport (Masdeu Yelamos, et al., 2019).

What does it mean to respect human rights in sport? It means to accept that we all can participate in sport activities. For example, do you remember David? He started playing basketball in his local team even if he rolls a wheelchair! He has a coach that knows how to adapt training drills for him. His right to participate in sport is fulfilled.

Also, sport programmes need to be safe for everyone involved. What does this mean? Children and adults should take part in sport for fun and enjoyment. Sometimes accidents

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport can happen while practicing sport, like an injury. It is important that coaches and athletes are aware of other threats. There are multiple threats. You can harm yourself. Someone can cause you harm. Or the way a club delivers sport can be harmful. The figure below describes some of these threats for children.



Figure 34. Threats to child athletes (adapted from Mountjoy et al., 2016).

### Human rights THROUGH sport

We have learned that participation in sport is a human right. But sport can also be used to teach other things.

When David joined the basketball team, he met Ahmed. Ahmed moved with his parents from Syria to David's community. Ahmed didn't have many friends because he didn't speak English yet. Since he joined the club, he met his teammates. After some months, he has made new friends, learned to speak English. Likewise, David has learned about Ahmed's culture. He can even say a few words in Arabic! This is a clear example of a few things that we can learn through sport.

Many clubs use sport as a method to promote other rights. Access to health and education are some examples. Playing sport can help you to improve your grades at school.

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For example, you can learn how to deal with objectives and challenges. You can learn to concentrate. You can learn to keep self-control during exams. There are many benefits! (David, 2020). Therefore, we say that sport can contribute towards the right to education.

Many human rights can be advanced through sport. But this is not an automatic process. Coaches and volunteers should be well prepared. They should know how to best use sporting activities to achieve a final goal.

### **What can you do to ensure that human rights are part of your team?**

We will present you some actions that you can do. First, you learned that you have the right to participate in sport. Why don't you help other to know this too? Tell other children about their right to participate in sport. Playing sport in a safe environment with more children will be more enjoyable!

Second, it is important that you can express yourself. Share your views and opinions of sport programmes with your coaches and teammates. Coaches should listen you before taking any important decision. This will help you to develop your self-confidence and self-esteem. And your rights will be fulfilled.

Third, if while doing sport, you feel that someone can abuse you (or someone else!), talk to someone. If someone make you do things you don't want to, feel free to talk about this with your parents, family, friends, teacher, or coach. Remember that doing sport should be fun. So, if something bothers you, talk to someone who will help you redress this situation.

Finally, it does not really matter which is your favourite sport you. The most important is that you have fun. You have the right to participate in a safe environment. You should play with other children who can become your friends. And while playing, you can learn other things, which will be useful beyond the sporting field!

### **Glossary**

- **Socialization:** It is the activity of mixing with others and, at the same time, learning skills and values that help you to feel an active member of your community.
- **Discrimination:** It is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age or sexual orientation.
- **Right:** A right is something a person has which people think should not be taken away. It is a rule about what a person is allowed to do or have.
- **Inclusive:** The practice of providing access to opportunities and resources for everyone, including people who might otherwise be excluded or discriminated.

### **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank the collaboration of Louise and her students at Coláiste Chiaráin, Leixlip for their unvaluable feedback.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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## Reflection tool

# Sport teams up with human rights



Read the article and answer the following questions:



**What have you learned about this topic?**

Blank space for writing the answer to the first question.



**What did you really enjoy about this topic?**

Blank space for writing the answer to the second question.



**Why are human rights important for children and youngsters?**

Blank space for writing the answer to the third question.



**Describe something you have learned through sport.**

Blank space for writing the answer to the fourth question.



**If you experience violence while doing sport, what should you do?**

Blank space for writing the answer to the fifth question.



**Do you think that all children / youngsters have the opportunity to participate in sport in your community?**

Blank space for writing the answer to the sixth question.

## Reflection tool

# Sport teams up with human rights



Please select the emoticon that better describe your feelings:

1

I understood the thematic of the article.



2

I think this is an important topic for me and other youngsters.



3

I would like to learn more about this topic.



4

I feel more confident now to claim my rights



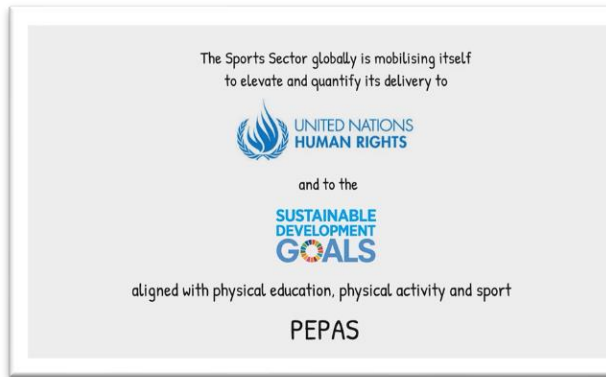
Please, explain the relevance of sport in your life. Why is it (or not) important for you? How could you ensure that human rights are part of your team?



