"He has been the worst coach, but he's also the one that said 'let's give it a go'": Understanding Inclusive Coaching Practices and Education in Mainstream Sport in Aotearoa New Zealand

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KATHERINE OWEN

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Abstract

Looking to coach education as a principal mechanism of change in inclusive sport practice, this thesis reports research on the development of inclusive coaching practice related to disability in the context of mainstream sport in New Zealand. Guided by Participatory Action Research and drawing on social constructionism, the study utilises semi-structured interviews with disabled people, community sport coaches, and national coach developers as a triad of key stakeholders to provide insight into the knowledge and support that is required by coaches and coach developers to enhance inclusive experiences for disabled people in mainstream sport. In addressing this aim, I also sought to understand the possibilities within coach education to improve coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people. Using a reflexive thematic analysis, the research highlighted that despite the desire of coaches and coach developers to do more in providing opportunities for disabled people, there is a significant lack of support available for both coaches and national coach developers to enact inclusive policy. The analysis illustrates levels of ableism inherent within mainstream sport, coach education and consequently coaching practice, as well as the resourcing and structural barriers that exist within mainstream sport that present significant barriers for achieving the inclusive aims of policy intent. However, despite this, several actions were identified to improve coaching practice at a relational level – between the coach and disabled person – and at a systematic level within the coach education systems of mainstream sport.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The effective inclusion of disabled people[1] in mainstream[2] community sport in Aotearoa New Zealand continues to be an enduring problem in both policy (see Cockburn & Atkinson, 2018; Sport New Zealand, 2019a) and research (McBean, Townsend, & Petrie, 2022). Specifically, the narrative that disabled people typically engage less in sport than their non-disabled peers is well documented (Kiuppis, 2018; Fitzgerald, 2009). Specific to New Zealand, 24% of our population - an estimated 1.1 million disabled people - have lower levels of participation in sport and activities relative to non-disabled people across all four key indicators of participation (weekly participation, time spent, average number of sports and activities and meeting the physical activity guidelines) (Sport New Zealand, 2022). Further, when compared to non-disabled people, disabled people are also less likely to participate in competitive sport or activities specifically, and disabled young people are also less likely to participate in sports and activities for fun (Sport NZ, 2018b). Simply, both anecdotally and statistically, at the community level, mainstream sport is not consistently, nor truly, inclusive of disabled people across New Zealand (Cockburn & Atkinson, 2018). Not only is this a considerable number of people missing out on opportunities to participate each week and a significant problem by itself, but it is also a fundamental human right of disabled people to participate in mainstream sport that is not being upheld (United Nations, 2006a). Further compounding this problem, we also know that disabled people who participate in fewer sports and activities consequently also score less favorably on health and wellbeing indicators (Sport NZ, 2018b).

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[1] The term 'disabled people' is used throughout this research to reflect the Social Model view of disability whereby individuals have 'impairments' but are disabled by a normative society (Oliver, 1996). It is important to recognise however, that not all participants or Disability Advisory Group members in this research identify with this language. Data extracts from participants therefore reflect their individual language preference.

[2] 'Mainstream' sport is a historically loaded term that assumes an undercurrent of ableism and is used to describe sporting experiences that 'other' disabled people. This is separate to Para sport and disability sport that is designed specifically for the inclusion of disabled people.

With the recognition that more action is required to improve opportunities for disabled people in sport, there have been several formal strategies and contemporary policies adopted in New Zealand and globally to initiate change. At the highest level, this is represented within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Article 30 of the Convention (United Nations, 2006a) asserts that 'State Parties (of signatories to the Convention, i.e., New Zealand) shall take appropriate measures to encourage and promote the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels.' Prior to becoming a signatory to the Convention in 2008 (United Nations, 2006b), the introduction of explicit formal policy on the inclusion of disabled people in sport in New Zealand dates back to 1998 (McBean, Townsend & Petrie, 2022).

In 2005, SPARC (now Sport New Zealand) released an updated version of the original 1998 Hillary Commission's 'No Exceptions Strategy' and a supplementary Implementation Plan (SPARC, 2005). The Strategy set out the expectations for 'all agencies involved in the provision of physical recreation and sport opportunities for disabled people, with the vision of '(a)All people participating in the physical recreation and sport activities of their choice.' (p.4 & 5). The latest Sport New Zealand Disability Plan (Sport New Zealand, 2019) reiterates their commitment to a '(s)System that is equitable and where disabled people are just as active as non-disabled people.' The Plan also details their expectation of the sector to 'develop inclusive opportunities and experiences for disabled people in play, active recreation and sport' (p.3). National Sports Organisations (NSOs), as the governing bodies of sports across New Zealand, have therefore been inadvertently (Sport New Zealand, 2019) and overtly (Hillary Commission for Recreation and Sport, 1998; SPARC, 2005, as cited by McBean et al., 2022) positioned as having one of the leading roles in the development of opportunities for disabled people

within their mainstream sports since 1998. This mirrors inclusion policy in sport in the UK, where the Government's Plan for Sport gives National Governing Bodies (NGBs) the leading role of mainstreaming disability sport and delivering opportunities for disabled people (Christiaens, & Brittain, 2021). However, despite key policy differences, such as equity and inclusion being a prerequisite for funding for NGBs in the UK, Christiaens & Brittain (2021) report that the UK sporting landscape also experiences gaps between their inclusive policies and practices. In their recommendations to NGBs to improve inclusive practice, the authors go on to suggest that they 'work with disability sport providers to make inclusion an integral part of coach education' (p.16).

In response, researchers and policymakers have identified coaches as key enablers to increase the opportunities for disabled people to participate in sport in New Zealand (Cockburn & Atkinson, 2018; Huntley, Whitehead, Cronin, Williams, Ryrie & Townsend, 2019). Being recognised as a key enactor of inclusive sports policy is a significant responsibility. If coaches are therefore not well supported through appropriate education opportunities, this has significant implications on the experience a disabled person receives, and consequently impacts their rate of participation in sport (Sport New Zealand, 2018b). Such education support required for coaches is concerning when current research demonstrates globally the general lack of formal, disability specific education available to support coaches in providing quality, inclusive opportunities for disabled people across a broad context of sporting experiences (see Douglas, Falcão, & Bloom, 2018; Fairhurst, Bloom & Harvey, 2016; Cregan, Bloom & Reid, 2007; Duarte, Culver & Paquette, 2020; MacDonald et al., 2016; Townsend, Huntley, Cushion & Culver, 2021). More specifically within National Coaching Programmes (NCPs), the lack of disability-specific coach education opportunities available to support coaches' development is also reported by Huntley, Whitehead, Cronin, Williams, Ryrie, and Townsend (2019), McMaster, Culver & Werthner (2012) and Wareham, Burkett, Innes & Lovell (2018). The absence of disability from mainstream coach development pathways thus marginalises disability coaching knowledge which is

consequently regarded as a specialist body of knowledge to be accumulated. Focusing on inclusive practice in community mainstream sport specifically, this is particularly problematic as Townsend & Peacham (2021) state that appropriate training and education for coaches is paramount in the pursuit of achieving full inclusion. The importance of effective training for community coaches is a further concern as existing research focuses largely on the perspectives of coaches in high performance and/or disability sport specific contexts, and comparatively little is known about the learning needs and support available for coaches within community level mainstream sports. (Wareham et al., 2018; Douglas et al., 2018; Fairhurst et al., 2016; MacDonald et al., 2016; Townsend, Cushion & Morgan, 2019; McMaster et al., 2012; Douglas & Hardin, 2014; Taylor, Werthner & Culver; 2014). Furthermore, a large proportion of existing research focuses on the perspectives of coaches in high performance and/or disability sport specific contexts (Wareham et al., 2018; Douglas, Falcão, & Bloom, 2018; Fairhurst, Bloom & Harvey, 2016; MacDonald et al., 2016; Townsend, Cushion & Morgan, 2019; McMaster, Culver & Werthner, 2012; Douglas & Hardin, 2014; Taylor, Werthner & Culver; 2014), thus limiting insights into the landscape of coaching as it intersects with disability.

The New Zealand sporting landscape is not exempt from this global coach education problem. Back in 2005, SPARC (Sport and Active Recreation New Zealand, 2005) reported that a more skilled and knowledgeable disability sector was required to provide opportunities for disabled people and that this need would be met by developing quality training and education opportunities. Advancing 13 years on, Cockburn and Atkinson (2018) in their independent review of the provisions for disabled people in sport and active recreation in New Zealand, highlighted the knowledge gaps that still exist within disability sport coaching. They add that the inconsistency in the levels and nature of coaches that are available throughout New Zealand further impacts the quality of opportunities for disabled people to participate in sport. The inconsistency and lack of coach education was consequently reported as a key gap in service provision, and in their recommendations to improve the opportunities

available for disabled people, Cockburn and Atkinson (2018) endorsed training to support coaches and the development of supportive learning environments. Sport New Zealand (2019a) further recognises the importance of providing more coach development opportunities to New Zealand coaches within their recent Disability Plan, stating to "provide training and support for the development of a skilled and confidence workforce" as a key priority within the Plan (p. 9). They also highlight the necessity of this education for the key implication it has on developing quality opportunities for disabled people in play, active recreation, and sport. As such, across the disability sport sector it is widely recognised that coach development provides one of biggest opportunities to improving the reach and quality of the programmes they offer (Townsend and Peacham, 2021), while at the same time the problematic nature of coach education that is based on medical model assumptions is also concerning given the types of knowledge about coaching and disability that are (re)produced.

In recent years in New Zealand, we have also seen the introduction of more contemporary policy that gives responsibility to NSOs as key drivers of inclusion in sport. In 2016, several NSOs committed to '#SportforAll' (Netball New Zealand, 2016)- a signed commitment to developing and implementing policies, programmes and practices that encourage greater diversity and inclusion across sport, be that in terms of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability, aiming to eradicate discrimination from sport. Furthermore, in 2019, the same NSOs signed the Sport New Zealand Balance is Better Statement of Intent (Sport New Zealand, 2019b)- another contemporary policy with a key commitment to "(E)nsuring all young people who play our sports receive a quality experience." (p. 1). However, despite the significant expectation and responsibility placed upon NSOs to implement these inclusive policies, there is little evidence of this strategy mobilisation in action beyond the inclusive intent of organisations. An example of this is a review I undertook of the online material presented by five NSOs in New Zealand. All the organisations had published statements or values which stated they were inclusive and wanting to include 'everyone'. Yet, when we compare

these statements to the representation of disability within their coaching resources, there was no educational guidance available for coaches to understand *how* to practically enact the 'inclusive environments' promised in policy. Thus, it is argued that the development of a competent and confident coaching workforce is a principal priority in the delivery of strategic change and policy enactment, that can aid in bridging the existing gap between policy and practice (Townsend & Peacham, 2021).

While we acknowledge that these are tangible, physical policies that aim to guide practices concerning equity, cultural values - as 'invisible guiding principles' - have also been reocgnised by Bertsch and Warner-Soderholm (2013) for their potential to support the development of human rights. Particular to the underpinning cultural beliefs and worldview that support the inclusion of disabled people in Aotearoa, New Zealand, 'invisible' cultural values can be observed when we look to Te Ao Māori (Bevan- Brown, 2013). Such Māori values and 'guiding principles' include: whanaungatanga (strong relationships and sense of family connection), wairuatanga (a recognition, respect and embracing of the spiritual dimension in others), āwhinatanga (an obligation not to 'trample on people's mana' by excluding them) and manākitanga (being 'welcoming, nurturing, hospitable and inclusive') (Bevan- Brown, 2013, p. 579). Although there is no evidence specific to inclusion in sport, such values have been suggested to support inclusive practices within education settings by Bevan-Brown (2013), whereby incoperating Māori values into education and disabiltiy services has contributed to the greater inclusion of all disabled people, regardless of ethnicity.

Within the existing literature, there is a dearth of research that utilises a participatory action research approach within disability sport coaching (Duarte et al., 2020). Furthermore, there is little evidence of inclusive research practices being used within disability sport research more generally, whereby disabled people are actively involved in knowledge generation beyond the role of a participant (Townsend et al., 2021). Current research including the perspectives of disabled people

either does so more generally referencing participation in sport as a whole (e.g. Carroll, Witten, & Duff, 2021; Wickman, 2015; Darcy, Ollerton & Faulkner, 2020; Darcy & Dowse, 2013; Ryan, Fraser-Thomas & Weiss, 2018) or involves an intimate cluster of research concerning largely the perspectives of physically disabled people in relation to disability sport coaching (Alexander, Bloom & Taylor, 2020; Culver & Werther, 2018; Allan, Sams, Latimer-Cheung & Côté, 2020; Ferguson & Spencer, 2021). However, these are still largely transactive research processes where disabled people are researched 'on' as participants and are not considered inclusive research studies (Milner & Frawley, 2018). While the findings from these studies give insight to coaching skills, practices and knowledge that are valued by disabled athletes, they do not offer guidance that is applicable within the context of mainstream, community sport. Research concerning the perspectives of coaches currently does so primarily within high performance settings, with a disproportionate focus on coaching people with physical impairments. Furthermore, the perspectives of coach developers are largely omitted within disability sport research currently and are either included incidentally or are a relatively small number of the participants in the study (Huntley et al., 2019). Little is therefore known of coach developer's experiences in developing education systems to better support disability coach education, and in turn, the inclusive practices of coaches.

1.1 Context and Research Question

My professional experiences within the disability sport sector in New Zealand have supported the initiation of my studies and are strongly embedded throughout this research. Through these experiences, I have witnessed first-hand the power of sport in disabled people's lives, and as an ally of the disabled community, I am continually on a pursuit to enhance the opportunities available for disabled people to participate in the sport(s) and activities of their choosing. However, mainstream sport is yet to cement itself on the menu of options readily and consistently available for disabled people to choose to participate in. Unless of course you are 'deemed capable of meeting non-disabled

norms' i.e., persons with a generally 'mild' impairment(s) (Christiaens & Brittain, 2021). Ableism is a key factor impacting sporting experiences, that privileges and assigns value to the able-bodied 'norm' (Campbell, 2009). Such ableist practices and attitudes thus frequently exclude Individuals 'whose bodily capabilities do not fit such hypothetical able-bodied norms in sport' (Carroll, Witten & Duff, 2021).

Through this research, and within my professional work as a Disability and Inclusion Programme Manager, the Social Relational Model of Disability (Thomas, 1999) offers some theoretical clarity. This model recognises the importance of, and centralises, the bodily reality of disability in that it can and does have both an impact and influence in the context of disability sport coaching (Townsend, Smith & Cushion, 2015). However, the effects of an impairment can extend beyond restrictions caused solely by biology, and thus disability is not limited solely to the impairment, nor is it entirely socially constructed (Townsend et al., 2015; Smith, & Bundon,2018). Within the Social Relational Model, disability is instead positioned as a bodily reality that is both socially constructed, and socially fashioned (Smith & Bundon, 2018). Furthermore, disablism in the social relational model is a form of 'social oppression that imposes restrictions of activity on people with impairments' as well as the 'socially endangered undermining of their psycho-emotional well-being' (Thomas, 2007, p.73). Importantly, the social relational model also extends our understanding of impairment effects, that is, how 'restrictions of activity in the lives of disabled people can arise directly from their impairments' (Smith & Bundon, 2018, p.22). Looking to the social relational model, disablism and impairment effects therefore focus my attention on both the relational aspect of coaching - as a practice that can restrict and enhance the activity of disabled people - and coach education structures and how they can contribute to disablism and social oppression.

At the time of initiating this study, I was employed by a Regional Sports Trust in New Zealand as their Disability and Inclusion Advisor. Within this role I was tasked with increasing the opportunities

available for disabled people to be active in our region. A key focus was on building the capability of local sporting providers and practitioners to include - and create more opportunities for - disabled people in mainstream sport. During a 2019 community information gathering event designed to better understand the needs of our local sports providers, one of the biggest barriers identified to including disabled people in sport was the lack of knowledge and understanding around how to communicate with and include disabled people as day-to-day features of coaching practice. In response to this local need, I sought out research to inform the development of a quality, pan-disability specific coach education opportunity that would support local coaches and deliverers to be more inclusive in their mainstream sport practices. However, as evidenced in Chapter two, I was met with limited applicable research to guide my actions. Consequently, local coaches and disability sport organisations became my principal sources of knowledge, in lieu of any formal guidance.

Concurrently, the impact of Sport New Zealand's enhanced focus on disability and inclusion – at least in policy – was, and still is, beginning to be seen across the sector. Specifically, the distribution of funds across the sector, and notably an additional 3.3 million dollars to be dispersed across the following three years through the 2022 Sport New Zealand Disability Inclusion Fund; with a specific focus on inclusionary practices and developing capability and capacity within the play, active recreation, and sport system. With this, there has also anecdotally been a relative increase in the number of NSOs in particular who have stated a desire to understand how they can improve their provisions for disabled people. However, with Sport New Zealand's 'diffusive' approach, practitioners have been largely left to 'self-source' effective approaches to inclusion, leading to a clear focus on coaching and coach education. Yet organisations are currently ill-equipped, as I was, to effectively develop these coaching and coach education practices to support the inclusion of disabled people in mainstream sport. While the value, allocation, and impact of this funding is yet to be seen (Townsend & Peacham, 2021), it is logical to question whether the funding can meet its full potential for impact without the development

of appropriate disability coaching structures in New Zealand. With this nationally growing investment, interest, concern, and question surrounding inclusive coaching practices, I have developed a strong interest and desire to understand how coach education can most effectively develop coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream sport. Consequently, this incessant curiosity, my professional experiences, and position as an ally of the disabled community have been significant motivators in the development of this research question and subsequent research study. This research therefore attempts to respond the following question:

> *How, through coach education, can we improve coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream community sport?*

Looking to coach education as a principal mechanism for change, this research aims to understand how we can improve coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream sport in Aotearoa, New Zealand specifically. In doing so, I aim to provide recommendations that add to the current literature surrounding how coaches can be more inclusive within the relational aspect of coaching – that is the relationship and interactions between the coach and disabled person being coached. In addition to this, I also aim to present a level of systematic recommendation and contribution to the literature surrounding how the current practices of coach education can be developed to better support coaches to include disabled people.