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport

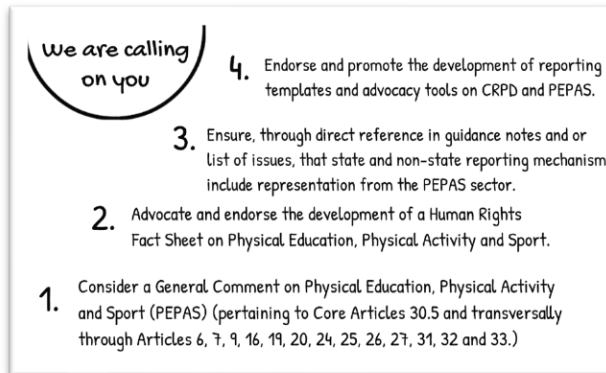
**Appendix 8. Animations created for the thematic briefing with CRPD, CEDAW and CRC Committees.**

**CEDAW**



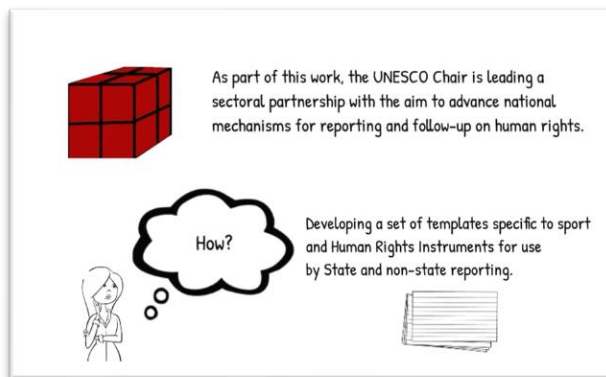
<https://youtu.be/YTPMYDw9UPI>

**CRPD**



<https://youtu.be/6COY9eYceWk>

**CRC**



<https://youtu.be/6l60q0v0IAA>

## Appendix 9. Screening matrix of the interaction between SDGs and human rights

### treaties and policy frameworks.

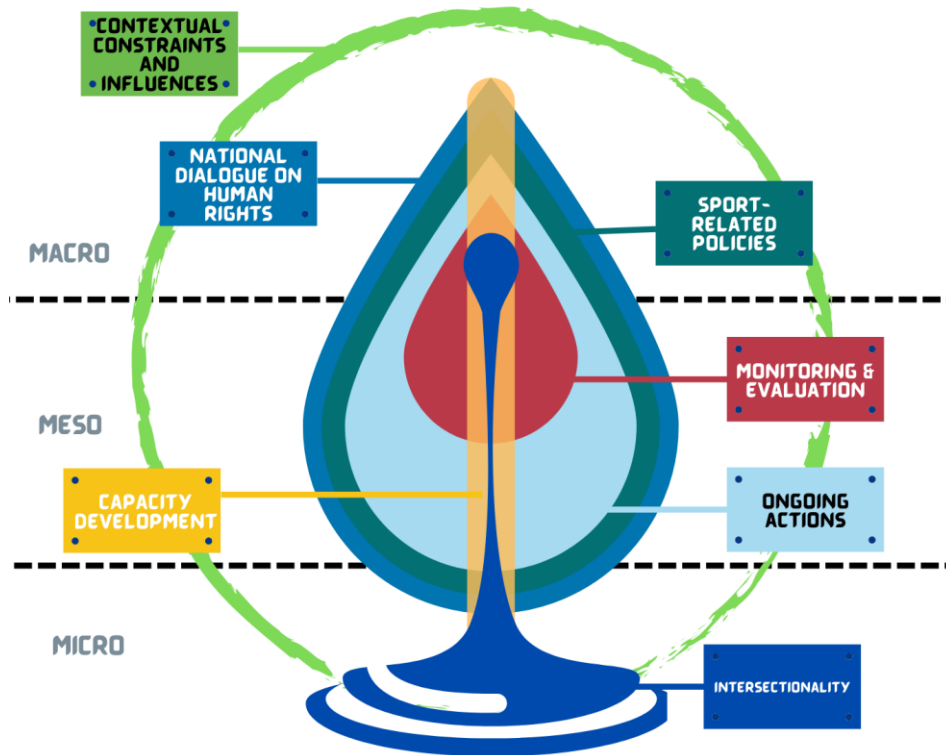
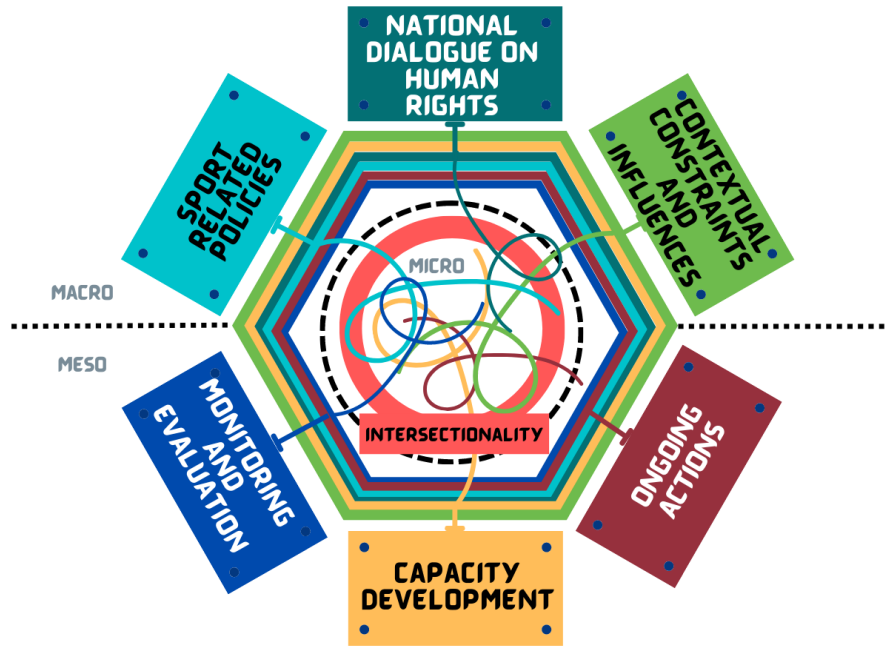
	SD G1	SD G2	SDG3	SDG4	SDG 5	SD G6	S D G 7	SD G8	SD G9	SDG 10	SD G11	SD G12	S D G 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SG16	SD G17
UD HR	XX XX XX		XXXX XXXX XX	XXX XXX X	XXX XXX XXX	XX XX X	X X X	XX XX XX XX X	XX XX XX	XXX XXX XX	XX X	XX	X X X		XX	XXX XXX X	XX XX XX XX XX X
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ICE RD	XX XX			X	XXX		X X	XX XX X		XXX XX	XX		X			XXX XXX X	X
CE DA W	XX XX X	x	XX	XXX XXX XX	XXX XXX XX	XX XX	X X	XX XX XX XX X	XX X	XXX XX	XX XX	X	X X			XXX XX	XX
CR PD	XX XX XX X	xx	XXXX XXXX XX	XXX XXX XXX	XXX	XX XX X	X X	XX XX XX	XX XX XX	XXX XX	XX XX X	X	X X X			XXX XXX X	XX X
UN DR IP	XX XX XX	xx	XXXX XXXX	XXX XXX	XXX	XX XX	X X	XX XX X	X	XXX XX	XX XX	XX XX X	X X X	XXX	XXX XXX XX	XXX XXX	X
IC RM W	XX X		XXXX XXXX	XXX XX	XX			XX		XXX XXX	XX X		X X			XXX XX	X
IC CP R	X		XXXX XXX	X	XXX XXX	X		X	X	XXX XX	XX	XX	X X X	XXX X	XXX X	XXX XXX XXX	XX XX X XX XX XX
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DE VA W	X		XXXX XXX		XXX					X	X		X			XX	
CB D		x													X		
FC TC			XX														
UN GP										X		XX					XX X
IL O 188														XX			
ML C														X			
NA GO YA															X		
ICP PE D																XX	
CP PC G																X	
CA T																XX	
UN CA C																X	

An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport

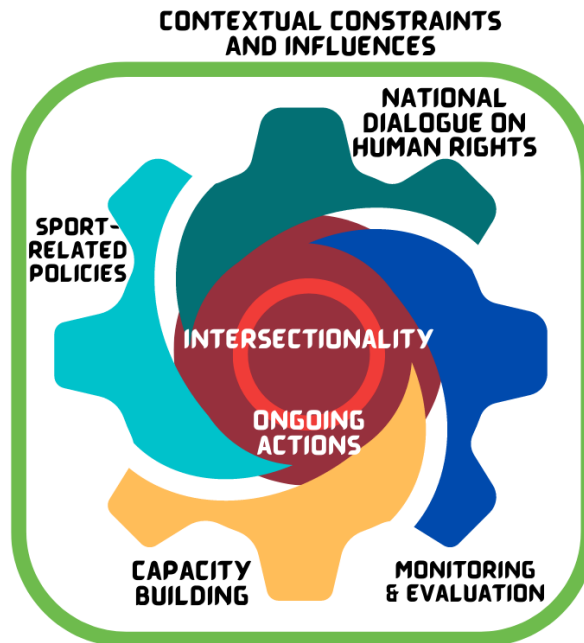
<b>Abbr.</b>	<b>Instrument</b>
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Language.aspx?LangID=eng">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Language.aspx?LangID=eng</a> )
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx</a> )
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx</a> )
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx</a> )
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx</a> )
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx</a> )
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx</a> )
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CAT.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CAT.aspx</a> )
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx</a> )
ICPPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CED/Pages/ConventionCED.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CED/Pages/ConventionCED.aspx</a> )
UNDRI P	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/Pages/Declaration.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/Pages/Declaration.aspx</a> )
UNGP	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf">http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf</a> )
DEVA W	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women ( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ViolenceAgainstWomen.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ViolenceAgainstWomen.aspx</a> )
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption ( <a href="https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/Publications/Convention/08-50026_E.pdf">https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/Publications/Convention/08-50026_E.pdf</a> )
CTOC	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime ( <a href="https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf">https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf</a> )
CPPCG	Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide( <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx</a> )
FCTC	WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control( <a href="http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/42811/1/9241591013.pdf">http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/42811/1/9241591013.pdf</a> )
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity ( <a href="https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf">https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf</a> )
NAGOY A	The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity( <a href="https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf">https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf</a> )

Appendix 10. Depictions of the RITES model

## RITES MODEL



## **UTES MODEL**



An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport

### **Appendix 11. RITES Toolkit**

The RITES toolkit can be accessed here.

<http://unescoittralee.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/RITES-Toolkit.pdf>

A copy of the toolkit is available below.

**rites**  
TOOLKIT

HOW TO  
GET  
STARTED?

**Step 1**

Complete the RITES Exploratory Checklist

**Step 2**

Review your responses

**Step 3**

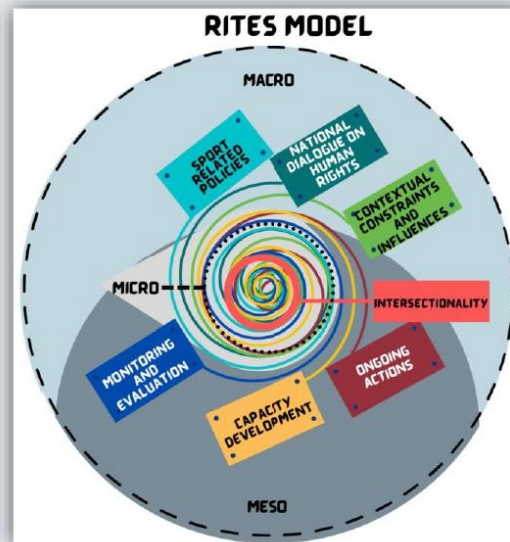
Act and transform the reality in your community!



**rites: RIGHTS IN AND  
THROUGH EMPOWERING  
SPORT**

INTRODUCTION

The RITES model aims to inspire and support all those who shape the sport sector to adopt human rights principles in alignment with their practice. This toolkit will help you to identify critical action areas, which need to be examined and applied considering the needs and opportunities available in the context of your community.



## RITES

---

The RITES model is a research output that stems from the findings of the five studies presented in the previous chapters as well as a critical review of literature. The aim of the RITES model is to highlight key multi-level mechanisms having an influence on the implementation of human rights in and through sport. For this reason, it is relevant for any stakeholder involved in the field of sport, such as sport educators, managers and policy makers, to ensure that the breadth of their work aligns with human rights ethos.

RITES is composed of seven elements that interact at different levels. Inspired by the meta-system of macropsychology, mesopsychology and micropsychology (MacLachlan & McVeigh, 2021), the RITES model is portrayed as a system with three levels (macro, meso and micro), each of them composed of dynamic mechanisms - depicted as spirals -that are intertwined and move across levels.

At the macro level:

- 1) Contextual constraints and influences;
- 2) National dialogue on human rights
- 3) Sport-related policies.

At the meso level:

- 4) Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- 5) Capacity development
- 6) Ongoing actions.

At the micro level:

- 7) Intersectionality.



## Step 1

### COMPLETE THE RITES EXPLORATORY CHECKLIST

The RITES exploratory checklist will help you gain awareness of implementing RITES elements in practice. Please complete the following checklist. At the end, for all the questions where you answered “No” or “I don’t know”, please refer to the RITES Toolkit to find further information.

Contextual constraints and influences	Yes	No	I don't know
1. Has your country signed and ratified the following human rights treaties?			
a. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights			
b. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women			
c. Convention on the Rights of the Child			
d. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities			
2. Are you familiar with national legislation related to sport?			
3. Have you undertaken a needs assessment to identify the physical and social environmental determinants of sport participation?			
4. Do you consider contextual factors before developing and implementing sport-based interventions?			
5. List two contextual influences and constraints related to sport and human rights in your country			
National dialogue on human rights	Yes	No	I don't know
6. Is there a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in your country?			
7. If yes, have they engaged in any project where sport was the primary theme?			
8. Is there any existing sports-related national network to discuss human rights issues?			
9. Is there any national human rights network to discuss sport-related issues?			
10. Do you see the replication of the TRUST Ireland approach in your country/region as feasible?			
Sport-related policies	Yes	No	I don't know
11. Do you know how sport contributes to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development?			
12. Do you know how sport and human rights relate at the policy level?			
13. Does your national sport policy align with the SDGs and/or human rights instruments?			
14. Does your national sport policy have a national action plan to support implementation, where you can contribute?			
15. Are you aware of the inclusion of human rights in policies and/or regulations of international governing bodies (e.g. FIFA, World Athletics, FINA, etc.)?			