As opposed to drive by, extractive research (Smith & Sparkes, 2020), this study is supported by a Disability Advisory Group (DAG) to centralise the voices of disabled people as more than just participants, and draws on the perspectives of community level coaches and National Sport Organisation's to gain a multi-layered understanding of opportunities within coach education to improve inclusion in mainstream sport. To gain this understanding, the research considers: 1, the experiences of disabled people being coached and the knowledge they perceive coaches to require to

support their inclusion. 2, the experiences of coaches and the knowledge and ways in which they require support to enhance inclusion of disabled people. 3, the opportunities and support identified by national coach developers to enhance their education system to improve inclusive coaching practices. By doing so, this research aims to support the opening problem outlined in this chapter - a partial decryption of the 'enigma' that is the effective inclusion of disabled people in community sport (McBean et al., 2022).

The following chapters of this thesis begin with a review of the current literature pertaining to inclusive coaching practices and disability coach education which includes research from disabled people and coaches themselves. This is followed by my methodological research approach in Chapter Three which outlines my Participatory Action research and inclusive research methods. Chapter Three also details how, ontologically, and epistemologically, semi-structured interviews with disabled people, community coaches and national coach developers - as the triad of key stakeholders - are undertaken in an iterative knowledge production process with support from the DAG. My analysis of the five key themes from this research is presented in Chapter Four a) and Chapter Four b), which also includes discussion points relative to the research question threaded throughout. Chapter Five concludes this study by providing both recommendations and reflections on the implications of this research for future coaching and coach education practices and systems in New Zealand, as well as identifying implications for future disability coach education research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In recognition of the important role coaches have in improving and supporting the participation of disabled people in sport (Cregan et al., 2007), the body of research concerning disabled people's participation in sport, coaching in disability sport, and coach education, has seen a significant increase in recent years. The following literature review aims to map this existing literature, synthesise key messages and identify gaps to inform this study. In doing so, I aim to understand the possibilities within existing coach education research to inform inclusive coaching practices.

2.2 Inclusion of Disabled People in Sport - Policy and Practice

Policies have long been developed by organisations and government bodies globally to support greater inclusion within mainstream sport and to address the inequities routinely observed in disabled people's participation in sport (Sport New Zealand, 2020a; Sport New Zealand, 2020b; Sport Canada, 2006; Sport Ireland, 2017). Furthermore, coaches are increasingly recognised for their critical role in the enactment of inclusive policies in sport (e.g., Hammond, Penney & Jeanes, 2020). However, despite the 'historical weight' and promise of inclusive policies to address social inequities (Townsend & Peacham, 2021, p.8), there is often a notable gap reported between policy and practice. Specific to New Zealand, this gap has only been explored in inclusive early childcare education policies and practice (Lyons, 2013). However, more particular to inclusion in sport, this gap has also been researched by Hammond et al., (2020) who examined the interpretation and enactment of disability and inclusion policy in swimming in Australia. Drawing on interview data with eight professional swimming coaches, the study highlighted that merely having a policy does not guarantee its automatic transfer through to practice. For example, while coaches were largely aware of a requirement to

include disabled children and were able to speak in inclusive terms, they were unsure of ways to progress inclusive practices in their contexts (Hammond et al., 2020). This is familiar when considering NZ sporting policy. It is clear we have policies in place to support inclusion, and NSOs are beginning to speak in inclusive terms and recognise their obligations. However, when it comes to enacting inclusive policies and statements, coaches - who are seen as vital in their delivery - are broadly not positioned to implement policies because of a lack of knowledge, skills, and organisational support (Townsend & Peacham, 2021). In their efforts to understand why and how the disconnect occurs between policy and practice, Jeanes et al., (2019) generated similar findings using in-depth interviews with volunteer club coaches and committee members to examine the response of Australian junior sports clubs to policy that supported the participation of young disabled people. However, they also found that policies are not being enacted because of an inherent desire of coaches and sports clubs to win, thus suggesting they believe disabled people would not be competitive, and that including disabled people was outside of their core business. Such ableist discourses were also recognised as a significant barrier preventing the translation of inclusive policy in the study by Christiaens & Brittain (2021), who utilised semi-structured interviews with sports organisations, officials, and disabled people to examine the extent to which inclusive, mainstreaming policies lead to inclusive sports practice in the UK. Similarly, through interviews with disabled people, their parents and 'key informants', Carroll et al., (2021) discovered how ableist attitudes and practices significantly inhibited the participation of disabled young people in sport in New Zealand.

Although research acknowledges that coaches play a critical role in the enactment of inclusion policies (Hammond et al., 2020; Jeanes et al., 2019; Townsend & Peacham, 2021), more knowledge is required that addresses how to effectively support this role. Thus, while the above studies affirm that a key gap in enacting policy relates to the knowledge and ableist beliefs of policy enactors, the existing

research falls short in offering details of the specific knowledge required by enactors to fulfil policy requirements, and the mechanisms by which inherent ableist attitudes can be reduced.

2.3 Coaching Disabled People in Sport

The important role of the coach in the development of athletes has also long been identified in both able-bodied and adapted sport (Kean, Gray, Verdonck, Burkett, & Oprescu, 2017; Cregan et al., 2007). Moreover, we know that coaches can impact disabled people's desire to participate (Shapiro, 2003, as cited by MacDonald, et al., 2016; Townsend & Peacham, 2021), and it is recognised that the coach-athlete relationship can have a significant impact on the athlete's experiences of inclusion (Ferguson & Spencer, 2021). It is also important to note that research pertaining to coaching disabled people in mainstream sport exists within a significantly broader context of coach and coach developer literature. However, despite the importance of and significance of coaching research, understanding the nuances of coaching in diverse disability contexts remains a significant concern in existing literature (Townsend, Cushion & Morgan, 2019). The following section of this review examines research that includes the perspectives of disabled people being coached, coupled with research on the perspectives of coaches including disabled people in their practice.

2.3.1 Perspectives of Disabled People

A central principle of inclusive research is the recognition that disabled people are experts in their own experiences (Grant & Ramcharan, 2007). As such, it is imperative to begin with research concerning the perspectives of disabled people themselves. There is significant value in disabled people providing insights into the development of education opportunities for coaches that are underpinned by lived experiences and what it means to deliver opportunities for meaningful participation in sport (Townsend et al., 2021). Despite this, there is a noticeable absence of research that currently provides insights from disabled people in a sport coaching context, specifically. The

exception to this is the small body of research by Alexander et al., (2020), Culver and Werther (2018), Allan et al., (2020) and Ferguson and Spencer (2021). Across all four studies, participants with lived experience of disability describe common coaching behaviours and skills they perceived to be valuable. Referenced by the elite para sport athletes interviewed by Alexander et al., (2020), one of the desirable coaching skills was adaptability, and more specifically the ability to creatively meet the needs of disabled athletes. Similarly, Culver & Werthner (2018) found in interviews with participants with physical impairments that athletes wanted a coach who could use creativity, alongside their experience for reference, to adapt and modify sports drills and activities. Communication and collaboration between the coach and athlete, whereby coaches empathise with and support their participants, as well as coaches' knowledge of both the sport and the individual's experience of disability, were commonalities in desired coaching characteristics across all four studies (Culver & Werthner, 2018; Alexander et al., 2020; Allan et al., 2020; Fergusson & Spencer, 2021). Using an ecological systems theory approach, Fergusson and Spencer (2021) also found that coaches who were willing to ask about athletes' needs and differences were recognised as being 'more invested, and better able to create a trusting and inclusive environment' for their female para-athlete participants (p. 286). These common findings suggest that it is important to provide space for, and to recognise the agency of disabled sportspeople's voices in the context of disability sport coaching (Townsend et al., 2021, p.10). It is important to note that although significant, the studies have a narrow scope of applicability, as only the perspectives of disabled people with physical impairments are largely considered by the studies, thus the full landscape of exclusion remains beyond our understanding. This is with the exception of Ferguson & Spencer (2021), who included female participants with vision and hearing impairments. Yet, we are not afforded the details of whether participants with sensory impairments reported different experiences with their coaches, relative to their physically disabled peers. Different impairments place different demands on inclusion – some require adjustment to the

environment; others require adaptive communication or behaviours. As such, we know comparably little between impairments, as well as the shared nature of disablement.

Considering the above, there is a need for research that includes more diversity across disability experience; including people with intellectual, learning, developmental and sensory impairments, as a means of generating a fuller understanding of the disabling barriers that permeate sport coaching. Further, these studies are not specific to the context of participation within community sport, and the relationship between the above coaching skills and knowledge, and the sport context they are applicable to (e.g., integrated or Para Sport), is left entirely unexplored within the studies. It could therefore be suggested that a broader range of practical considerations for coaches could be achieved by seeking more diversity among disabled people with different impairment types. In addition to this, there is a need to explore the relationship between desirable coaching skills, knowledge, and practices within the different contexts of sports that are participated in by disabled people (mainstream, community, high performance, Para Sport, Integrated).

Despite the lack of research on the perspectives of disabled people in sport coaching specifically as indicated above, there is growing research that includes the perspectives of disabled people on sporting participation more generally (Carroll et al., 2021; Wickman, 2015; Darcy et al., 2020; Darcy & Dowse, 2013; Ryan et al., 2018). While some of these studies touch on sports coaching, or the participant's experience of being coached, the authors do not provide the level of detail or insight required to inform or influence change in the way coaching practices are delivered. Although generalised, these findings are still important to consider and do provide some additional insight into our understanding of disability sports coaching, from the perspectives of disabled people themselves.

In their study of the social and personal impacts on the sporting experiences of disabled young people with diverse impairments, Carroll et al., (2021) share how coaches were often referenced as

enablers in the context of participation in disability or adapted sports. The authors argued, however, that it was less common for participants to report positive experiences where they felt supported and accepted by their coaches within mainstream sporting contexts. Delving further to understand why it was less common for participants to feel supported by their coach in a mainstream sports context - relative to participants within an adaptive sporting context – may provide a deeper understanding of the discrepancy in experience. A similar contrast in experiences between mainstream and disability sport coaching is reported by Wickman (2015). In their study of the experiences and perceptions of physically disabled young adults in sports, they illustrated how participants had felt encouraged by their coach in a disability sport specific setting, and how significant this was for their self-esteem. Of interest though, is that all participants in the study had been dissatisfied with their experience in mainstream Physical Education (PE), to some degree. The largest contributor to this dissatisfaction among participants was the lack of the teacher's ability to adapt the teaching to the student's needs. This finding and the need for teachers to be better educated about being able to adapt and accommodate disabled young people in PE was also evident in the study of Darcy et al., (2020). While there are similarities in these findings to that of Culver and Werthner (2018) and Alexander et al., (2020) who also reported the need for coaches to be adaptable and creative, there is a fundamental problem with 'adapting' pre-defined curricula, aims, goals and sessions. Much sporting practice is built on an ableist value system; hence disability challenges these assumptions and practitioners are forced to adapt. We must also be mindful of the inherent differences between the contexts of sport and PE when comparing these findings. Fundamentally PE is, for the most part, a compulsory sporting experience underpinned by curriculum, whereas mainstream sport is generally voluntary in nature, taking place outside of the academic and mandatory setting. The training of professionals in these domains is also significantly different; teachers generally must complete tertiary, higher-level education, whereas coaches commonly do not require any formal qualifications (Blair & Capel, 2011).

Adaptability and flexibility are also key themes presented by Darcy and Dowse (2013) in their survey of people with intellectual disabilities on the constraints and benefits of sport participation. Additionally, they add that an awareness of disability issues and an understanding of the individual's disability and how it affects them is also a key area of need for coaches. Another significant finding to note within these studies is evidenced by Darcy et al., (2020) in their transdisciplinary study, surveying disabled children, their parents, teachers, and coaches about disabled children's sport participation. They also highlight how the competitive nature of team sports and the beliefs and attitudes of coaches who prioritise winning over participation presented a real issue for inclusion in mainstream sport. This finding is especially important to consider within a New Zealand sporting context, given the significant investment in contemporary policy such as 'Balance is Better' (Sport New Zealand, 2019b) which aims to address this very same 'win at all costs' mentality. A critique of this study is the high proportion of caregiver and parent voice within their participant surveys. Though they have included disabled people as participants, this is a small percentage of their participant group (5.4%). Similarly, in the study of Darcy and Dowse (2013), while there is a significant number of participants with an intellectual impairment contributing to the study, the reader is not afforded the details of how many of these participant responses were submitted by parents and caregivers by way of proxy. In both instances, I therefore question whether the themes are truly reflective of the perspectives of disabled participants themselves. Within this collection of studies, there is notably greater diversity among disabled participants and greater inclusion of people with intellectual impairments, however the perspectives of people with sensory impairments continue to be a glaring omission from the research. Consequently, the limited knowledge we have about the experiences of disabled people with sensory impairments in sports coaching, or in sport participation more generally, is again a real concern.

Despite the perspectives of disabled people being included in the (9) studies discussed above, none of these articles demonstrate the inclusion of disabled people in the research beyond the role of a participant. This is both significant and concerning as it is recognised that disability research should at a minimum, be taking an inclusive approach (Macbeth, 2010), whereby research is conducted *with* disabled people as part of the study design (Goodley, 1999). If disabled people are notat least afforded the opportunity to 'check facts, offer alternative explanations or verify researcher interpretations' (Kitchin, 2000, p.40) of their experiences, then we must question the true validity andinterpretation of disability research by non-disabled researchers. As such, there is a need for future research in the field of disability sport coaching to be more inclusive, and to ensure the perspectives and voices of disabled people are included throughout the research study, as coresearchers (Goodley,1999).

2.3.2. Perspectives of Coaches

The following section of this literature review aims to understand the journeys that led coaches into coaching disabled people in the first instance, and how this contributes to our understanding of coach knowledge development, as well as the knowledge and skills coaches believe are necessary to include disabled people in their practise.

2.3.2.1 The Coaching Journey

Commonly coaches in disability sport do not initially intend on coaching disabled athletes, and largely coaches begin their coaching journeys coaching non-disabled people (Cregan et al., 2007; Fairhurst at al., 2016; Duarte, Culver & Paquette, 2021). Unless, however, the coaches were Paralympic athletes themselves (Douglas et al., 2016). This is consistent with the findings of Huntley et al., (2019) who report in their analysis of interviews with 20 Paralympic and Disability Sport coaches that coaches' journeys often started serendipitously, beginning with an association through mainstream sport as

athletes or parents. It is It is important to note that within all of these studies, with the exception of Huntley et al., (2019), the coaches were either 1) coaches of physically disabled athletes, or 2) it is unclear to the reader whether the coaches had experience coaching disabled people with more diverse lived experience of disability. The transition from mainstream coaching and entry into coaching disabled people was often varied. In some instances, coaches gained experience through formal university education that involved exposure to adaptive physical activity and disabled populations (Fairhurst et al., 2016; Taylor, Werthner & Culver, 2014). However more commonly, coaches were introduced to disability sport by disabled athletes who were looking for coaching support (Fairhurst et al., 2016), or when disabled athletes turned up at one of their practices (Cregan et al., 2007). In their study of 12 elite coaches of disabled athletes, Wareham et al., (2018) report the initial apprehension felt by their coaches with no prior disability-specific training when first considering whether to include a disabled athlete within their mainstream sports squad. Thus, suggesting that providing training to mainstream coaches on including disabled people within their programmes could support an easing of the 'fear of the unknown' commonly reported by new coaches (see Townsend et al., 2017).

A significant gap to note here is that all the coaching journeys being investigated above include coaches of athletes in Para sport or disability sports. Very little is known about mainstream coaches and their learning journey to including disabled people within their mainstream practises. This is a glaring omission in existing research, as an understanding of coaches' personal and coaching experiences is vital to supporting the development of effective learning interventions (Duarte et al., 2020). Taylor et al., (2014) and Duarte and Culver (2014) found that the family experiences of coaches were important in the shaping of inclusive attitudes, including the parental influence of the coaches' mothers who were welcoming and inclusive of all, which played a big part in the coaches' early exposure to disabled people. Utilising a life-long learning perspective to understand the experiences

of an adaptive sailing coach, Duarte and Culver (2014) further suggest that this early socialisation and exposure may have lessened the feeling of 'disjuncture' that coaches may feel when first engaging with disabled people. Such findings demonstrate the need for inclusive societies where people who may become coaches, like others, would benefit from life experiences with disabled people.

2.3.2.2 Skills and Knowledge Required

When reviewing the comparatively greater body of literature that highlights the views of coaches of disabled people in sport, it appears there are some synergies with the perspectives of disabled participants cited above regarding the perceived coaching skills and knowledge that are required to coach and include disabled people in sport. Commonly, coaches have reported the need to be creative and to think outside of the box when coaching disabled athletes (Douglas & Hardin, 2014; Cregan et al., 2007). Additionally, Douglas et al., (2016), in their comparative qualitative study between coaches coaching wheelchair or standing basketball, state that coaches must rely on 'pure ingenuity' to become effective coaches in disability sport (p.2). This mirrors the sentiment from disabled athletes cited above, where they valued coaches who were adaptable and creative to meeting their needs as athletes. However, research is needed to better understand if these comments on creativity and adaptability are because of the lack of coach education opportunities available, and therefore coaches *have* to rely on creativity, or whether creativity and adaptability are essential to cater to and include disabled people. I suspect that both examples may be true, however understanding the nuances beyond the need and desire for coaches to be creative and adaptable, and exploring the specific context these are relating to, would support in providing more concrete recommendations to coaches and coach developers, alike. Additionally, coaches commonly report the importance of knowing the athletes' specific impairment and their individual needs (Douglas & Hardin, 2014, Tawse, Bloom, Sabiston, & Reid 2012; Cregan et al., 2007). Although other than the need to understand the nature of the athlete's disability, coaches also commonly believe that coaching disabled athletes requires the

'same' skill set and knowledge as coaching non-disabled people (Douglas & Hardin, 2014; Cregan et al., 2007). The apparent need for coaches to understand both the sport-specific knowledge and the individual's impairment also mirrors the athlete's perspectives reviewed above and is particularly evident in the poem 'same but- different' shared by Culver & Werthner (2018): *"Bring me the best of what you have from your able-bodied experiences – treat me like the athlete I was …. before being in a wheelchair. But … beware my individual disability - the challenges I have in my training routine"* (p.171). The poem speaks to the need for disabled athletes to be treated like athletes first, but that the approach must be coupled with knowledge of the Para sport and the unique needs of the disabled person's impairment. Tawse et al., (2012) also found that seeing disabled athletes as 'athletes first' was important. In their study exploring the personal experiences of four wheelchair rugby coaches, the authors detail their coach's belief that athletes should be regarded as athlete's first, but the spinal cord injuries of the athletes in their study are a reality and do impact their lives. It is important to note, that these two studies are from coaches of athletes with physical impairments, therefore we have no evidence to suggest the 'same, but different' coaching philosophy extends to coaches of athletes with diverse impairment types. 'Athlete first' discourses have also been critiqued by Townsend, Huntley, Cushion, & Fitzgerald, (2018) for their complete disregard of impairment effects on coaching practice, with the authors concluding that coaching disabled athletes requires a more nuanced, considered approach.

Coaches also report the need for collaboration with their athletes and in particular, the importance of listening to, and understanding their athlete's needs (Tawse et al, 2007; Fairhurst et al., 2016; Townsend et al., 2019). This again mirrors the perspectives of disabled people cited above (e.g., Culver & Werthner, 2018; Alexander et al., 2020; Allan et al., 2020) who valued their coach's communication and collaboration efforts. Another important factor noted in the literature - that the studies above do not make mention of - is the need for coaches to collaborate and build strong

relationships with the athletes' caregivers and families (Fairhurst et al., 2016; Townsend et al., 2019). Fairhurst et al., (2016) in their study of six high level paralympic coaches share that the value of these strong relationships is largely from the support caregivers and parents provided coaches, and their ability to provide feedback and insight, suggesting that parents and the wider support network of a disabled person are a valuable source of knowledge for coaches.

Research also suggests that there is a set of skills and knowledge that coaches need to draw on when working with disabled athletes with lived experience of intellectual disability. A coach who provided commentary to the chapter by Townsend et al., (2019) shared that 'openness, flexibility and patience' are important skills when responding to the needs of their athletes with intellectual impairments, who require coaches to 'regularly return to practices that players are familiar and competent with' (p.6). The value of flexibility and patience in coaching people with intellectual impairments is also reflected in a vignette shared by Cronin, Ryrie, Huntley, & Hayton (2018). In their co-constructed autoethnography, the significance of these coaching skills could be seen through their coaches' dialogue: "*For the second week running the structure of my session has gone out of the window! All this planning is wasted*" (p.9). Several additional coaching skills and knowledge sets were also identified by Kimber, Burns and Murphy (2021) in their study of 10 coaches of individuals with autism. Within their semi-structured interviews with coaches, the authors described that the use of humour and empathy were key social skills, and that knowledge of behavioral support techniques and of communication tools such as social stories were also important to coaching individuals with autism.

These findings suggest that there are different coaching skills, and knowledge that might be required depending on the nature of the impairment of the disabled person being coached. Townsend et al., (2019) further support this argument, stating that 'the nature of the players' impairments can and does impact on the coaching process' (p.5). Consequently, it is vital that research reflects this

diversity, reflects the need for research that considers more than coaches' experiences of people with physical impairments. This in turn will generate a more complete understanding of the knowledge and skills required by coaches to include disabled people, as a diverse group of individuals. However, with the exception of Cronin et al., (2018) and Kimber et al., (2021), this diversity in coaching experience is notably a significant gap in existing research. MacDonald et al., (2016) have gone some way to explore *how* 45 Special Olympics coaches, who coach participants whose primary experience of disability is intellectual, source their coaching knowledge. Although the study does not explore *what* specific knowledge or coaching skills the coaches perceive as necessary to coach athletes with an intellectual disability. An additional gap to consider in the current literature is that the studies above largely include the perspectives of coaches of elite and performance athletes (With the exception of MacDonald et al., 2016; Cronin et al., 2018 and Kimber et al., 2021). Thus, comparatively little is known about the perspectives of community-level coaches (Townsend & Peacham, 2021; Cronin et al., 2018). This is a significant gap as community sport provides one of the largest opportunities for participation across the spectrum of sporting experiences.

Despite some commonalities in the perspectives of disabled people and coaches of disabled people above, there is no existing research that explores the dyad of coach/athlete perspectives simultaneously, and currently the perspectives of the two participant groups are sought entirely exclusive of each other. This is particularly significant when considering how both disabled people and coaches of disabled people are key stakeholders in research concerning disability-specific coach education. In recognition of this gap in the existing research, Alexander et al., (2020) suggest further research should look to include perspectives of the coach/athlete dyad, to gain a more nuanced, multi-dimensional insight that concurrently draws on the two perspectives to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

2.4 Coach Education

Formal coach education is an important component of coach development and is positioned centrally as a driver of quality coaching practices (Nash et al., 2016). However, it has long been identified that there is a general lack of disability-specific coach education opportunities available for coaches of disabled people in sport. Back in 1986, DePauw first identified the need for more research to understand the development and training of coaches and called for further studies to determine the effectiveness of disability coach education programmes. Fast-forward to today, and researchers are still reporting on the need for greater research in this area (e.g. Townsend et al., 2021), even despite the significant growth in research in this area over the last 15 years (Culver et al., 2021). In a recent review, Townsend et al., (2021) further report on the scarcity of disability-specific coach development programmes and highlight their concerns of the serious implications this has on the quality of sport coaching received by disabled people. However, while the authors propose a framework for disability coach education based on 'infusion'- that is, having disability specific information embedded within 'mainstream' coach education pathways - there is a lack of evidence as to how this can be achieved within existing coach development structures.

2.4.1 Modes of Disability Coach Education

The lack of research into coach education programmes in disability sport is suggested to be reflective of the general lack of disability-specific coach education opportunities that exist globally (Townsend et al., 2021). As a result, much of the coaching knowledge pertaining to disability is sourced overwhelmingly from 'experiential, informal and non-formal sources' (Trudel, Milistetd, and Culver, 2020 as cited by Townsend et al., 2021, p. 248). Evidence to this argument is the fact there are only two current articles that evaluate the effectiveness of a disability-specific coach education programmes (Townsend, Cushion & Smith, 2018; Duarte et al., 2021). Drawing on evaluative

methodology comprising of participation observation, qualitative survey data, and follow-up case study interviews about autism (ASD) specific coach education, Townsend et al., (2018) found that while the intended focus of the impairment specific coach education training was the development of autism 'awareness' and improving coaches' confidence, the teaching and learning practices highlighted the impairment effects of ASD as the cause of exclusion. Hence, drawing on medical model discourses within educational programmes can unintentionally contribute to a 'false' ideology of inclusion (Townsend et al., 2018). A critique of this study, however, is the lack of representation from disabled people themselves. As research done on autism-specific coach education, it should - at a minimum - include the perspectives of people with autism.

The coach education programme examined and developed by Duarte et al., (2021), followed a collaborative enquiry approach with 16 wheelchair curling coaches, six technical curling leaders and three researchers. The participants engaged in several online group meetings for collaborative knowledge creation which shaped the content for online learning camps, and for the coaches to further share their learnings on an online platform as a part of the social learning intervention. The paper demonstrated the multi-dimensional value that coaches of different experience levels gained from this collaborative, social learning approach. This study goes some way to highlighting the value of the co-creation of knowledge within disability coach education. However only the perspectives of coaches were sought for the collaborative learning opportunities, and other than a coach who had experience as a wheelchair curler incidentally, the perspectives of wheelchair curlers themselves are entirely void from the co-construction of knowledge within this participatory action research. There is therefore a need for research that explores the value of co-produced coach education programmes, that is, programmes which involve the perspectives of *both* disabled people and coaches, alike (Duarte et al., 2021).

2.4.2 Formal Coach Education Opportunities

Formal coach education has been recognised for its ability to provide an important basis, and leading source of coach learning and this is particularly the case in Para sport (Taylor et al., 2014; Douglas et al., 2016). However, it appears that much of the research highlights the paucity of formal and specialised disability-specific education opportunities that are available for coaches within sport. This is notable across the board; for coaches of elite (Wareham et al., 2018; Douglas et al., 2018; Fairhurst et al., 2016; Cregan et al., 2007) and grassroots disabled athletes (Duarte et al., 2020; MacDonald et al., 2016), to the coaches of athletes with intellectual (MacDonald et al., 2016; Townsend et al., 2019) and physical impairments (McMaster et al., 2012; Douglas & Hardin, 2014). In their global survey of the experiences of Paralympic and disability sport coaches, Huntley et al., (2019) reported that only 19% of coaches who held national coaching qualifications (from the 313 coaches surveyed) received formal Para-specific coach education. This is also evident in New Zealand, whereby only two known formal disability-specific coaching programmes are available to coaches throughout the country (Sport New Zealand, 2018a). Further, no formal evaluations of these programmes currently exist, so their relative effectiveness is largely unknown. Similarly, only 40% of the coaches of physically disabled athletes interviewed by McMaster et al., (2012) and 33% of elite coaches studied by Wareham et al., (2018) were provided formal education opportunities through their National Coaching Programme. Compounding this issue, these authors also highlight that there is minimal, if any, disability-specific information included within formal training provided to coaches by their Governing Sport Bodies and National Coaching Programmes. The lack of disability-specific coaching information provided by National Sporting Bodies mentioned above also mirrors the offerings by NSOs in New Zealand.

Findings suggest that the small number of coaches who have received formal, disability specific coach education believe that these opportunities do not generally include the level of technical, disability-specific knowledge that they desire (McMaster et al., 2012; Wareham et al., 2018;

Taylor et al., 2014). There is a need therefore, to look at research with coaches to find out more about the potential value of formal coach education in relation to disability sport. Drawing on the qualitative analysis of a coaches' lifelong learning, Taylor et al., (2014) suggest in their case study findings that it is necessary for coach educators to recognise the relevance of formal education, while still ensuring there are ongoing opportunities for coaches to develop knowledge on the myriad of disabilities and equipment needs. This research fails to give specific guidance about how to address this need in formal coaching, however. Huntley et al., (2019) do go some way to providing a more detailed account of the knowledge gaps identified by coaches through their qualitative survey analysis. The authors detail the support coaches are seeking in the areas of sport science, impairment specific knowledge, coaching practice, and classification; including a number of participant quotes which highlighted specific details in these areas such as: *"Different methods to teach/coach different impairments"* and *"Specificity of different disabilities; possibilities of athletes with different disabilities" (p.24)*. While this gives us a deeper understanding of the certain knowledge sought by coaches, we are unable to determine from this research which sporting contexts these coaches are operating in, or the diversity of experiences among the disabled people they are coaching, or indeed the practicality of implementing them. Thus, we cannot use these insights alone to inform developments in coach education opportunities in mainstream sport, specifically.

A clearer understanding of the knowledge and skills desired by coaches from multiple perspectives (both in terms of sporting contexts and diversity of disabled people being coached), would go some way to providing an evidence base to inform how we can better support coach education practices. This insight could also provide a useful platform for determining what knowledge to 'infuse' within the infusion coach education framework proposed by Townsend et al., (2021) cited above.

2.4.3. Non-formal and Informal Opportunities

Comparative to the formal education opportunities referenced above, it appears that coaches generally place a higher value on nonformal (e.g., training camps) and informal (e.g., personal experiences and social interactions) methods of coach education (Nelson, Cushion & Protrac, 2006; as cited by Wareham et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2014; Duarte & Culver, 2014; Fairhurst et al., 2016). This is supported by Huntley et al., (2019) who reported that 42% of coaches surveyed perceived learning from experience (informal) to be the most effective method of coach education. This was followed by non-formal learning (31%) and lastly, formal learning (27%). Comparably, coaching clinics and workshops were ranked low as sources of knowledge for a wheelchair basketball coach in the study of Douglas et al., (2016). This raises a question as to whether these methods (informal and non-formal) are valued by coaches simply for their greater availability than formal education avenues, or whether nonformal and informal methods are genuinely more effective in disability-specific coaching. There is currently no universal agreement on the methods of coach education that are more effective (Huntly et al., 2019; McMaster et al., 2012). Yet it could be suggested that the value of the non-formal and information methods currently lies within their ability to bridge the noticeable gap created by the lack of formal education opportunities.

Collaborative, shared learning among coaches is commonly reported as a valued source of informal education amongst coaches, and there appears to be a general willingness by coaches to share their experiences with others, which is relatively uncommon in able-bodied sport (Duarte et al., 2020; Wareham et al., 2016; Cregan et al., 2007; Duarte & Culver, 2014; Huntley et al., 2019; Fairhurst et al., 2016). Many coaches also valued acquiring knowledge through mentors (Huntley et al., 2019; Douglas et al., 2016; Douglas et al., 2018), where they were used as a sounding board (Duarte & Calver, 2014), and through whom they learnt highly specialised technical skills (Fairhurst et al., 2016).

Learning from their disabled athletes, and their athlete's parents and support networks, are also commonly reported as vital sources of education for coaches, especially relating to the athlete's own specific impairment and capabilities (Huntley et al., 2019; Cregan et al., 2007; Duarte & Culver, 2014; Fairhurst et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2015; Douglas et al., 2016). This process of co-constructing knowledge with athletes (and wider support network) can therefore be viewed as a method that can assist with the integration of sport and disability specific knowledge, and to optimise the athlete experience and development (Allan et al., 2020; Cregan et al., 2007). As well as learning from others, the reflective and self-introspective practices of coaches have been noted as another way coaches learn. Whereby, reflecting on their coaching practices enables the coaches to achieve a greater understanding of their coaching style, and how to change or adapt their approach to better suit the needs of their athletes (Taylor et al., 2015; Douglas et al., 2016).

2.4.4. Lived Experience of Disability and Experiential Coach Learning

For disabled coaches, the lived experience of disability and previous participation in disability sport are further recognised as sources of informal, experiential learning that can add to a coach's understanding of disabled athletes' needs and experiences (McMaster et al., 2012; Douglas et al., 2016). Interestingly, this lived experience of disability was deemed 'not essential' by the disabled coaches interviewed by McMaster et al., (2012). Although paradoxically, a disabled coach in the study by Douglas et al., (2016) suggests that the lived experience of disability and previous participation in disability sport is a 'prerequisite' of coach learning for coaches wanting to include disabled people.

For coaches who do not have a lived experience of disability, a disabled wheelchair basketball coach (Douglas et al., 2016) and a Para skier (Culver & Werthner, 2018) suggest that learning from participating in disability-specific sports and using the necessary adaptive equipment (wheelchair basketball chairs and sit-skis) can support coaches to gain valuable experiential knowledge on how to

play the game, and for the understanding of the technical equipment details. Allan et al., (2020) further endorse this premise in their findings from the life histories of 21 physically disabled participants, that coaches testing equipment and trying the disability sport for themselves may support their efforts to understand and empathise with their athletes. These are important insights when we consider the higher proportion of non-disabled coaches (relative to disabled coaches) that are present in disability sport coaching research (DePauw & Gavron, 1991, as cited by Cregan et al., 2007; Fairhurst et al., 2016), with the exceptions of Tawse et al., (2012) and Douglas et al., (2018). The place and value of both the lived experience of disability and 'learned' experience of disability in constructing knowledge about coaching are therefore contested, further highlighting the need for research that explores the co-construction of knowledge with disabled people in the context of coach education.

2.4.5 Barriers to Accessing Quality Coach Education

As well as a comparatively smaller number of education opportunities available for coaches of disabled athletes, the availability of these opportunities also appears to be inequitable and inconsistent (Cregan et al.,2007; Duarte & Culver, 2014). For coaches that are un-paid, the cost, time,and travel required to attend training camps and competitions have been identified as key barriers preventing coaches from accessing these highly valued education opportunities (Duarte et al., 2020; Wareham et al., 2018; Douglas et al., 2018). Conversely, coaches in paid positions have greater accessto a wider range of development opportunities (Wareham et al., 2016). This is a particular concern when we consider the study of Huntley et al., (2019), who discovered the disability coaching workforceconsists principally of volunteers (n=112 of 313 surveyed) and has been described as a "blended profession" of full time (n=79), parttime (n=53), sessional (n=65), and volunteer coaches.

We also know there are inconsistencies in the coach education opportunities available for coaches internationally, regionally, and locally (Huntley, et al., 2019; Culver et al., 2021). The breadth of inconsistency is highlighted by Culver et al., (2021) who shared in their review of the current coach education programs offered globally, that opportunities can vary from two-hour workshops to 2-year post-graduate programs. Thus, the access to such education by coaches is further impacted by lack of consistency, and geographic availability. We also know the opportunities available to coaches largely depend on the National Sporting Body the coach is governed by (McMaster et al., 2012; Wareham et al., 2018). The inconsistency in the availability of coach education opportunities is similarly evident in New Zealand, as Sport New Zealand (2018a) explain that sport delivery providers have a big influence on whether coaches understand who they are working with, and what might be required to facilitate their quality participation.

It is interesting to consider that the above barriers coaches face to accessing quality coach education mirror the commonly reported barriers of disabled people in accessing quality sporting opportunities; resourcing, travel, regional availability, and cost (Sport New Zealand, 2018b). It is therefore important that the barriers of coaches accessing coach education opportunities are considered in the development of coach education offerings, to ensure there are equitable opportunities for coaches to develop their practice.

2.5 The Perspectives of Coach Educators

There is growing interest in the education and training of coaches to work with disabled athletes, however coach developers are currently invisible in existing disability coaching research. This is a significant omission, because coach developers are increasingly gaining traction internationally as a focal point of coach education research (e.g., Callary & Gearity, 2019). In the Special Issue of the International Sport Coaching Journal 'Global Perspectives in Coach Education' the authors (Callary &

Gearity, 2019) share how it is imperative that we seek to understand the perspectives of coach developers and enhance their preparation in developing quality coach learning programmes. The important role of coach developers is additionally highlighted by Townsend & Peacham (2021), for the significant part they play in developing and designing appropriate coach education resources and programmes to support coaching practice.