## An interdisciplinary multi-level approach to advance human rights in and through sport

Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	No	I don't know
16. Do you use a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the impact of your sport-based interventions?			
17. Do you include human rights indicators?			
18. Do you measure the impact of your interventions against sport-related policies?			
19. Do you use quantitative and qualitative indicators that are disaggregated?			
20. Do you use structure, process and outcome indicators?			
Capacity development	Yes	No	I don't know
21. Are you aware of capacity development programmes to learn more about RITES?			
22. Do you know where to learn more about governance and integrity in sport?			
23. Do your capacity development programmes include information "about, for and through" human rights?			
24. Do higher education institutions and training providers in your country/region offer mainstreamed human rights education?			
25. Do you regularly take part in capacity development initiatives?			
Ongoing Actions	Yes	No	I don't know
26. Do you implement awareness-raising initiatives related to human rights in and through sport?			
27. Do you have a mechanism to redress human rights violations and abuses?			
28. Do you advocate for RITES within your community?			
29. Do you consult with your participants to find out more about their needs?			
30. Do you undertake a risk assessment to safeguard the rights of marginalised groups?			
Intersectionality	Yes	No	I don't know
31. Do you understand the concept of intersectionality?			
32. Do you analyse sport participation with intersectional lenses?			
33. Do you collaborate with rightsholders advocacy groups (e.g. LGBTQ+, disability, ethnic minorities, etc.) to support their participation in sport?			
34. Do you make adaptations to facilitate the participation of marginalised groups? (e.g. women with disabilities, children from lower socioeconomic groups, etc.)			
35. Do you use disaggregated data to monitor, understand and analyse intersectional participation?			

### REVIEW YOUR ANSWERS

Thank you for completing the RITES exploratory checklist. At this point, select all the "No" and "I don't know" answers and review answer

## Step 2

REVIEW YOUR ANSWERS

### CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS AND INFLUENCES



#### HAS YOUR COUNTRY SIGNED AND RATIFIED THE FOLLOWING HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES?

You can check if your country has signed and/or ratified each of the main human rights treaties on the OHCHR Interactive Dashboard, which is a comprehensive data visualisation portal containing the latest status of ratification of 18 UN treaties and optional protocols.

<https://indicators.ohchr.org/>



#### ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH NATIONAL LEGISLATION RELATED TO SPORT?

Why don't you do a quick review to find out the key legislation related to sport? Check out governmental sites and websites from national sport governing bodies. Also, the International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics publishes a series of Country Profiles, which can provide useful information. Check it out [here](#) and find out if your country is included.



#### HAVE YOU UNDERTAKEN A NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINANTS OF SPORT PARTICIPATION?

You can use the [ALPA questionnaire](#) to measure environmental perceptions in relation to physical activity. Read the articles below for further information:

- [Environmental Barriers as a Determining Factor of Physical Activity](#)
- [Evidence review: Addressing the social determinants of inequities in physical activity and related health outcomes](#)



#### DO YOU CONSIDER CONTEXTUAL FACTORS BEFORE DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING SPORT-BASED INTERVENTIONS?

Contextual factors are dynamic processes of critical consideration as, at the higher level, they shape and constraint the participation in sport. For this reason, exploring contextual factors in complex environments such as human rights and sports is of great importance. In the case of sport, environmental determinants include access to sport facilities, provision of safe areas to practice sport (e.g., parks and cycling paths) or transportation to sport clubs, which is one of the most reported barriers to sports participation for people with disabilities.



## NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON HUMAN RIGHTS



### IS THERE A NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTION (NHRI) IN YOUR COUNTRY?

All countries are encouraged by the UN to establish an NHRI, although some have yet to do so. However, you can find all existing NHRIs here: <https://ganhri.org/membership>



### IF YES, HAVE THEY ENGAGED IN ANY PROJECT WHERE SPORT WAS FEATURED?

Check out on your NHRI's website and learn if they have any project related to sport. If you can't find any information, don't be shy and get in touch with them to find out. This can be the first step to build a relationship with them.



### IS THERE ANY EXISTING SPORTS-RELATED NATIONAL NETWORK TO DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES?

You may contact your NHRI or ask a national sport governing body or specialized entity such as the [Centre for Sport and Human Rights](#).



### IS THERE ANY NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK TO DISCUSS SPORT-RELATED ISSUES?

Your NHRI is the best starting point. They will inform you about human rights networks. Alternatively, you may wish to contact any civil society organization working in the domain of human rights.