It is important to recognise the efforts of Huntley et al., (2019), who go some way to including the voices of coach educators (n=11) alongside the voices of coaches (n=313) in their study of the experiences of coaches in Paralympic and disability sport. The voices of these educators are somewhat diluted in the reporting of this research however, and only appear explicitly in the dialogue of two coach educator case studies recalling their education programmes. The only other instances of the coach developer-coach dyad perspectives being included in disability sport coaching research appear to be entirely by coincidence. For example, the participant in the study by Duarte & Culver (2014) was a developmental adaptive sailing coach who also happened to be a coach developer. This is something even the authors referenced as a 'bonus' and was not an intentional criterion sought of their participant, nor a preliminary objective of their study. Similarly, a proportion of coach participants in the study by Duarte et al., (2020) were also coach developers, however little is shared about the participants in their coach developer role. The importance of the coach developer role in New Zealand disability sport has recently been highlighted by Special Olympics NZ, who recognise the need to enhance the professional development opportunities for their coach developers around the country - with the development of a specific training course currently in progress (Townsend & Peacham, 2021). This further highlights the need to include the coach developer voice in research concerning disability specific coach education in sport. I argue that the coach developer perspective in disability sport coaching not only needs to be included, but there is also a need for this insight to be juxtaposed to the perspectives of both coaches and disabled people, to ensure that future research considers such

multi-faceted approach to knowledge construction. Callary & Gearity (2019) support this argument, also recognising in their Special Edition that *'there are layers of connection between coach developers, coaches, athletes, families, their communities and others, and the rigor to which we want to have quality coaches demands that we examine these interconnections'* (p. 261).

2.6 Discussion

On review of the literature, a number of key omissions within the existing research, and suggested ways forward for future studies have been identified to improve inclusive coaching practices. In doing so I have mapped a space and opportunity for my subsequent research to provide meaningful contribution to the developing field.

Firstly, coaches play a key part in the enactment of inclusion policy in sport, however there is evidence to suggest that key policy enactors aren't aware of how to implement policy actions (Townsend & Peacham, 2021; Lyons, 2013; Hammond et al., 2020). Further, in the context of mainstream sport, there is no evidence base to understand what support and experience coaches require to enact inclusive policy. 2. While we have a general understanding of the knowledge and skills coaches would like to acquire to better support disabled athletes, we do not have any detail on the specific contexts of sport this knowledge is required within (i.e., disability sport, high performance sport, community mainstream sport). 3. While disabled people are experts in their own experience and are key to understanding how coach education can be developed, currently only four studies seek the voices of disabled people on the topic of coaching specifically, and the value of lived experience is currently contested in research. 4. There is a skew of current research pertaining to physical impairments. Both from the perspectives of coaches of physically disabled people and the perspectives of disabled people themselves. 5. Disabled people have not been included beyond the role of a participant in disability sport coaching research to date. 6. We have a reasonable

understanding of the learning journeys of coaches within disability sport, however we currently do not understand the experiences of mainstream sport coaches who are effectively including disabled people in their mainstream sport practice. 7. There is evidence of the co-production of knowledge between coaches and coach developers within one coach education programme (Duarte, et al., 2021). But there is an apparent dearth of knowledge about co-production and how it can be used in disability coach education research, let alone how the perspectives of disabled people can be considered and utilised within this approach. 8. Despite the significance of coach developers in supporting effective coach education programmes and systems, they are predominantly void from existing disability coaching research, with the exception of Huntley et al., (2019).

To occupy some of the identified 'space' for this research and to address key omissions identified above, the following actions have been taken: Methodologically, this research is underpinned by the principles of inclusive research - involving supported continued engagement and partnership with a Disability Advisory Group with diversity in lived experience - to support the research design, participant recruitment and the contextualisation of key findings. The research goes beyond including disabled people as participants, to now working with disabled people to develop the research, which is not a practice evident in the field of disability sport coaching research at this point in time. Empirically, I am drawing on multiple perspectives to inform coach development by looking through the eyes of athlete/coach/coach developer triad of key stakeholders and by championing the voices of disabled people with diversity in their lived experience. Finally, I am looking specifically at inclusion within the context of community, mainstream sport to simultaneously address the research question.

3. Chapter 3 – *Methodology*

3.1 Introduction

Indicated in the literature above, critiques (methodologically) in existing disability sport research largely concern the lack of athlete voice and the involvement of disabled people in research beyond the role of the participant. With these criticisms in mind, my work aligns with Participatory Action Research and Inclusive Research approaches, whereby disabled voices are central to this study through the disability advisory structure and their roles that influenced the research design, participant recruitment, data collection and resulting research analysis. The perspectives of disabled people are central to my reflexive thematic analysis that was then layered with the perspectives of the remaining two participant groups: community coaches and national coach developers. Together, the collective participant groups of this research enabled a multidimensional view of inclusive coaching practices and disability coach education that provided a multifaceted lens for which to investigate how, through education, coaching practices can be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream sport.

3.2 Research Paradigm

All research is underpinned by a 'fundamental set of beliefs that guide action' (Guba, 1990, as cited in Collins & Stockton, 2018, p.2.), ultimately reflecting the researcher's ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (Pabel, Pryce, & Anderson, 2021). These assumptions are commonly captured under a 'paradigm' (see Kuhn, 1962). It is therefore imperative that as researchers we begin by understanding where we position ourselves both philosophically and politically within our work (Glesne, 2011).

Philosophically within this research I adopt a social constructionist approach. My understanding of how sports coaching can be developed to be inclusive of disabled participants through coach education is formed through interactions with others, i.e., disabled people, coaches, and coach developers, and also through the historical and cultural norms that operate within these individuals' lives (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). That is, the historical and cultural norms of disability, coaching and coach education in New Zealand, as the participants of this study have experienced them, all play a part in the construction of knowledge and understanding that is, expressed through me as a researcher (Pabel et al., 2021). The participants in this research are therefore positioned as co-producers of knowledge that comes from their own selves and experiences, given that ontologically, constructionism implies that multiple social realities exist, and that the understanding of those realities are constructed through the interaction with others (Smith and Sparkes, 2016; Pabel et al., 2021). Furthermore, social constructionism contends that knowledge and social action go together, such as this study's marriage of knowledge that is co-constructed with participants, to ultimately support a more inclusive mainstream sporting environment (Young & Collin, 2004).

The use of social constructionism is also consistent within existing qualitative research specifically in the field of disability sport and recreation research (e.g., Brittain, 2004; Jessup, Bundy & Cornell, 2013; Grenier, 2007). Furthermore, this way of understanding is also evident within coaching and coach education research, (Lang, 2022; Zenther, McGannon, & McMahon, 2019; Sawiuk, Leeder, Lewis, & Groom, 2022).

Both philosophically and politically, I also subscribe to the notion of 'Nothing about us, without us' within this research, reflecting the philosophy and history of the Disability Rights Movement whereby disabled people asserted that only they truly "know what is best for them and their communities" (Charlton, 2000, p.4). By actively seeking the voices of disabled people, this research

recognises the importance of directly engaging with disabled people themselves, as the experts of their own experiences. Such an approach is vital within this research to effectively understand disabled people's experiences of inclusion (or not) in sport, their perspectives of quality coaching practices and the knowledge required by coaches to better support their inclusion. Together these perspectives and experiences are imperative to discovering the educational support required for coaches to improve inclusionary practices within mainstream sport.

3.3 Participatory Action Research

Qualitative research is described by Smith and Sparkes (2016) as a complex "set of interpretive activities" (p.1) that not only crosses multiple disciplines and fields, but is also underpinned by complex, interconnected, concepts, approaches, assumptions, and theories. Given its complexity and breadth, it is therefore important to detail where my research fits within this multifaceted "field of inquiry" (Smith & Sparkes, 2016, p.1).

Participatory Action Research (PAR) has been described as a collaborative process of research, education, and action, whereby the outcomes of research are oriented towards social transformation (Hall, 1981). In line with the co-construction of knowledge for social action within constructionism, PAR moves beyond the understanding of the phenomenon of the world, to understanding how these phenomena can change the world for the better (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007). As such, PAR is understood as research that will benefit participants through direct action, or by utilising research findings to influence change and inform action (McHugh, 2016). To achieve these outcomes, the voices of marginalised communities must be central to the research process (Smith & Sparkes, 2016), and researchers and participants much be engaged in a collaborative research process to address real-life problems (Kindon et al., 2007). The 'real-life problem' in the context of this research is the inclusion of disabled people in mainstream sport. This research is therefore centralising the voices of disabled

people and listening to the voices of coaches and coach developers, as participants who can collectively 'solve' this problem in the pursuit of knowledge generation and social change.

Participatory Action Researchers assume a particular wisdom lies within those who have been most 'systematically excluded' (Kindon et al., 2007, p.9). Further, 'participatory' and 'action research' are also included as a set of approaches that collectively make up inclusive research as described by Chapman (2014). This research includes both a 'participatory research' approach, whereby disabled people are actively involved in the research in an advisory capacity (detailed below), and an 'action research' approach, where coaches and coach developers are engaging with, and reflecting on their practice through participation in the study. With the aim of this research being to influence coach education practices, to ultimately support coaches to better include disabled people in mainstream sport, there is potential for all participants – that is, disabled people, coaches, and coach developers – to benefit from this research. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is thus a key underlying methodological approach of this research which brings together both 'participatory research' and 'action research' approaches for the process of collaborative knowledge production, in pursuit of practical problem-solving (Lawson, 2015; Kindon et al., 2007).

Consistent with the underlying paradigms and methodology of this research, McHugh (2016) details how many participatory research approaches have been guided by social constructionist perspectives in sport and exercise research to date, to support the necessary inclusion of underrepresented groups in research. Specifically within Para coach education, participatory methods have been used for the co-construction of coach education opportunities (Culver et al., 2021). This participatory approach was valued by the authors for its ability to facilitate collaborative enquiry by both the researchers and participants. McHugh (2016) further explained that the importance of these approaches together (PAR and constructionist perspectives) lies in their ability to understand the important experiential knowledge of marginalised populations, including insight into the social and

cultural issues that are embedded within such experiences. Consequently, this approach has been deemed 'essential' by McHugh (2016) in the context of research concerning marginalised communities, and for the development of future sport and exercise research. In order to carry out a true PAR approach in the context of this study with disabled participants, it is also important to consider 'inclusive disability research' practices, and to define where this research is positioned on the continuum of inclusive research.

3.4 Inclusive Disability Research

Inclusive Research was first described by Walmsley & Johnson (2003) as involving people with intellectual disability in a way that moves towards a relationship as research partners. It is important to note that this framework was set up to describe research with people with intellectual disabilities specifically. Inclusive research has derived from the emancipatory disability research framework that was developed with its roots in the growth of both the Disability Movement and the Social Model of disability (French & Swain, 1997). Inclusive disability research has also been defined by Walmsley and Johnson (2003) as a broader umbrella term to encapsulate a wider range of approaches. Within these approaches, Walmley and Johnson (2003) also detail five prescriptions for Inclusive Research: First, the research question must be owned (although not necessarily initiated) by disabled people; research should further their interests and non-disabled people should be on their side; research should be collaborative and disabled people should be involved in the research process; disabled people should be able to exert some control over the research process and the outcomes, which should also be accessible to them. While I do not claim that my research fits all of these prescriptions,and perhaps aligns most strongly with the research being 'collaborative, with disabled people being involved' and research that 'furthers the interests of disabled people', it does however hold a place on the continuum of Inclusive Research as described by Bigby, Frawley, & Ramcharan (2014a), and

includes some of the approaches that collectively make up Inclusive research as described by Chapman (2014).

Bigby et al., (2014a; 2014b) illustrate that the continuum of Inclusive Research includes: the involvement of disabled people in an advisory capacity, disabled people having control and leadership of research projects, and collaborative research groups with disabled and non-disabled researchers. My research sits within the early phase of this continuum. I utilised an 'Advisory approach' whereby a Disability Advisory Group (DAG) made up of four disabled people (Advisors) with different lived experiences of disability were employed throughout the research process to guide the engagement and representation of disabled people's voices. While the Disability Advisory Group also provided valuable insight that significantly shaped the construction of knowledge within this research, it is important to note that the group did not have any overarching control nor leadership of the research itself. However, Bigby et al., (2014 b) explain how not only can utilising an advisory approach ensure that research is relevant to the lives of disabled people, but it can also enable a higher quality of research to be produced.

Inclusive research can therefore be understood as a collection of approaches and assumptions that attempt to 'flatten' the traditional transactional, extractive, and hierarchical nature of research. Inclusive research can thus also involve approaches dubbed 'participatory research', and 'action research' (Chapman, 2014). By drawing on Participatory Action Research and utilising an 'Advisory Approach' as above, this research consequently and intently employs an assortment of approaches that assume space within the Inclusive Research umbrella.

3.5 Method

Ethical approval was granted for this study by the University of Waikato, Human Research Ethics Committee, (HREC(Health)2021#64) to conduct semi-structured interviews with three different participant groups as the principal research activities of the study (Appendix 4). The approved research design included the DAG role in co-developing knowledge from the study and engaging in framing interview questions and post-interview reflections.

3.5.1 Research Design

A multi-layered approach to incorporate the experiences and perspectives of the participant groups outlined below was employed to gain a unique, multidimensional understanding of how mainstream sports coaching can be developed through coach education. That is, understanding what inclusive coaching practices look like from the experiences of disabled people, what education and support coaches feel is necessary to better include disabled people in sport, and what support is required for coach developers to enhance disability education opportunities for their coaches. As an overview, the three groups of participants included:

1. a. Research Disability Advisory Group (4 participants, recruited using snowball sampling or were known to me)

   b. Disabled participants with a diverse range of ages, impairment types and experiences in sport (5 participants recruited using snowball sampling only)

2. Community grass-roots coaches from Football, Cricket, Hockey, Netball and Rugby (5 participants recruited using snowball sampling)

3. National Coach Developers tasked with educating coaches from the above five NSOs.(5 participants, recruited using snowball sampling or were known to me)

The study aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities to develop coach education practices that includes the perspectives of disabled people, as this is largely missing from current research in disability sport. Asking coaches what they need to be able to include disabled people in mainstream sport is important, but this knowledge alone has significant limitations for developing quality coach education programmes on inclusion in mainstream sport, without including insights from disabled people themselves. The overall design incorporating the intersecting layers of engagement of each group is depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: *The Multidimensional Research Approach and Relationship Between Research Participant Groups.*
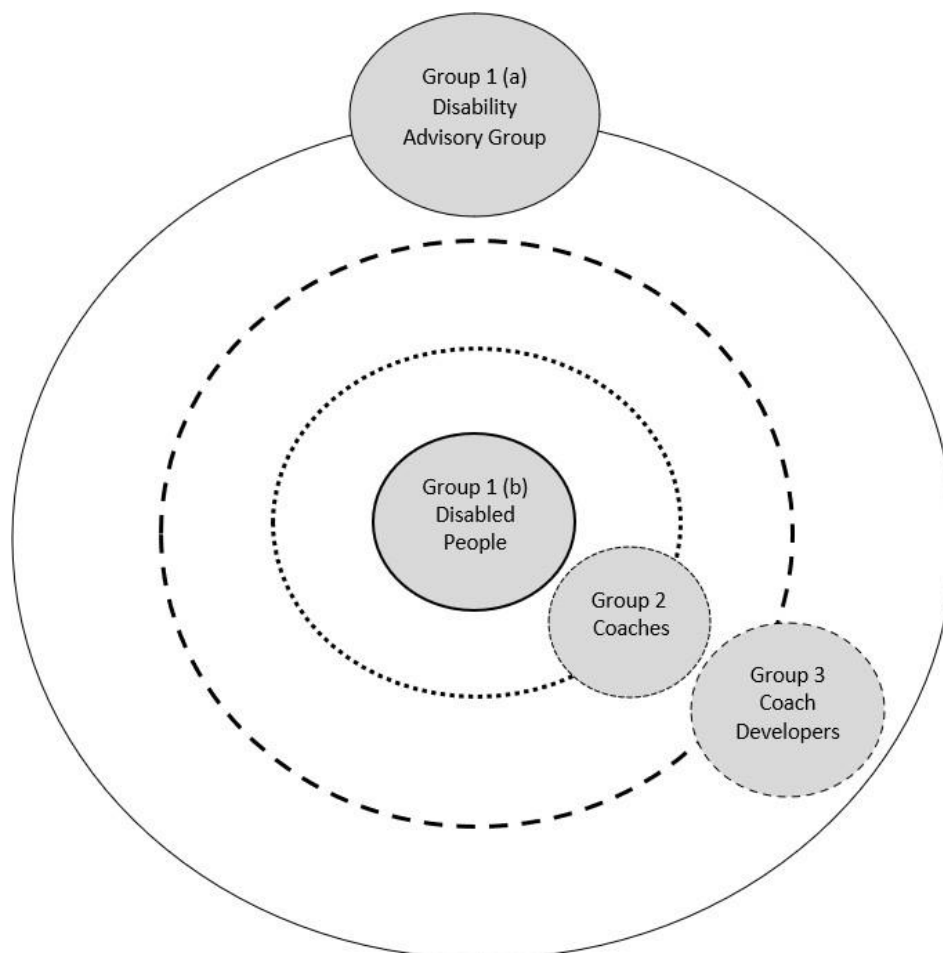
Figure 1 above illustrates how disabled people's voices have an overarching influence on the research, whereby the Disability Advisory Group (Group 1 a) influences the knowledge production concerned with each group of participants. The voices of disabled people are also centralised within this research, illustrated as Group 1 (b) in figure 1 as disabled participants. Figure 1 also demonstrates the line of influence between participant groups. Coaches (Group 2) have a direct relationship with disabled participants in sport, thus they are depicted in the second sphere of influence from the disabled participants. Furthermore, the systems and education opportunities created by national coach developers have a direct impact on the coach, and consequently the relationship the coach has with the athlete and the inclusive experiences they provide. Coach developers therefore occupy space in the third sphere of influence as Group 3. Collectively, disabled athletes, community coaches and coach developers of NSOs are therefore key stakeholders, and enablers, in developing a greater understanding of how inclusive coaching practices can be developed through coach education.

3.5.2 Recruitment and Sampling

The selection and recruitment of participants for this study was guided by the need to ensure an 'information rich' (Sparkes and Smith, 2014, p. 70) sample across the three participant groups:

Group One (a) - Research Disability Advisory Group:

Four disabled people who had experience in disability sport were recruited to the Disability Advisory Group (DAG). Participants were initially identified using maximum variation sampling. DAG participants were either known to me prior or were known to others and recruited using snowball sampling. The set dimensions of the population group were individuals having a lived experience of disability, who live in New Zealand, and have participated or been coached in sport. Within these parameters, participants were identified to represent the 'most important possible variations of these dimensions' (Smith and Sparkes, 2014 p. 70). The key variations sought were in participants':

backgrounds, ages, impairment types and experiences in sport. The issue of tokenism is a key concern raised by Bigby et al., (2014 b) in recruiting an Advisory Group. Therefore, the 'closeness' of the individual to the topic of inclusion in sport, their 'expertise via experience' and the severity of the individual's impairment(s) were also important considerations for ensuring diversity within the group Bigby et al., (2014 b). Considering these parameters helps to ensure that participants are not the 'most likely suspects' or the most available and well-known 'self-advocates' (Bigby & Frawley, 2010; Nind, 2011, as cited by Bigby et al., 2014b, p. 7). This advice from Bigby et al., (2014 b) prompted a review of the Advisory Group members I had originally thought to recruit for this research, and key changes were made to achieve better balance and diversity.

Three Advisory Group members were known to me and were recruited personally. However, to achieve the greatest 'range of different perspectives' within this group, snowball sampling was used to recruit the final group researcher. I drew on a pre-existing relationship with a National Disability Organisation (NDSO) for their support with recruitment. The NDSO introduced to me to an individual who met the criteria via email. Each participant was contacted via email, phone, or in person to discuss the role of the Research Advisory Group and were invited to take part. One participant was Deaf, and the initial meeting took place face to face to ensure we could communicate effectively. It is a key responsibility of the researcher to facilitate the group's full involvement in the advisory activities (Bigby et al.,2014b). Thus, flexibility and individualisation in approach is important so Advisors can meaningfully contribute to the study. All four participants verbally consented to be a part of the DAG. Consent was also further re-confirmed with the DAG at the first Group meeting.

Group One (b) – Disabled Interviewees

Maximum variation sampling was also used to recruit five disabled interviewees, this was achieved utilising snowball sampling (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The set dimensions were individuals having a lived experience of disability, who live in New Zealand, and have had experiences of participating and

being coached in mainstream sport. Within these parameters, participants were then identified to represent key variations: backgrounds, ages, impairment types and experiences in sport. While the advice of Bigby et al., (2014b) cited above is related to achieving diversity among disabled people advising on research projects specifically, these principles are equally transferable and applicable to the maximum variation sampling of disabled interviewees in this context. Following this advice ensured the research was truly exploring a range of different perspectives to understand multiple facets of the problem (Bigby et al., 2014b). Such practices have the potential for more widely applicable results that are representative of the disability community as a whole; rather than just being representative of the least impaired, easiest to include, and readily accessible participants.

The DAG drew on their existing networks to identify three participants who met the above criteria and who they felt would be most the 'useful', 'information rich' participants (Sparkes & Smith, 2014 p.71). I also drew on existing relationships I had built within a disability sport organisation (DSO) for the recruitment of the remaining two participants. The DSO identified two individuals who they felt aligned to the key considerations. All five participants expressed interest in taking part and were contacted by phone or email, to further explain the aims of the study. Participants were also sent follow-up participant information (Appendix 1a) and consent forms (Appendix 2), in a format most appropriate for their communication preference (one was modified to meet Plain Text Guidelines and an Advisory Group member discussed both forms with a participant in NZSL). All five participants consented to volunteer as a participant in the study. This inclusive, individualised approach to seeking consent for Group One (b) ensured that participants could make their own decision about whether, and on what terms, to participate (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

Group Two – Coaches

Community coaches were selected using criterion-based sampling and were identified for meeting specific criteria (Sparkes &Smith, 2014). This was achieved using snowball sampling. Each of the five participants had to be a coach from one of the five mainstream sports chosen for this study (rugby, netball, cricket, hockey, and football), with experience coaching at the community, 'grass roots' level. I drew on existing relationships within Regional and National Sports Organisations for their support to identify participants. Five community coaches were identified using this method and were contacted via phone to discuss the participant information and consent process. Participants were invited to participate and were sent follow-up participant information (Appendix 1b) and consent forms (Appendix 2). All five coaches volunteered to participate in the research and returned their completed consent form via email.

Group Three – Coach Developers

Coach developers were also identified and recruited using criterion-based sampling and snowball sampling, and one was known to me personally. Participants were identified for meeting two specific criteria: participants had to hold a National Coach Development role, and each had to be employed by one of the five NSOs selected for this research. The study required one coach developer from eachNSO. I again drew on my position within the sector, and on relationships I had built within NSOs and Regional Sports Trusts (RSTs) to identify participants to recruit for the study. Four participants were identified using these relationships and a coach developer I had a pre-existing relationship with was also contacted via LinkedIn[3] to explain the aims of the study. All five participants were contacted via phone to discuss the participant information and consent process. Participants were invited to

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[3] LinkedIn has recently been recognised for its effectiveness as a social media tool in recruiting study participants, given the opportunity it provides for researchers to communicate directly with connections builtin a related field of work (Jones, Walters & Brown, 2021).

participate and were sent follow-up participant information (Appendix 1c) and consent forms (Appendix 2). Written consent was obtained via email from all five coach developers who volunteered to partake in the study.

3.5.3 Participant Rationale and Roles

Group One (a) - Research Disability Advisory Group & Group One (b) – Disabled interviewees:

Not only is including the voice of disabled people important in this context of knowledge production, and an important gap to address within existing literature, but we are also reminded by the General Assembly on the Rights of Persons with Disability (United Nations, 2016) and the 'Nothing About us Without us' philosophy that it is also the *responsibility* of the researcher to include disabled people in research that concerns them (Charlton, 2000).

A diverse group of disabled interviewees was deliberately recruited to achieve greater diversity across a range of characteristics (disability experience, age, and sporting experiences) than is currently represented in coaching literature, which predominantly includes disabled people with physical impairments with experiences in competitive Para sport. The age of participants in Group One (b) ranged from 17-63 years of age. Two participants had physical impairments and were wheelchair users. One participant was Deaf, one was blind, and one participant had an intellectual impairment. While this group is titled 'Disabled Interviewees', and having an impairment was a criterion for selection, it is important to note that only three of the five participants identified as a disabled person. One participant identified as a person with disability, and one identified as "just Deaf". All participants had experiences being coached in both community level mainstream sport and disability sports. Each interviewee had also participated in several different sporting codes within these contexts. Inadvertently, all participants had at least competed in a national level competition for their chosen sport, with four of the five participants also competing internationally in their disability specific sports.

Three participants were female, and two were male. Two participants also had coaching experience, with one having experience within both mainstream and disability sport coaching.

The use of a Disability Advisory Group further demonstrates the 'Nothing About us, Without us' philosophy and is also a commitment to Inclusive Research. The DAG involved supporting the identification and recruitment of disabled interviewees, the co-design of each of the three interview schedules (Appendix 3a, b, c) for participant groups, the testing and development of interviewing practices and the interview schedule for disabled participants, and the refinement of key themes to centralise disabled people's voices within the tone and contents of reporting. The DAG were able to use their networks and relationships to recruit a far more 'knowledge rich' group of disabled participants, with greater diversity in lived experience, than I would have been able to achieve, independently. Furthermore, because of this Group, the interview schedules included eliciting, and pertinent questions which produced far richer, and more actionable data, than I again would have been able to achieve as a sole, non-disabled researcher within this study. Their collective knowledge and diversity in both lived experience of disability, and experiences in sport, have been transformational within this research. I therefore believe this research has more robust, nuanced, and pragmatic findings, as a result.

The DAG have significant mana (prestige/influence) within the communities they represent and serve. Each person holds a position of significance within the disability support and/or disability sport organisation they are associated with. Such positions include National Disability Leadership, National Athlete Leadership, Regional Committee Members, and Regional and National Disability Support and Advocacy roles. All participants had experiences in sport and being coached. One group member had a physical impairment, one group member was Deaf, one group member had a vision impairment, and one group member had a hearing, vision, and intellectual impairment.

Group Two & Group Three – Coaches and Developers:

The coach and coach developer participants of this study are all from, or affiliated to, New Zealand Cricket, Hockey, Netball, Rugby, and Football. At a national level, NSOs have the responsibility of developing and providing standardised coach education and accreditation opportunities to their affiliates across the country. Such opportunities span from high performance sport, through to youth sport and community 'grass roots' sport coaching. As some of the biggest participation sports in the country, these five sporting codes present a significant opportunity for any pragmatic findings to be applicable across a larger number of participants. Moreover, these five NSOs were also the first to sign up to the Sport New Zealand Balance is Better Statement of Intent (Sport New Zealand, 2019b). Balance is Better is a contemporary policy underpinning Sport New Zealand's approach to youth sport, which aims to prevent young people dropping out (Sport New Zealand, 2019b). One of the key commitments all five NSOs signed up to within this policy was "Ensuring *all* young people who play our sports receive a quality experience, irrespective of the level at which they compete" (Sport New Zealand, 2019, p. 1.). Without stating explicitly, this statement implies that all young people, *including disabled young people*, will receive a quality experience. Selecting coaches and coach developers from NSOs who are underpinned by policies that align to the philosophies of this research may have greater potential to influence the application of any practical findings or suggestions from the study.

All coach participants had experience of coaching community, 'grass roots' mainstream sport and had received both formal and informal coach education opportunities within the various sports they had coached. One coach had a formal degree in sports coaching, another a diploma in sports coaching from a tertiary institution. The three remaining coach participants largely received their coach education opportunities from their NSO. Two coaches were female, three were male. Two coach participants had paid coaching experiences, the remaining three coaches were volunteers. One coach also had experience as a regional coach developer. None of these coaches outwardly identified as a

disabled person. All coach developers also had extensive experiences as coaches within their respective mainstream sports. Four coach developers were male, and one coach developer was female. None of the coach developers openly identified as a disabled person.

3.5.4 Intersecting Experiences

While the three participant groups in this study were recruited entirely exclusively of each other, it is important to recognise the intersecting experiences within this research. Two of the disabled interviewees within this research have also had experiences coaching sport, and one of the coaches also had experience as a coach developer. All coach developers have had experience coaching, but none of the coaches or coach developers outwardly identified as disabled. This does not mean to say that we do not recognise the value of disabled coaches or coach developers, more that the participants recruited through our criterion sampling, did not identify as disabled.

3.5.5 Researcher Positionality

I had a pre-existing relationship with eight of the total fifteen participants recruited for this study. In these instances, the pre-existing relationship was discussed with the participant before they engaged with the research. It was clearly communicated by myself as a researcher and the supporting organisation that there was no obligation for them to participate in the research, and that this relationship will not affect their confidentiality, their ability to withdraw from the study, or my professionalism within or outside of the research. Utilising the supporting organisations who were involved with the recruitment of disabled participants follows the advice of the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee (2019) who suggest that when 'dual roles exist' between the participant and researcher, "coercion to participate may be avoided by asking a third party to undertake the informed consent process" (p.4). As non-disabled researchers, Brighton, and Williams (2019) also suggest it is important to consider our position within interviews with disabled people, and

to reflect on our experiences and knowledge to understand the "why" behind our interest in disability and disabled people in sport and physical activity.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge and uncover my position of power in this research within both of the 'dual roles' I assume as a non-disabled researcher and as a professional within the disability sport sector (Gustafson & Brunger, 2014). Power relations in research with 'potentially vulnerable' communities are complex (Gustafson & Brunger, 2014). They require the attention, commitment, and reflexivity of the researcher in order to subvert the unequal power dynamic that commonly exists between the researcher and the researched (Gustafson & Brunger, 2014). Beginning this research by genuinely engaging and developing relationships with the DAG- as key partners in the knowledge production process - demonstrates my commitment to empowering disabled participants from the outset of this study. The subversion of power relations is further perpetuated in this study by the influence and agency the DAG had within the participant recruitment and consent processes, development of research interview schedules, and the refinement of research themes.

3.5.6 Procedure

An iterative approach to knowledge production was employed throughout this research project, in collaboration with the DAG. This collaborative process (illustrated in figure 2) takes place across all three levels of data collection and data analysis, which is further explained in detail within the following procedure.

Figure 2. *Collaborative Research Procedure with Disability Research Advisory Group*

Established Research
Disability Advisory Group
(DAG) Group 1a

Literature Review

Participant Recruitment
Group 1b

Development of Group
1b interview schedule

Mock Interview

Group 1b Interviews

Group 2 Participant
Recruitment

Development of Group
2 Interview schedule

Group 2 Interviews

Group 3 Participant
Recruitment

Development of Group
3 Interview Schedule

Group 3 Interviews

Analysis

Reporting

Diagram Key:

= Advisory Group Meetings

= Direction of information shared between researcher and Advisory Group

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3.5.6.1 Data Collection

     Disability Advisory Group (group 1a)

I began by reviewing the existing literature surrounding coach education in disability sport, disabled participants in sport and PE, and inclusive policy in sport and education. The key themes generated from this review, alongside the objectives of this research with disabled participants, were used to form a draft framework for the interview guide for Participant Group One (b) – *disabled interviewees*. This framework was used as a starting point for discussion and further refinement by the DAG in the first research meeting (represented by the first grey circle in figure 2). All DAG meetings were conducted using Zoom, and NZ Relay New Zealand Sign Language interpreters supported the inclusion and participation of our Deaf Advisor during these meetings. DAG meetings ranged from 65-90 minutes in length.

     The DAG provided invaluable feedback and insight that helped craft a more pertinent interview schedule to guide more nuanced, information rich conversations with disabled interviewees. One of the Advisors with an intellectual impairment also volunteered to take part in a mock interview to both check the guide's effectiveness, and as an opportunity for me to refine my interview skills. A reflective conversation with the Advisor after the mock interview provided additional feedback to improve the interview schedule's effectiveness. A further reflective account ofthe mock interview supported by discussions with my research supervisors, and additional research on effective interview skills with intellectually disabled interviewees also proved valuable in developing my research interview skills. This deliberate, considered approach with the DAG ascollaborators helped to ensure the data collection process was 'fit for purpose' (Bunning, Alder, Proudman, & Wyborn, 2017). Once the amended interview guide was approved by the DAG (as

presented in Appendix 2), I conducted semi-structured interviews with all five disabled interviewees in Group one (b).

Interviews are a common method of data collection within qualitative research (Peters & Halcomb, 2015; Meriam & Tisdell, 2016) and specifically, semi-structured interviews are commonly used for data collection in disability sport research (see, for example Brighton & Williams, 2019; Fairhurst et al., 2016; Alexander et al., 2020). Semi-structured interviews are valued by researchers in this context for their ability to yield rich, new data - beyond what can be observed - about people and their experiences, opinions, and perceptions through constructive, reciprocal conversation (Peter & Halcomb, 2015; Smith & Sparkes, 2016). Such as this research's aim to understand the experiences of disabled people being coached in mainstream sport, and their opinion of the knowledge they wish for coaches to have, to better support their inclusion. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews also permits participants to direct the conversation and highlight information that is important to them, allowing disabled interviewees greater control within the conversation (Smith & Sparkes, 2016). This follows recommendation from Brighton and Williams (2019), that non-disabled researchers should assume a "one down" position as a "learner" when interviewing disabled people (p. 35).

To further subvert power to disabled interviewees and to promote safety within the interview process, participants had control over where and how they wanted to be interviewed (McDonald, Kidney & Patka, 2013). Interviews were arranged with participants according to their preferences in the pre-interview phone call that also discussed consent, general interview themes and participant information. The pre-interview phone calls were also effective in establishing a good rapport between the researcher and interviewee (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Bishop, 1997). This also afforded the opportunity to better understand participant's individual communication styles prior to the interview conversations (Hollomotz, 2018; Harding, 2021).

Interview approach – disabled athlete participants (group 1b)

Two interviews were conducted face-to-face; one interview took place at an interviewee's home, and one took place at my work office in Hawke's Bay, New Zealand. The remaining three interviews were completed using an online video call, via Zoom. In the face of COVID-19, and undertaking interviews in a socially distanced world, video-conferencing programmes such as Zoom, have become more common for their use in online-interviewing (Lobe, Morgan, & Hoffman, 2020). This individualised approach to interviewing also enabled a more inclusive data collection process. Travelling to conduct an interview in the home of an interviewee who is blind meant they did not have to overcome travel barriers to meet at my office, nor did they have to use an online platform they were unfamiliar with.

Further technology supports were also put in place to support the inclusion of an interviewee who was Deaf. An online translation service, NZ Relay, was used to translate New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) into spoken English during our interview. This was a face-to-face interview between the participant and I, however the interpreting service was online. This meant the Deaf participant had to be facing the computer screen for the interpreter to translate effectively. General Deaf awareness practices such as looking and speaking to the deaf individual directly were therefore difficult to follow (Ministry of Education, 2020). However, this format did allow for our interview to be video recorded. Using video technology within sign language interpreted interviews is a recommendation by Adjei, Sam, Sekyere, & Boateng (2022), as the expressive, visual nature of the language provides significant context to the spoken words of the interpreter. Video recordings therefore help to reduce translation bias and potential interpreter omissions (Adjei et al., 2022). My prior knowledge of NZSL also helped to reduce translation bias, as I was familiar enough with basic signs and key sporting phrases to identify any potential omissions or miss-interpretations. Such incidents occurred when the participant was trying to describe a basketball training scenario that the interpreter did not understand, however my basic knowledge of sign helped to support the

translation. This is highlighted in the interpreter dialogue to me as the researcher: "You might have understood that, but I didn't". It is therefore important that interpreters have a good understanding of the research subjects and contexts prior to the interviews, to avoid endangering the natural conversational flow within the interview, and to minimise miss-interpretations (Adjei et al., 2022). The interpreter was provided the interview schedule (Appendix 3 a) prior to this research interview; however, this could have been further prevented with a pre and post interview discussion with the interpreter (Adjei et al., 2022).