### DO YOU SEE FEASIBLE THE REPLICATION OF THE TRUST IRELAND APPROACH IN YOUR COUNTRY/REGION?

The TRUST Ireland methodology uses the quintuple helix model, which highlights the roles different groups have in implementing human rights in and through sport. It recognises that momentum around sport as a human right and of rights in and through sport needs a multistakeholder approach. To this end, the TRUST project held national dialogues with the following groups:

- Government departments with responsibilities related to sport and human rights and state bodies
- Sport Sector
- Rightsholders

Dedicated dialogues were held with each of the following rightsholder groups:

- Women and girls
- Migrants, including Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- LGBTI+ community
- People with disabilities
- People with intellectual disabilities
- Travellers

To learn more about the methodology and the results of this approach, please visit [www.trustirl.ie](http://www.trustirl.ie)



## DID YOU KNOW...?

NHRIs are unique institutions. They sit between government and civil society, and they serve as a bridge between both.

As official State institutions, with a legal mandate, NHRIs have greater authority than NGOs. Their opinions and findings can carry greater credibility and their recommendations greater influence, both with their government and with international bodies.

NHRIs also have stronger investigative powers than NGOs, usually including the powers to obtain documents, summon witnesses and enter premises, such as prisons and detention centres.

## SPORT RELATED POLICIES



### DO YOU KNOW HOW SPORT CONTRIBUTES TO THE AGENDA 2030 FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

While there is not one specific goal dedicated to sport, the preamble to the Goals recognises the important role that sport can play in enabling and realising sustainable development.

"Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives."

You can learn more in this online course "[Sport for Sustainable Development: Designing Effective Policies and Programmes](#)" or reading the [Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals](#) or [The Contribution of Sports to the achievement of the SDGs: A Toolkit for Action](#).



### DO YOU KNOW HOW SPORT AND HUMAN RIGHTS RELATE AT THE POLICY LEVEL?

The sports sector globally is unifying and advancing its human rights activities considerably. The Kazan Action Plan and allied UN frameworks are coherent mechanisms for policy development, implementation and monitoring aligned with human rights and the SDGs. You can learn more about this here: <http://sportandhumanrights.unescoitralee.com/>

Also, if you would like to develop a human rights policy in your organisation, check out this resource developed by the United Nations Global Compact and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR): [A Guide for Business. How to Develop a Human Rights Policy](#).



### DOES YOUR NATIONAL SPORT POLICY ALIGN TO THE SDGS AND/OR HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS?

Contact the authority tasked with the development of sport in your country.



### DOES YOUR NATIONAL SPORT POLICY HAVE A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION, WHERE YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE?

As stated in question 13, contact the authority tasked with the development of sport in your country.



### ARE YOU AWARE OF THE INCLUSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN POLICIES AND/OR REGULATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES (E.G. FIFA, WORLD ATHLETICS, FINA, ETC.)?

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights have provided some impetus for the engagement of the sport sector with human rights. While states remain the primary duty bearers with regards to human rights, the Guiding Principles acknowledge the responsibilities of businesses to protect human rights meaning:

***"That they should avoid infringing on the human rights of others and should address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved. The responsibility to respect human rights is a global standard of expected conduct for all business enterprises wherever they operate. It exists independently of States' abilities and/or willingness to fulfil their own human rights obligations and does not diminish those obligations: And it exists over and above compliance with national laws and regulations protecting human rights.***

Some sport organisations have taken note of these responsibilities and have begun to take steps to incorporate human rights respect and protection into their operations. Below you can see some examples:

- International Olympic Committee: [Strategic Framework on Human Rights](#)
- [FIFA's Human Rights Policy](#)
- [Commonwealth Games Federation Human Rights Policy Statement](#)

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION



### DO YOU USE A MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK THAT TO MEASURE THE IMPACT OF YOUR SPORT-BASED INTERVENTIONS?

Quantitative and qualitative indicators should be co-developed, applied and evaluated by those who will be the ultimate beneficiaries, especially marginalised groups. It is important that the process of developing indicators, it is not only about answering “which indicators are required to measure impact?”, but also questions like “who are they targeting” and “how will these be developed, applied and evaluated?”.

Read this guide developed by Street Football World on [Monitoring and Evaluation in Sport for Development](#).



### DO YOU INCLUDE HUMAN RIGHTS INDICATORS?

Human rights indicators are defined as:

specific information on the state or condition of an object, event, activity or outcome that can be related to human rights norms and standards; that addresses and reflects human rights principles and concerns; and that can be used to assess and monitor the promotion and implementation of human rights

If you want to develop human rights indicators tailored to your work, please read the [OHCHR Guide to Measurement and Implementation: Human Rights Indicators](#).



### DO YOU MEASURE THE IMPACT OF YOUR INTERVENTIONS AGAINST SPORT RELATED POLICIES?

Contact the authority tasked with the development of sport in your country and familiarize yourself with national sport related policies. Then, a mapping exercise should be undertaken to align your indicators with a) SDGs, b) Human Rights instruments and c) national sport-related policies.