Interviews with disabled participants ranged from 49 minutes to 135 minutes in length, totaling 440 minutes (7.3 hours) of interview data. During each interview, key points of interest and questions that arose from the interview dialogue were recorded as handwritten notes. These notes were then used to frame the second discussion with the DAG, as depicted in figure 2. Many of the themes and experiences I relayed to the Advisory Group within this second meeting were scenarios and opinions that they too both shared and resonated with. This helped to validate disabled interviewee's experiences and reaffirmed my translation of their experiences as authentic. From these discussions, a draft interview guide for the second group of participants- Group Two – *Coaches*- was developed (as presented in Appendix 3b).

Interview Approach - Coach participants (group 2)

Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with all five of the coach participants in Group Two. COVID-19 community transmission was at its peak during the time of conducting these interviews. All five interviews were thus conducted online, using Microsoft Teams or Zoom, in the interest of participant and researcher safety (Lobe, Morgan, & Hoffman, 2020). Utilising these online technologies also afforded the opportunity to access participants from other regions of New Zealand. The interviews with coaches ranged from 49 minutes to 86 minutes in length, totaling 344 minutes

(5.7 hours) of interview data. As with Group One, key points of interest in relation to the research question, and questions that arose from the interview dialogue with coaches were recorded as handwritten notes. These notes then framed the third conversation with the DAG, as depicted in figure 2. This collaborative discussion supported the development of the third interview guide for Group Three participants - Coach Developers (as presented in Appendix 3b).

Interview approach - Coach developers (group 3)

Semi-structured were then conducted with all five of the coach developers in Group Three. Like Group Two, all five interviews were conducted online, using Microsoft Teams or Zoom in line with the participant's preference. Given all five of the national coach developers work in the larger cities of New Zealand, online interviews provided a greater accessibility of interview data, rather than traveling a significant distance to meet participants in person (Gray, Wong-Wylie, Rempel, & Cook, 2020). The interviews with coach developers ranged from 73 minutes to 80 minutes in length, totaling 385 minutes (6.4 hours) of interview data. Collectively between the three cycles of data collection with Group One (b), Group Two and Group Three, 19.5 hours of interview data were generated and transcribed verbatim in preparation for data analysis. Participant interviews were shared back with each interviewee who were then provided the opportunity to amend and add to their interview dialogue – no participants made changes to their interview data.

3.5.8 Data Analysis

Reflexive thematic analysis and the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013) were used as the principal method of data analysis, to find subjective meaning with potential practical application, within this research. Thematic Analysis and the approach developed by Braun and Clarke (2013) is a widely used method in qualitative sport research (Smith & Sparkes, 2016). More specifically, reflexive thematic analysis is valued in this context for its ability to conceptualise themes as stories of shared

meaning that are bolstered by the researcher's subjectivity. That is, offering flexibility to the researcher in their approach; both theoretically and methodologically (Braun & Clarke, 2019). While I did not strictly use a theoretical framework for the analysis of interview data, my analysis was however strongly informed by a critical disability studies lens, including ableism and disability models. This is an example of capitalising on the flexibility that Braun & Clarke's (2013) approach to reflexive thematic analysis affords the researcher. While I appreciate that reflexive thematic analysis is "not like a baking recipe that must be followed precisely in order to ensure a successful outcome" (p.2), this approach must however be carried out deliberately and thoughtfully (Braun & Clarke, 2019). As such, I made a series of systematic choices (Trainor & Bundon, 2021) to undertake reflexive thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2016). I describe these decisions below for each phase.

Phase one, familiarisation: Much of my initial familiarisation with the data was during the transcription of the interviews (Bird, 2005). Interviews were transcribed using Otter programming, however this still required going through each transcript and video recording to check for accuracy and amend errors. After transcription was complete, each transcript was read-through again for further familiarisation and error-checking. During this process, key ideas, points of interest and questions were noted down, to start to conceptualise the overarching story of the data.

Phase two, generating initial codes: After the transcription was complete, I started with Group One (b) – disabled interviewees - and re-visited each transcript again. I searched the transcripts identify snippets of data that presented meaning relevant to the research question (Broom, 2020). Coding was achieved using the comment functionality within Microsoft Word, as a way of most effectively capturing the many codes identified in the first round of coding. Although I utilised an inductive approach, data was still informed by critical disability theories, including ableism and models of disability (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Ableism, specifically, provided a useful lens to analyse many of the data extracts pertaining to exclusionary practices and attitudes. Looking at ableism within the

social relational model of disability was also an effective tool to better understand impairment effects, and to identify disablism in action within the data (Smith & Bundon, 2018). In attempt to also provide more pragmatic findings to support coaches and coach developers to deliver more inclusive opportunities for disabled people in mainstream sport, coding was centralised around the experiences of disabled participants being coached and included (or not) in mainstream sport, and the knowledge that would support coaches to better enhance the experiences of disabled people. Thus, many of the initial codes generated were semantic, capturing the explicit meaning of participant language (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield & Terry, 2019). However, latent codes, focusing on more in-depth conceptual meanings, became more prominent as the coding process developed (Braun et al., 2019; Broom, 2020). Within these comments, I also noted analytic references, to try and make further sense of the 'story' being told through interviews (Trainor & Bundon, 2021). Often these would be drawing links or contradictions between interviews and existing literature, ponderings about where such meaning of the topic was generated from, and key discussion points to raise with the DAG.

Phase three, constructing themes: After coding all the Group One (b) data from disabled interviewees, I began arranging these 300+ codes into clusters of shared meanings or ideas that capture 'something important about the data in relation to the research question' (Braun & Clarke, 2013 p.82). During the coding process I had begun to note down potential themes that captured the shared meaning across codes as they were developed. I began with these themes as a starting point and generated a blank Microsoft Word Document for each theme. I then went through each of the codes and comments that were highlighted within each of the transcript documents and organised the data extracts into the theme document they identified with, generating sub themes within each section as the codes necessitated. This was very much an 'active process' of theme generation (Braun & Clarke, 2019), grouping codes in an inductive, exploratory fashion. There were six initial themes generated through this process with the data from disabled interviewees (Group one (b)). These

themes were then used as 'buckets', and the coding of the Group Two (coaches) and Group Three (coach developers) data was predominantly guided by these pre-determined themes from disabled participants, as a way of centralising their voices (Braun & Clarke, 2019). However, despite using somewhat of a 'pre-determined codebook' for the remaining two datasets, there was still room within this process for new sub-themes to be generated (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This afforded the opportunity to demonstrate a multidimensional meaning to the data that centralises disabled people voices, whist also layering in meaning from coaches and coach developers. This resulted in all of the coded data being organised into six preliminary themes: (1) Knowledge, (2) Small things, Big Impact, (3) Good Intentions, But..., (4) It's a two-way street, (5) Same, but Different, (6) (almost) Invisible.

Phase four, revisiting themes: To further refine and revisit the preliminary themes above, each of the six theme documents were printed in hard copy, and each of the individual quotes were cut out on to a strip of paper. This method enabled me to physically map out each theme and sub-theme under sticky-note headings (as demonstrated in Figure 4 &5), so I could see the whole 'story' of the themes and sub-themes together (Trainor & Bundon, 2021). From here I was able to physically re-arrange and condense themes and sub-themes, as well as ensure they were reflective of the whole data set. I was also able to physically select the most persuasive data extracts within each theme, to help clarify the story being developed, in preparation for phase five and six below (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Figure 4 & 5: *Thematic Analysis in Action – Phase Four*
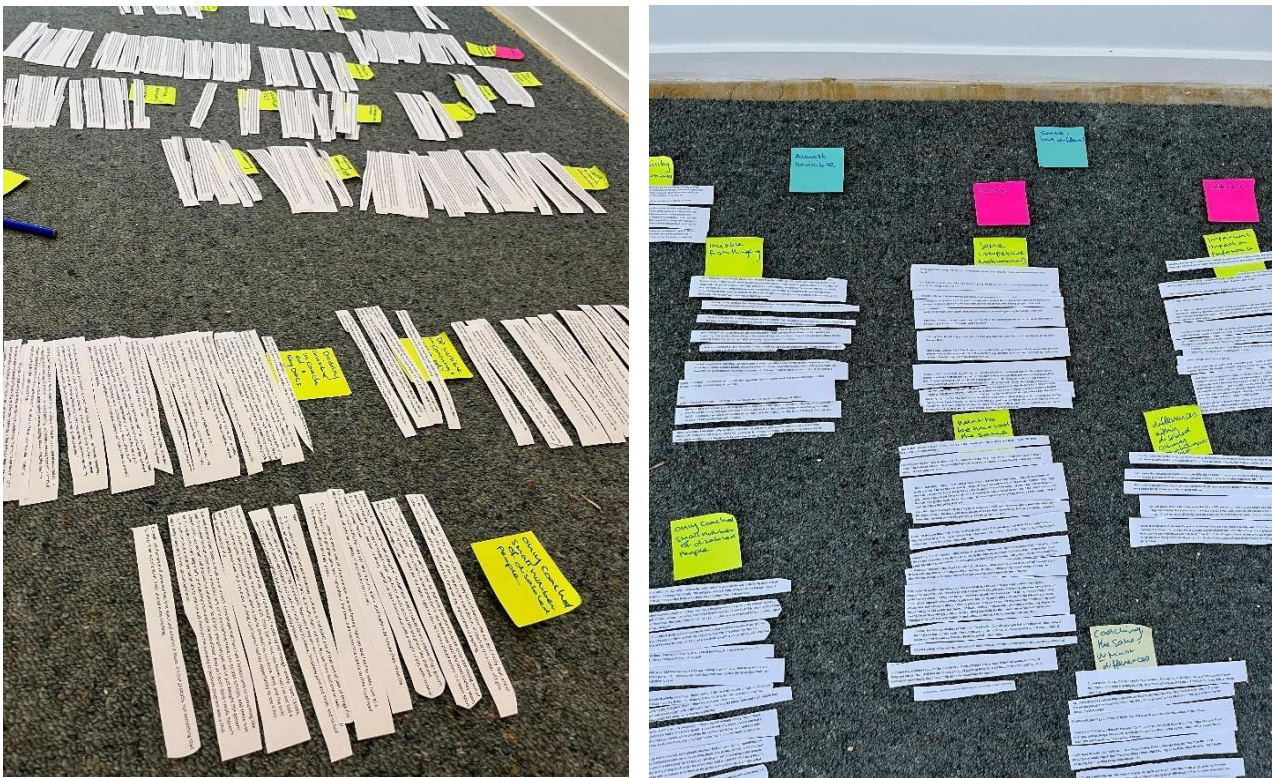
The initial six themes were then condensed into five, with 'it's a two-way street' being condensed into 'small things, big impact'. These themes were also discussed and further refined with the two available DAG group members in the final research meeting(s), as represented in figure 2. This final reflective, collaborative process developed a 'richer, more nuanced' meaning of the data 'story' being represented within the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Table 1 below illustrates the refined themes generated through this process.

Table 1. *Data Themes and Sub-Themes*

Theme	Sub theme(s)
Knowing	*What do we need and want to know?* • General disability awareness • How to adapt to include the disabled person • The individual • Key policies and documents • Knowledge of impairment and ability • How to ask about disability • Value of indigenous knowledge *How do we learn it?* • Engaging with disabled people and people who support disabled people • Researching • Experience • Methods of education (online, practically, workshops) • Ongoing opportunities to learn • Is this even relevant? *Where do we start?* • Coach developers need support, to support their coaches
(Almost) Invisible	*Disabled people are (almost) invisible within:* • Mainstream Sport ○ Coaches have had limited experience coaching disabled people • Coaching and Coach education *Disability is (almost) invisible within:* • Current thinking • Coach education content *Increased visibility = increased opportunities*
Same, but different	*Same:* • Competitive motivations and desire to develop • Treated the same as everyone else *Different:* • Impairment impact on participation • Disabled people not a homogenous group

	Same, with subtle differences: • Coaching disabled people

(Mostly) good intentions, but…	*Ableism*
	
	• Outright, the too hard basket
	• More subtly:
	    ○ Not listening to the disabled person
	    ○ Invited to the party, but not asked to dance
	    ○ Being dumped or ghosted
	    ○ Assumptions
	Fear
	
	• Of the unknown
	• Of causing offence or a bad experience
	• Of being wrong
	
	The structure and competitive nature of mainstream sport

Small things, big impact	*Willingness:* • To learn • To include *Inter-personal skills:* • Encouragement and Enthusiasm • Empathy • Patience • Communication • Relationship building *Impairment specific things* *Disability awareness*

Phase five, defining themes and phase six, writing the report: After generating the above themes, they were each clearly defined within a separate Microsoft Word Document (Braun & Clarke, 2016). These analytical descriptions then became the starting point of the written 'report' of the findings for each of the five themes, as demonstrated in Chapter 4.

3.5.8.1 Reflexivity

It was important to provide a detailed account of this analysis given the inextricable role I play as the researcher in the construction of knowledge, and to demonstrate part of the 'reflexivity' within this process (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Furthermore, I am aware of the concerns surrounding the validity of coding and reporting data that are shared by Bishop (1997), who explains that there is a real need to question what happens to information after its collection. It was therefore important to illustrate how the themes were not developed based on my ideas alone, and that data was not selected solely to fit my pre-conceptions, beliefs, or assumptions. I do however appreciate that the thematic analysis was influenced by my own professional experiences, position as an ally of the disabled community and theoretical and philosophical positioning within this research. That is, my experience working in the disability sport sector, my desire to produce pragmatic findings to support better outcomes for the disabled community in mainstream sport in New Zealand, the theoretical positioning of disability within the Social Relational Model, the Inclusive and PAR research approach, and the constructionist paradigm underpinning this method, all contributed to the meaning that was developed through this analysis. Just one example of this in practice, is how the knowledge I have developed of Māori values and Māori world view within my professional work has influenced the data analysis. I was able to identify pattens within the data whereby Māori values and world view may have influenced the inclusion of disabled people in sport. This was not a relationship I had considered before this research, however I was able to draw links between these values and the Social Relational Model, as well as demonstrate a pragmatic recommendation for future research and recommendations, as a result.

It is also important to note the positionality of the DAG within this research. Undoubtably their own personal experiences also shaped the meaning that was developed through analysis, as the key opinions and examples they shared with me over the course of this research project have influenced

my own thinking and ideas. I met with two members of the Advisory Group prior to reporting the findings, and they had a further influence on the analysis at this point too, as they were contextualising the findings within their own experiences as a way of validating the research findings. Due to such positionality and subjectivity, I believe that together with the DAG, we were able to collaboratively generate a deeper understanding of the data beyond what the participants had said at face value. This has enabled us to demonstrate a compelling response to the research question, which I share in the following chapter.

3.5.9 Ethical Considerations

Pseudonyms were given to each participant to protect their anonymity within the research (University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee, 2019). However, I was conscious that this was just one way to preserve confidentiality in research (Wiles, Crow, Heath & Charles, 2008). Walford (2005) adds that confidentiality is extended to mean that any information about individuals that will enable them to be identified by others, should not be included in research. In line with this recommendation, I have chosen not to report which National Sport is aligned to the data extracts that are presented in the findings. Intentionally, participant demographics have also not been presented alongside each other in a table within the participants and sampling section of this methodology. The disabled community within New Zealand is closely connected, and reporting their demographics together in a table, alongside which sports they had participated in within the reporting, may have enabled them to be identified - thus they were not included. Similarly, with only a small number of national coach developer roles within the NSOs selected for this study, I felt that including this information within reporting could enable them to be identified. It was also clearly communicated to participants that anything they shared within the interviews was not going to be presented as "John from New Zealand

Rugby sates…". This was appreciated by participants, which I believe enabled more candid, honest conversations with coaches and coach developers within the interviews.

3.5.9.1 Critical Reflections

Doody (2018) shares how seeking disabled people's input within a research advisory capacity can further strengthen the ethical consideration of inclusion within research, such as this research project's commitment to engaging with a DAG. The Advisory Group were also able to support me in providing an appropriate, safe, and meaningful experiences for our disabled interviewees in this research. As an example, one of the Advisors supported me to book the NZSL Translator online using NZ Relay – an interpreting service I was not aware of prior to this research project. Although reflecting on this translator experience as recorded in the procedure above, next time I would book a face-to-face interpreter if time allowed, to create an environment better aligned with NZ Deaf Culture.

Reflecting on interviews with coaches and coach developers, there were also several instances where ableism - both outrightly and more discrete - were evident within our conversations. I have recognised my responses to ableism within these interviews as 'ethically important moments' (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Extracts from these instances are evident within the following chapter, however I now reflect on these conversations questioning whether I should have responded in a different way. In one of the earlier coaching interviews, a coach made an outrightly ableist remark, that truly left me speechless. All I could respond with was an inwardly shocked, "OK, yeah". I believe it was my responsibility as a researcher to have acted within this moment (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). However, since reflecting on this moment I believe there were a few things that influenced my decision to not respond. At the beginning of each of my interviews, I outlined with each participant that anything that was shared within our conversation was contributing to how we understood the topic, and that there would be no judgement passed from me on any of their comments. Would responding to this ethically important moment be seen by the coach as me going against what was

earlier said about judgement, potentially risking the trusting relationship we had built? I was also uncertain how to respond in a way that preserved the mana of the coach, and in the ethically important moment, I could not think of a response that could be articulated in a respectful, non-judgmental way. I was presented with several more subtle examples of ableism within the interviews that followed, and I was able to take the feedback from my supervisors on board to respond to these moments more successfully. Rather than passing any judgement on the coach, I took a more inquisitive approach. In an example with a coach developer who believed it would be easier to included disabled people within the modified versions of their game, with the assumption that other formats were too dangerous, I simply asked in a neutral tone "Interested to understand your thoughts there". The coach developer's response highlighted why it is so important to act within these ethically important moments: "*Yeah, look, I just think it's, it's easier from an organization to, to use the modified versions of the game. But then of course, that might not, we are just automatically assuming that the disabled person…*" My questioning prompted important self-reflection by the coach developer, and they continued to suggest ways around their assumptions, ultimately indicating it was something that they wanted to address "…. *So that's that. That's a dilemma (our assumption, but also the increased risk) and that's a discussion that's well worth having".* In future, this is a scenario I can now better prepare for prior to conducting research interviews. Next time I would seek the support and guidance of the DAG around how to best respond to ableism within interviews. Going forward I would also re-consider my opening line to interviewees to better set up the interview to allow for the safe space to challenge and support each other's thinking and ideas.

A further consideration of research ethics in disability research is suggested by Brighton and Williams (2019), who recommend giving back to your research participants and their community by utilising the findings to ultimately remove barriers for disabled people. With the support of the DAG and my research supervisors, it is our intention to publish this research, to help influence decisions

around coaching and coach education practices, to ultimately improve the inclusion of disabled people in mainstream sport. Furthermore, there was a real interest among all groups of participants (disabled interviewees, coaches, and coach developers) to learn from the findings of this research. Such interest is encouraging for the potential of the findings in the following chapter of this research to be practically applied.

Chapter 4. Results and Discussion

My research question seeks to understand how coach education can improve coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream sport in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Within this, the research began by understanding the experiences of disabled people being coached and the knowledge they perceive coaches needing to better support their inclusion. This was followed by understanding the experiences of coaches and the knowledge and ways in which they require support to enhance the inclusion of disabled people. Finally, the perspectives of coach developers were sought to consider the opportunities and support they require to enhance their respective education systems. Collectively, this multidimensional understanding has highlighted opportunities for change at a systematic level, that is, how coach education can be transformed to better support coaches to include disabled people. Furthermore, I also outline the opportunities for coaches to be more inclusive within the relational aspect of coaching – that is the relationship and interactions between the coach and disabled person being coached. The findings are presented in this chapter across two sections: Chapter 4 a) and Chapter 4 b). The first section (Chapter 4 a) begins outlining the structural dimensions of inclusion through three themes: 1. (Almost) Invisible. 2. Same, but Different. 3. (Mostly) Good Intentions, but…. Chapter 4 b) moves towards the more relational dimensions of inclusion, which includes the final two themes: 4. Knowing and 5. Small Things, Big Impact.

Chapter a) 4.1 (Almost) Invisible

The visibility of disability or rather, the '(In)Visibility of DisAbility in Sport' is a typology developed by DePauw (1997) to capture the various ways in which disabled people are observable in sporting domains: 1. Disabled people are invisible/excluded from sport. 2. Disabled people have become visible in sport as disabled athletes. 3. Disabled people are increasingly becoming more visible in sport as athletes.

This typology has been extended to better reflect the visibility of disability through the findings of this research, specifically in the context of coach education. The findings of this research suggest that disabled people are not entirely excluded from mainstream sport, but knowledge *about* disability is often absent from the existing education structure. Thus, in both instances, disability it is neither overtly visible, nor is it entirely invisible. Hence '(almost) invisible' is the modified term used to theorise the findings of this theme.

4.1.1 Disabled People are (almost) Invisible in: Mainstream Sport

Disabled interviewees highlighted the impact that the low visibility of disabled people in mainstream sport has had on their sporting experiences. Leah shares:

> *"It's not too often you see a disabled person playing. Like, for example, like someone with an amputated leg playing in a netball team, you don't often see that. Yeah…so I never really played netball once I was in a wheelchair. It was straight, I turned straight into a manager of a netball team…. So, I never actually played, or got back into netball in a wheelchair. It's just, I didn't think I could, really, yeah."*

Such an account from Leah demonstrates that because she has not seen anyone in a wheelchair playingnetball before, she had assumed it was not an option for her, however there is nothing in

the rules of netball that precludes wheelchair users from playing, despite being clearly designed for non-disabled playing populations (International Netball Federation, 2020). Such understanding that the sport is not for people who are wheelchair users is thus a socially constructed, culturally fashioned notion of exclusion, based on the historical visibility of opportunity and participation. The concern highlighted here though, is that low the visibility of disabled people has led to the further exclusion of a disabled person within sport. Leah adds that in general:

> *"there's not much inclusion in mainstream sport. For it's just, yeah, it'd be weird. Yeah, I just don't think they (disabled people) are very included in mainstream sports."*

Not letting 'being the only Deaf person' get in the way of him participating, Steven shares his account of playing in a mainstream sports team:

> *"When I was playing for a hearing team. I was the only one that was Deaf. And so, you know, they would all be speaking to each other. And I didn't know what they were saying. So, I brought my mum to help me communicate."*

These data highlight how 'being the only one' presented barriers for inclusion for Steven, and that whānau support was required to overcome the exclusion he experienced in this setting. Ella added the disjuncture she felt as a disabled person who did not 'fit' within her chosen mainstream sport, as a result of low visibility:

> *"so the classes that I was doing were the mainstream, like the mainstream classes, right. But I didn't really see any other people with disabilities joining those mainstream classes. I only saw like, kind of like, you know, how they can set aside a class for people with special needs and like things like that. Like you see that, but I wasn't part of that group...So it kind of left me in a weird place to be like, 'Okay, well, do I just join mainstream? Or do I just do my thing on my own?' So I ended up doing mainstream and then going to something on my own, right."*

As Black (2011) argued, it is the "everyday access to opportunities in physical activity and sport in school and community that restricts choice and defines difference" (p. 198). Disability sports are considered a direct response to exclusionary 'mainstream' sports structures, necessitating the establishment of segregated contexts designed to meet individual needs. Highlighting the low availability and therefore low visibility of inclusive opportunities that are also 'actively engineered', Jane shares her perspective of playing in the first Special Olympics Unified Sports[4] team in New Zealand:

> "(E)xcept with basketball…we competed with (regional basketball team). (It) was a Unified team. And we were trying to get the initiative of Unified Sport(s) going. And we were the first club or team in New Zealand to compete as Unified, which was pretty cool to say the least… And it was, I think that's quite a big deal to a lot of people because it's like, oh my god, it's Unified. You know, it's not, it's not just us. But it was, it was really cool."

Consequently, Jane describes the value she places on inclusive opportunities:

> "Because it's already hard enough for some of us to be included in the community. So, you know, so getting us included in Unified Sport or mainstream sport. It's really important, because, you know, we get, we're quite left out, I guess, as well, you know."

Principally, disabled people are currently not overtly visible in mainstream sport due to systemic ableist practices and attitudes that continue to exclude disabled people (Carroll et al., 2021). This evidently presents a barrier for disabled people who currently do not see people 'like them' participating in mainstream sport, which contributes to the perception of mainstream sport not being inclusive to disabled people. Thus, discouraging further disabled people to participate. With the low

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[4] 'Unified Sports' is a Special Olympics sports programme that combines an approximately equal number of Special Olympics athletes (individuals with intellectual impairments) and partners (individuals without intellectual impairments) on teams for training and competition.

visibility of disabled people currently participating in mainstream sport, it is therefore not surprising that coaches have rarely had opportunities to coach or include disabled people in their practice. Ella explains:

> "Because I think experience and exposure (to disability) is a huge, huge thing, because people go, 'oh, I didn't know about this before', or 'I haven't worked with this before'. And it's like, yeah, but you probably haven't had chances to? Like… it's like you haven't seen it (laughs)."

Ella's example is also mirrored by Mitch, a community coach:

> "Yeah. I've never thought of it (disability). Leading up to that, that (disability-specific coaching) course that we did, but never even, didn't even cross my mind. And part of me feels bad for it because you're sitting there going, well, what, why? Why have you not thought about it sort of things? And it's just because you never see them. Yeah, you see injured people on crutches, walking and supporting their teams and everything on those sorts of lines, because they're injured. But you don't actually see the impaired people even in the (sports) games or anything on those sorts of lines."

When coaches and coach developers were presented with opportunities to include disabled people in their practice, it is therefore unsurprising (again) that these coaches did not feel prepared or confident to deliver an inclusive opportunity:

> "And then I've had another kid in the U13 which I felt really, really bad with because she was Deaf. Partly Deaf, and of course, I got thrown straight in the deep end initially. I got given, was it 80 kids, to coach at the hockey U13 girls' hockey program. Not once did they say that there was, there was any impairments or anything." (Mitch, Community Coach)

This lack of exposure to disabled athletes in mainstream sport was not just noted by coaches, but by the coach developers, too. For example, Amy, explains:

> *"Um, well, it's interesting, because you go out to coach, some people that have had a broken arm or something like that. So you have to adapt in that way. I remember early on in my coaching there, you go into schools, and there was a few that had, like, we had a kid that was in a wheelchair. So it's just, you go oh god, we've just bought this generic kit, and we don't have any bigger balls, or it's getting stuck under the wheelchair. And so I don't think I really haven't coached that many (disabled people) …"*

These data from Mitch and Amy demonstrate the clear lack of support and education that is provided to coaches by their NSOs and Regional Sports Organisations (RSOs) to effectively include disabled athletes. Both examples also identified how their lack of experience in including disabled people, coupled with disability not being thought about prior to their sessions, led to coaches ultimately being 'thrown in the deep end'. Townsend et al., (2018) have also discovered coaches being 'dropped in the deep end of disability sport' as a result of no formal support or education, leading to experience in the field being 'commonly responsible for the development of knowledge' (p. 351).

4.1.2 Disabled People are (almost) Invisible in: Coaching and Coach Developer Roles

Not only are disabled people (almost) invisible from mainstream sport and thus coaches have rare experiences in including disabled people, but this research also demonstrates how disabled people are also (almost) invisible from coaching and coach developer roles. Steven shares his experience of being the only Deaf coach attending a coach education opportunity:

> *"Sometimes there'd be 200 coaches, it would be a really big event and there'd be one person who was deaf, and they wouldn't provide for me. And they would be stunned when I said I was coming."*

Similarly, from the perspective of a coach developer, John outlines the physical accessibility challenges of including disabled coaches in education opportunities:

> *"So there's a real life example with someone that's in a wheelchair locally, and they're just trying to work out how to get them into the room and stuff upstairs and have their lifts and all that kind of stuff, sorted. So, but but but we didn't consciously think about it,."*

Not 'consciously' thinking about including disabled people in national coach education opportunities also highlights the unconscious ableism that exists within the national coach education programmes. That is, the unconscious assumption that disabled coach developers will not be attending their programmes, thus disability is not 'thought of' and education opportunities are tailored in favour of meeting the needs of non-disabled coaches and coach developers.

While the findings suggest disabled people are slightly more visible in coaching positions comparative to coach developer roles, national coach educators did however see value in employing disabled people to assist with coach education:

> *"Yeah, there's was, one to two wheelchair-bound, bound coaches, another couple of other coaches that had reduced sight, disability. Two or three coaches that were partially deaf and one in particular that was profoundly deaf. So yeah, it's yeah…But yeah, so I, I yes, do I think I think it would be great to have more people that had a disability that felt comfortable enough to, to come forward and say, hey, look, I would like to help in the coach development or the development of coaches. There hasn't, in my many years that that hasn't occurred very often."* (Sam, National Coach Developer).

Interestingly, Sam's dialogue positions inclusion as the responsibility of the disabled person by putting the emphasis on the comfortability of disabled people to participate in coach development roles, rather than reflecting on the accessibility of their coach education programmes.

James, another National Coach Developer, adds:

>*"I'm just trying to think whether do we actually already have someone that's got a disability? That's a coach developer. Within our network, no one jumps off, jumps off the top of my head, but that's not to say there's not already someone out there. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. But yeah, certainly, certainly value in that"*

Amy (National Coach Developer) also reiterated the potential value she sees in having disabled coach developers support their education opportunities:

>*"Yeah, like I I just think it's, it's powerful, when somebody's lived it and experienced it, and truly understand its. I, I'm not going to word this right. But I think it's also really, it's really powerful, valuable to be around people with disabilities when you haven't been. It's it's always an interesting experience…That makes people I think, more comfortable as well. So I think it breaks down those barriers. But it also has somebody that actually does have that experience."*

4.1.3 Disability is (almost) Invisible in: Coach Education

Not only are disabled people (almost) invisible within mainstream sport, coaching, and coach developer roles, the concept of disability is also absent from the thinking of coach developers. Such finding is new within the context of disability sports coaching research, as the voices of coach developers have largely been omitted from existing research to date (Huntley et al., 2019). Subsequently, disability is also (almost) invisible from existing coach education content. Luke, a National Coach Developer, explains:

>*"Like I say, it's (disability) not something that I would necessarily always, wrongly, or rightly, think too much about when I get a group of students or a group of athletes or anything in front*

of me... I think, as a developer or as an educator, it's not something that I would necessarily

like, it's not something I'd think about too much..."

Similarly, when asked what the biggest challenge is for coach developers to provide disability specific coach education opportunities for coaches, Sam added:

"I think, I think with the disability lens on and looking through that, it's, you know, for many, many years of involved in the game now. it's...it's not front of mind, because it's not that common."

Sam's dialogue suggests that disability is void from the thinking of coach developer as a direct result of having low visibility of disabled participating. John, another National Coach Developer, also weighs in:

"I don't think it's (disability), I don't think it's part of the conversation yet. So that's a pretty good barrier...Because my, if I look at the coaching space it hasn't been talked about in the 12 months that I've been here, so I'm sure that's about to change with the alignment with participation space moving that direction."

It is therefore unsurprising that disability specific education and content was recognised by community coaches as either not existing "at all' or at best, being "briefly touched on" within the education opportunities they had received. Mitch (Community Coach) shares his disappointment in the lack of support he received that was specific to disability within his tertiary National Sports Coaching Certificate:

"No, not one single thing (related to disability), not one single thing and part of me sits there and goes, that's crap...Yeah, so there's the National Sports Coaching Certificate. So I've just done that one sorts of things, but once again, nothing in there was put towards, with disabled

kids, or disabled people…(B)eing a coach, you sit there and go, right, well, I'm (just) going to

be coaching people, kids, whoever. That, yeah that's the way that people think, is that, it sets

that expectation."

Such findings are consistent within existing research that also identified the 'minimal, if any' disability

specific coaching information that was provided by NSOs in the studies of Wareham et al., (2018) and

McMaster et al., (2012). However, Mitch's dialogue above also adds significance to this finding by

demonstrating that having no disability specific content within existing coach education sets an

expectation for coaches that they are not likely to be including disabled people in their practice. Such

omission from coach education content therefore sets a precedent for the exclusionary practices of

coaches. National coach developers also all acknowledged the limited disability specific information

that is currently included both within their coach education opportunities and key policies:

"You've probably, you've picked a little point, which I've just made a note down here that

something, that perhaps we should, if we're totally, if we're true to our word, and we're totally

inclusive in what we do, then perhaps we aren't, you know, we certainly have explicit training

in and around gender. So, you know, we certainly have it in around ethnicity as well. So,

disability, we don't. And that's something perhaps we should." (Sam, National Coach

Developer).

Similarly, John (National Coach Developer) adds:

"Yeah, so that word inclusion is definitely in there, and just probably haven't really talked

explicitly about the disability space. But if you can somehow get into the strategy, then you'd

be way."

Amy (National Coach Developer) also comments:

"Well, we've, we've been, we've noted inclusion, in terms of saying, how can you adapt your session to make sure everybody is part of it? And some tips and tricks around that around? Okay, if somebody has this, how do you modify something and understand that, but we, we what we really struggled with was the depth of information you go into? And so, do you need to talk about a range of different disabilities and how you support those each? And do we dive into what is this and what is that and what extent of the information do you provide and not overwhelm the community coach? So, we've sort of stuck with a generic of it's really important to make sure that everybody can be involved and here's some tips around how you can do it. So, things don't have to looking exactly like this, etc. So that's, that's the extent of what we've got."

The use of the words 'inclusion' and wanting 'everyone to be involved' in the national sports strategies and coaching frameworks by NSOs is also consistent with the notion of 'enlightened ableism' (Lyons, 2013) whereby none, or limited guidance is included alongside such inclusive aspirations to support coaches in actually including disabled people within their practice. When considering the findings from 'Knowing' (Chapter 4 b) 4.4) however, it is likely that the enlightened ableism evident within thecoach education systems exists due to the lack of support and knowledge available for National Coach Developers when designing their education programmes and systems. Developing the knowledge base of National Coach Developers around disability and inclusive practice as well as bolstering the support available for National Coach Developers in designing their education programmes are therefore key recommendations from this research. The enhancement of professional development opportunities for coach developers is also an approach that has been recently endorsed by Townsendand Peacham (2021).

Considering the collective findings of this theme, I argue that exclusion from mainstream sport is not one dimensional and that a double bind of self-perpetuating exclusion exists. That is, both the

low visibility of disabled people in mainstream sport, and the invisibility of disability within coach education are interconnected. Because of the limited visibility of disabled people participating in mainstream sport, mainstream sport coaches do not currently believe that coach education opportunities pertaining to inclusion or disability are currently very 'relevant'. Nor have coaches commonly been afforded rich, diverse, and first-hand experiences in effectively including disabled people in their sporting setting. Such lack of preparedness exacerbates the feelings of uncertainty and the 'fear of the unknown' (see 4.3 (Mostly) Good Intentions, but...) that coaches have around including disabled people. This consequently impacts on the coaching experience a disabled person receives. Therefore, unless disabled people are 'able' enough to fit within the existing ableist mould of mainstream sport (Christiaens, & Brittain, 2021), they are likely to experience the 'awkwardness' and 'uncertainty' of the unprepared and unsupported coach which may, in-turn, deter them from participating again.