### DO YOU USE QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE INDICATORS THAT ARE DISAGGREGATED?

The disaggregation of data is a key aspect to be considered. There is a need for monitoring the participation -and lack of participation- of people in sports in a disaggregated manner. This would provide a reliable assessment of the inclusion needs of individuals, especially those marginalised, considering their intersectional identities.



### DO YOU USE STRUCTURE, PROCESS AND OUTCOME INDICATORS?

Structure indicators refer to the adoption of legal instruments and institutional mechanisms -i.e., policies- deemed necessary for the promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights. Process indicators measure the on-going efforts to transform statements into desired results. Examples of process indicators related to sport programmes and interdisciplinary activities implemented at national level. Finally, outcome indicators refer to the results of an implemented action.



## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT



### ARE YOU AWARE OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT RITES?

There are many free online courses and educational resources to learn more about human rights in and through sport. For instance, the [TRUST online course](#) introduces learners to key concepts on human rights education through sports.



### DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY IN SPORT?

[Guidelines on integrity in sport](#) were developed by the Council of Europe, providing evidence-based knowledge relevant for sports ministries. In this resource, the concept of integrity encompasses the notion of human rights and is sustained in three pillars: 1) the integrity of people, including safeguarding from violence, abuse and harassment; 2) the integrity of competitions, including the fight against doping and match-fixing; 3) integrity of organisations, including good governance. Other available resources are:

- The Sport for Protection Toolkit: Programming with Young People in Forced Displacement Settings. Access the toolkit [here](#).
- The i-Protect Programme offers a holistic approach to a child safeguarding strategy and includes e-learning courses aimed at athletes, families, coaches and sport managers as well as guidelines that will allow participant clubs at grassroots level develop a complete child protection strategy. Visit the website [here](#).



### DO YOUR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES INCLUDE INFORMATION “ABOUT, FOR AND THROUGH” HUMAN RIGHTS?

Following the recommendation of the UN Declaration on human rights education and training (UNDHRET), any capacity development programme should include a holistic approach that covers knowledge a) about human rights; b) through human rights and c) for human rights

Framework	UNDHRET Definition	Implications for sport education curriculum
<b>About human rights</b>	Providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;	Sport professionals can understand and share the importance of human rights with athletes, rightsholders, spectators, and other relevant stakeholders. Also, they can identify human rights abuses and direct victims to remedy mechanisms.
<b>Through human rights</b>	Learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;	Sport educators should be able to learn and teach how to deliver sport-based interventions that respect, protect, and fulfil the human rights of all.
<b>For human rights</b>	Empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.	Sport educators should empower athletes and sport practitioners to acknowledge their rights, embody them in sport practice, and help them collaborate with others to uphold their rights.



### DO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND TRAINING PROVIDERS IN YOUR COUNTRY/REGION OFFER MAINSTREAMED HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION?

Higher education and further training bodies have an important role to play in the promotion of human rights through a number of functions. Firstly, they have a duty to ensure that access to their own courses of inclusive and accessible in line with human rights standards. Secondly, as the primary trainers of the people who will work in the sport sector be that as a coach, PE teacher, policy maker, manager or any other role. Education and training providers can shape the knowledge, standards and practice of the sport sector of the future. By embedding human rights education in their curricula, they are paving the way for a sport sector that is fully aligned with a rights-based approach.

Check out the courses of higher education institutions in your country and find out if they offer mainstreamed HRE.



### DO YOU REGULARLY TAKE PART IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES?

There are many capacity development initiatives available in this area. Some are mentioned in the previous questions. We encourage you to consider them. Capacity development becomes a key mechanism to bridge the policy-practice gap and to accelerate the implementation of actions aligned with human rights frameworks.

## ONGOING ACTIONS



### DO YOU IMPLEMENT AWARENESS-RAISING INITIATIVES RELATED TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN AND THROUGH SPORT?

The advocacy of applying a human rights-based approach to sport is gaining traction across the sector. Many types of actions can be organised, ranging from sports-based programmes to awareness-raising events or advocacy campaigns. You can find some examples [here](#).



### DO YOU HAVE A MECHANISM TO REDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ABUSES?

The [UN guiding principles on business and human rights](#) provide guidelines for companies – including any stakeholder in the sports ecosystem- to align their work in the “protect, respect and remedy” framework. More work is needed to develop complaints and redressal mechanisms to ensure that rightsholders in a vulnerable position or that experience abuse -in and through sport- can be safeguarded. These mechanisms should integrate legislation, but they should go beyond that and align redress with other actions such as policy coherence and capacity development, as legislation on its own is not a guarantee.



### DO YOU ADVOCATE FOR RITES WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY?

The RITES model presents seven intertwined multi-level mechanisms that will maximise the contribution of sport towards protecting, respecting and redressing human rights. Make sure to highlight in your promotional materials your rights-based approach, so that everyone can benefit of participating in sports.



### DO YOU CONSULT WITH YOUR PARTICIPANTS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THEIR NEEDS?

Engage with your community to find out more about their needs. Establish consultative mechanisms learn more about their experiences and receive suggestions to increase participation by rightsholder groups.



### DO YOU UNDERTAKE A RISK ASSESSMENT TO SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF MARGINALISED GROUPS?

Safeguarding means protecting people’s health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. All participants in sport have a right to participate safely. Particular attention may need to be paid to specific groups such as children or vulnerable adults.

There are many educational resources that can help you assessing risks. For instance, the Council of Europe provides an [online hub on Child Safeguarding in Sport](#) that contains guidelines and tips for action, and examples of practices and initiatives





The inequalities a person faces are unique to that person due to the fact that they are made up of many unique identities. This is also important for diversity and inclusion in sport.

For example, Disabled World 2017 reported that 72.1% of people with disabilities take part in no sport or physical activity, compared to 47.8% of people without disabilities. However, this research also found that 93% of women with disabilities do not exercise regularly or participate in any type of sport. Here we can see the multiple layers of discrimination.



## INTERSECTIONALITY



### DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF INTERSECTIONALITY?

This concept was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) to demonstrate how multiple identities interact and shape distinct and complex experiences and struggles, particularly for those who experience discrimination on the basis of disability, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity or socio-cultural or economic background. The concept of intersectionality is widely used in critical studies and the social sciences. The definition has expanded to include all social identity structures, which result in the unique social advantages and disadvantages that every individual experiences.



### DO YOU ANALYSE SPORT PARTICIPATION WITH INTERSECTIONAL LENSES?

Intersectionality is very important to developing inclusion policies because it allows us to understand that one size does not fit all. For example, a gender inclusion policy that is built solely around the experiences of wealthy, able-bodied, white women may not work for women from different ethnic backgrounds, women with disabilities, women from low-income backgrounds etc., and therefore is not a robust gender inclusion policy. As you consider inclusion in your sports club, PE class or in broader terms across society, remember that the experience of one is not the same as everyone and consider the intersectional facilitators and barriers a person may face.



### DO YOU COLLABORATE WITH RIGHTSHOLDERS ADVOCACY GROUPS (E.G. LGBTQ+, DISABILITY, ETHNIC MINORITIES, ETC.) TO SUPPORT THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SPORT?

The phrase 'nothing about us, without us' has been used by disability rights advocates for many years to illustrate the importance of active participation of people with disabilities in all policy and programming decisions. When developing a new sports-based programme, consult with rightsholders and ensure that the tips, ideas, and experiences reflect their actual lived experiences.



### DO YOU MAKE ADAPTATIONS TO FACILITATE PARTICIPATION OF MARGINALISED GROUPS? (E.G. WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES, CHILDREN FROM LOWER SOCIOECONOMIC GROUPS, ETC.)

Consult with your participants to get to know their needs and expectations.

Also, the [inclusive TIMES adaptation model](#) is one of a few adaptation models used to outline the various aspects of physical activity participation that can be considered or adapted to facilitate inclusion, in particular the inclusion of people with disabilities.



### DO YOU USE DISAGGREGATED DATA TO IMPROVE INTERSECTIONAL PARTICIPATION?

In the first global physical activity guidelines for people living with a disability, Carty et al. (2021, p.92) point out the disaggregation of data as an area to advance inclusive policy, practice and research in physical activity: "Mechanisms to gather disaggregated data on participation in physical activity, sedentary behavior, and disability are essential to monitor progress in participation on all levels—local, national, and international".

## Step 3

### TRANSFORM YOUR COMMUNITY IN AND THROUGH SPORT

The appreciation of the universality of human rights and the well-established system of protection of human rights should encourage the sport sector to work towards improving governance, conditions and quality of services offered at any level, from grassroots sport to elite sport. The cross-cutting contribution of sport to multiple human rights and its social appeal and recognition across communities, can produce a viral effect, advancing the rights of marginalised groups.

# SOCIALISE HUMAN RIGHTS IN AND THROUGH SPORT

### PROMOTE THE IDEALS AND PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO EVERYONE PARTICIPATING IN YOUR ACTIVITIES

Now it is time to take the lead with your sports-based interventions, but make sure to explain what you are doing to the rest of the club management, coaches, trainers, other teachers, volunteers, etc. Bring them on board with your plans, explain the duty bearing role you all have and see how you can support each other.

Promote the ideals and principles of human rights to everyone participating in your activities. This can be done by visually displaying your values in your facilities, sending newsletters to members, talking about human rights principles during classes and training sessions, etc.

Work towards ensuring the overall culture of your organisation is a culture of human rights. Use the RITES model to guide organisational development and lead the change in your community.