Furthermore, because of the limited visibility of disabled people participating in mainstream sport, there is a perception among coaches (See 4.4.1 What Do Coaches Need and Want to Know?) that this disability coaching knowledge is not 'relevant until it's relevant'. As a result of this lack of relevancy, and the lack of disabled people actively advocating to be included in mainstream sport with which they have potentially had negative experiences in, or believe is 'not for them', disability is currently not represented well in existing coach education opportunities. Nor do NSOs currently prioritise disability within their existing coach education systems and structures.

Consequently, when coaches are in search of information that has suddenly become very relevant (see again 4.4.1 What Do Coaches Need and Want to Know?): that is, a disabled person has just registered, or more commonly, 'just turned up' (Cregan et al., 2007) to a training session– as they have every right to – coaches find limited support to fulfil their suddenly urgent desire for knowledge development. And so, the cycle begins again: Coach finds limited avenues for support, coach is

nervous and uncertain of how to include the disabled person effectively in their sport, disabled person potentially receives a negative experience, disabled person decides 'mainstream sport isn't for them', there is limited visibility of disability, and so on, and so on. So, how do we break this cyclical pattern when we are ultimately presented with the 'chicken' and the 'egg' of exclusion? The chicken is the (almost) invisibility of disabled people participating in mainstream sport and the egg, the invisibility of disability in current coach education. Which one came first? And where do we start?

4.2 Same, but Different

A consistent finding through discussions with disabled interviewees was the belief that coaching disabled people is the 'same' as non-disabled people, *but* there are subtle differences that coaches need to be aware of to achieve inclusion in mainstream sport. Such paradox is consistent with developing research (Allan et al., 2020; Culver & Werthner, 2018; Tawse et al., 2012) that is challenging and extending the previously accepted discourse that coaches should approach coaching disabled people in the same way as non-disabled people (Cregan et al., 2007). 'Same, but different' supports the argument that such discourse is perhaps more nuanced and requires more complex consideration (cf. Townsend, Huntley, Cushion and Fitzgerald, 2018). The following theme expands on both the similarities: competitive motivations and desire to be developed as athletes, and desire to be treated the 'same', as well as the differences: impairment impact on ability, and diversity in disability experience.

4.2.1 The Same

All disabled interviewees demonstrated having the same competitive motivations as non-disabled people, as well as the same desire to be developed in their respective sports as athletes. Jane explains how a good coach will:

> *"(r)eally push you, like, in a good way, push you to your best, and know that you can do more than you think… and then (the coach will) figure out how to get them up. Rather than just keep them there. We learn how to build them up."*

Leah also demonstrates her competitive motivations:

> *"I don't want to waste my time doing something that I'm not good at"*

Adding that being pushed by her coach:

"(M)akes you feel like he's taking what you want to achieve, like your goals and stuff,
seriously, and knows what you want to achieve, and is helping you get to that point."

A community coach (Simon) also recognised this similar desire to be developed in a disabled athlete
he had coached:

"But then, you know, he, as part of the programme, there was always the fact that the boys
kept on coming back. He wanted progression. And so he progressed all the way through, you
know, to (the highest community level). Yeah. And all the way through, so from day dot all the
way through, so for a good five, six years."

However, despite the desire of disabled interviewees to be developed by their coaches, a community
coach explains how she has paradoxically gone 'a bit easier' on disabled people she has coached
before, to support them in achieving some success:

"And it might just be that, you know, you you're just a little bit easier on them (the disabled
person) as far as what they can do and stuff like that, you know, if you're asking (the team) to
do something with, you know, just the left foot or something like that, and they use both feet,
well, then it's not a big deal, kind of thing. And stuff, so, you know, just making it so that it's
achievable for them. Because if it's not achievable, then then just gonna give up."

This example highlights the balance coaches must strike between wanting to ensure all participants
achieve some success, while still extending and developing disabled sportspeople's abilities as
athletes. This finding also supports the sub-theme '*Knowing: The individual*' (Chapter 4 b) 4.4.1.1)
whereby understanding the individual's motivations and desire to be developed could further support
coaches to achieve such balance within their practice.

As well as the same competitive motivations and desire to be developed as athletes, disabled interviewees also expressed a strong need to be treated the 'same' as their non-disabled peers in mainstream sport. Thomas explains:

> *"I think in mainstream sport, they (coaches) have to realize that the people that want to compete in mainstream sport, don't want to feel disabled. I know that sounds stupid, because we are, but please, don't patronize me. Push me as hard as you can. And if I break, that's part of it, you know. I want to know that you're coaching me because you think that you can get better out of me. And I want to be coached to get the best out of me. I don't want to hear that, 'oh this is good enough'. It's more important to my self-esteem to be told you didn't try hard enough…, Yeah, I don't want to be treated any different."*

Thomas suggests that being treated the 'same' in this context means that coaches must recognise and provide experiences that validate his athletic motivations in the 'same' way they would when coaching their non-disabled athletes. Explaining what 'the same' means for her, Leah describes:

> *"Well, I think it would be like, I think it would be like trying to include me, like, I don't have a disability. That, like inclusive to me is like including, if I want to be included into a normal able-bodied sport, it would be overlooking my disability and making me feel like I was just like everyone else. Yeah… if a coach is coaching a disabled person in a different way, It kind of makes you feel more disabled, I don't know if that makes sense. But like, yeah, if he just treats you, like if coaches just coach you as a normal person, again, it makes you feel like you don't have a disability, sort of. I don't know."*

Leah's dialogue suggests she has experienced coaches treating her differently for being disabled which exacerbated feelings of disablism. The desire for coaches to look past her impairment also suggests Leah perceives this as an empowering position that transforms her 'disabled athlete' identity from

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being "disability-based to sport-based" (Le Clair, 2011 as cited by Cushion, Huntley & Townsend, 2020). Simon's desire not to 'feel disabled' within mainstream sport also exemplifies his preference for his identity shifting to 'sport-based'. Jane adds how a sense of belonging within a unified team supports her to feel 'the same' as her non-disabled teammates:

> "Yeah, that I really belonged and, and they get to know you as well. And, you know, you're, you're the same, you're the same people on the inside, you know, you are all people. And they make you feel like, you know, that you're there and they make you feel like you belong, and things like that. Yeah."

These findings also mirror the findings of Allan et al., (2020) whereby the participants in their study also expressed a desire to be treated the same as their able-bodied peers. From the perspective of a community coach however, Simon shares how treating everyone the same can be problematic in his experience coaching young people with ADHD and autism:

> "Unfortunately, sometimes you can be quite hard on them without knowing. And I think that's probably the worst thing you can be. And that sort of… you just treat them like a kid that's been really naughty, like a normal kid. And actually, that doesn't help, that only exacerbates the situation."

Simon's extract further supports the need for coaches to understand their individual athlete's preferences and impairment in order to provide effective coaching experiences.

Together, the findings of this sub-theme illustrate how for disabled participants, being treated the 'same' as their non-disabled peers means that coaches are recognising, validating, and developing their athletic aspirations, just as a coach would when catering to the needs of their non-disabled athletes. Furthermore, we recognise that a sense of 'belonging' and being included as a part of the team can further support disabled athletes to feel the 'same' as their non-disabled peers. Thus, in to

effectively meet the needs of disabled athletes, coaches must understand and cater to the disabled individual's motivations and sporting aspirations, as well as facilitate a sense of belonging andinclusion within the mainstream team environment for all participants.

4.2.2 But Different

Despite similarities in motivation and the desire to be treated the same as non-disabled athletes - to therefore reduce instances of disablism - there is a recognition by disabled interviewees however that their impairment can and does impact on their ability participate in sport. Such findings are consistent with the social relational model of disability, which 'makes room' for impairment and 'impairment effects' by suggesting that although disability is socially constructed and culturally fashioned, restriction of activity in the lives of disabled people can also arise as a result of their impairment (Smith & Bundon, 2018). This sub-theme also demonstrates a consistent understanding between disabled people and community coaches that there are inherent differences within and between different impairment types. Each disabled interviewee shares how, at times, their impairment can and does impact on their ability to participate in sport. Steven shares:

> *"I tried to get in (to a mainstream sports team) and I failed because of my deafness, because it was hard to communicate. They were all hearing and they were a high level, and so I wasn't able to get in because of my communication."*

Ella also explains how her physical impairment impacts her technique:

> *"So I actually, I can't do that, physically, I can't do that. So we had to adapt how I could still have my arm out, without being in pain, but being able to have a steady position, whereas most people wouldn't have that problem, because they don't have that disability I guess. Yeah. So yeah, we did have to, we had to fiddle around with a lot of stuff and ways of how we could adapt it."*

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Furthermore, Jane describes how her intellectual impairment impacts her within a sporting setting that is noticeably different from her non-disabled peers:

> "Because I know some people like us, we may take a little bit to learn something, whereas they (non-disabled people) are quicker to learn... But yeah, I guess (my disability) does (impact on my participation). Like, it may take me longer to learn stuff than others, you know, to learn something. So it may take me a while to, you know, get it right. Even maybe a few goes or a few practices or something. It may take me a bit to get there, but I will get there."

The recognition of their impairment effects on participation in sport highlights the 'realities' of disability as experienced by interviewees (Tawse et al.,2012), and evidences the various ways in which the nature of impairment impacts the coaching process (cf. Townsend et al., 2019). Indeed, the realities of impairment - as they were experienced by interviewees within their respective sports - necessitated a particular response from their coaches to effectively support their participation. There was also a recognition among disabled participants, coaches, and coach developers that there are differences within and between different impairment types and disabled people are not a homogenous group. Ella comments that although she has a disabled coach:

> "(B)ecause our disabilities are quite different, it's harder to explain, sometimes what's going on. And it can be seen as an excuse, instead of, of like them actually trying to understand what's happening."

Steven (disabled athlete) adds:

> "Deaf behaviour isn't all the same, that, there's a variety. Some Deaf people are quite independent, and they can go into hearing teams... But often it's oral communication. You know, lots of teams have players that have cochlear implants. So there's a lot of more oral

communication. Not as many people use NZSL, so sometimes it's a little bit more complicated.

You'd have different level of communications."

These differences within the Deaf community are also recognised by a community coach (Jess) who explains:

"So, you know, I mean, I know, like, every disability is different and stuff like that, and people have got different ranges of disability. And you know, you can't just say, you know, you're deaf, so, but you know, there is different ranges of deafness and stuff like that, and some can still hear a bit and some profoundly deaf and you know."

Mitch (Community Coach) shares his concern however with the breadth of diversity among impairment types and the challenge of obtaining this knowledge:

"I mean, it's quite difficult, because it's, you know, the one thing that I learned very quickly, was, every disa, every impairment is different. So, and you trying to adapt to every impairment, every different way, you're physically going to, excuse the pun, well, excuse what I'm going to say, but you're pissing into the wind. You can't, you're gonna, you're gonna be failing every time. If you try and understand every aspect of every impairment sorts of things, you're going to lose. You need to be able to, it's just a confidence thing. And it goes back to that..."

The recognition of the breadth and diversity that exists within and between impairment types is an important consideration for the future of coach education, especially when considering the desire of community coaches in this study to acquire impairment specific knowledge (see Chapter 4 b) 4.4.1.3 'impairment specific knowledge'). Future disability coach education that focuses on impairment specific information must therefore recognise this breadth and diversity, whilst also reinforcing that coaches do not need to be an 'expert' on every impairment, encouraging that they instead learn from the disabled individual about their experiences of disability and impairment (Allan et al., 2020).

4.2.3 Coaching Disabled People: Same, but Different

Considering the desire to be treated like everyone else, as well as the recognition of the differences within impairments, and their impact on sports participation, together these variables suggest that coaching disabled people is mostly the same, but slightly different to coaching non-disabled people. The following data are illustrative:

> *"So I don't think it's a big step to go from coaching an able bodied person to a disabled body person. The basic, the reason you became a coach is there. Yeah. The only thing is you have to adapt your thinking to what works for them... I just really want the coaches to know that I'm not expecting anything other than what anybody else would expect. But a heads up about a metal object coming up my face, would be great (laughs). You can usually take the other blows quite successfully* (Thomas, disabled athlete)."

When asked what coaches *need* to know about disability, Jane adds:

> *"Know that they, yes they (disabled people) are different, but they're also human. And, you know, treat them like you would anyone else, but maybe have more patience with them. You just, you know, take the extra time to yeah, let them learn. I guess have patience with them."*

Both extracts again demonstrate the desire and expectations of disabled interviewees to be treated the same as 'everyone else' however, these extracts are also subtly layered with the realities of their impairment as they transpire within sporting contexts. For Simon, that is the reality of his vision impairment and needing verbal guidance from coaches to support his safety, and for Jane, the reality of her impairment and the time it takes her to learn new skills which requires extra time and the 'patience' of an inclusive coach. Mitch, a community coach demonstrates this 'same, but different' approach within his coaching practice:

"(I) keep them (my coaching techniques) the same? I've done it exactly the same as everything else sorts of things. Yes you keep an eye on them a little bit more. But you don't, I don't change anything. Apart from obviously with, with the girl, you know you're walking closer to her and making sure that she's hearing with what you're saying or buddying her up with someone."

Although Mitch states he coaches disabled people 'exactly the same' as he would non-disabled athletes, his data extract proves to be more nuanced than this by highlighting how he in fact adapted his practice to effectively communicate with a Deaf athlete. Until now, there has been no evidence to suggest that the 'same, but different' discourse extends to coaches of athletes with diverse impairment types, as all existing research referencing this approach has been focused solely on athletes with physical impairments (Tawse et al., 2012; Culver & Werthner, 2018). The above extracts from disabled interviewees with vision, intellectual and hearing impairments, along with the perspective of a coach of a Deaf player, suggests however that this concept can be applied more broadly.

Furthermore, the 'same, but different' discourse challenges the well-accepted notion among coaches that coaching disabled people is 'exactly the same' as coaching non-disabled people. Such notion is easy to appropriate in contexts where athletes 'fit' into existing structures, rather than requiring actual change or transformation. However, despite the clear good intent of coaches who believe such practice is exemplary, the 'the same' discourse is ableist for its complete disregard of impairment effects and disablism. To challenge such ingrained coaching discourse and to develop coach education practices that better reflect the nuances of coaching disabled people future coach education practices should therefore draw on the social relational model. Such practice in coach education would ensure that impairment effects are considered alongside the political, social, and cultural factors that impact disabled people's participation in sport (Cushion et al., 2020).

4.3. (Mostly) Good Intentions, But…

"This is the most important theme for me" – Kate, Disability Advisory Group Member

Consistent within the research findings were the (mostly) good intentions of the coach and coach developer interviewees. Other than the blatant instances of outright ableism as presented below, there was also a noticeable desire by coaches and coach developers to provide more, quality opportunities to disabled people in mainstream sport. Disabled interviewees also recognised the (mostly) good intentions of their coaches, however they identified several accompanying examples of coaches not meeting their needs or expectations of being included. The examples within this theme shared below demonstrate that even with the best intentions, subtle ableism, the fear of coaches and coach developers, and the structure and competitive nature of mainstream sport all impact on the experience of the disabled person being included (or not) within mainstream sport.

4.3.1 Outright Ableism

Other than the *mostly* good intentions of coaches and coach developers, there were instances of obvious, outright ableism within the data extracts that cannot be dismissed. Tamati, a community coach explains how the ableism evident within the education system has influenced his practice in a sporting context:

> *"Primarily, what a lot of teachers do is make them (the disabled person) sit on the side or do whatever. But to be fair, I, I always almost assume that as well. And I don't cater to, to them by themselves… It's just, having to go to a school with 30 kids. It is hard, but I'm sure a teacher or someone would know how to include them in something."*

> Adding that… *"sometimes for us, so if we're doing a lot of coaching and during the day, we'll take the easy way. Yeah, for sure. I've done three hours of coaching already. I'm going to have to think, modify what I've planned. So you do exclude."*

Such example highlights how outright ableism has been produced as a result of the coaching delivery model and resourcing constraints placed upon the coach. Ella and Leah describe their experiences as disabled athletes being on the receiving end of such ableism:

> *"Oh, I just thought of another experience is a PE teacher, like, he, just, this was a relief teacher, he just looked at me. And was like, well, 'obviously you're not playing', sort of thing...There's just an assumption, that people who are disabled don't like to play sport, sort of. I think." (Leah)*

Almost identically, Ella adds:

> *"Whereas, in high school, when I had a different PE teacher, she just be like, 'oh, you can sit on the side'. I'm like okay, I was like, I actually want to get involved, but yeah, okay. I'll sit on the side."*

These findings are consistent with Wickman (2015) who discovered that all participants in their study had been dissatisfied with their experience in mainstream PE, to some degree. It is important to note that while these experiences are represented in school settings, and PE specifically, Tamati's account highlights how the exclusionary practices within mainstream schools can consequently influence and infect the practices of coaches within mainstream sports settings. This finding is therefore a significant concern when we consider how regional coaching roles employed by RSOs are commonly tasked with delivering sports opportunities within schools in New Zealand. However, ableism is clearly not just confined within the school gates of the education system. Another community coach (Aroha) recalled a recent example that occurred at their sports club whereby coaching the disabled person was seemingly put in the 'too-hard basket':

> *"I was shocked and horrified. Just this week, when I found out that someone who had a hearing impairment had wanted to trial for (the regional sport) and I hadn't been told. And because*

someone else had decided that their experience as a coach meant that coaching someone with

a hearing impairment was too difficult. The person was told no, you probably, probably isn't

going to suit you."

The assumption that the disabled person would be 'too difficult' to include as the example from Aroha

suggests, and the assumption that disabled people would not be capable of participating in

mainstream environments - as demonstrated in the extracts of Leah and Ella – are examples of

outright ableism in action. Such instances echo the findings of Carroll et al., (2021) who demonstrated

how 'ableist attitudes produce social, cultural and physical barriers to participation' in sport for

disabled people who do not fit 'able-bodied norms' (p.1).

4.3.2 Subtle Ableism

Although not as obvious as the outright, unapologetic ableism highlighted above, disabled

interviewees also shared several examples that were contrary to an inclusive experience, with more

subtle undertones of ableism woven into the fabric of their sporting experiences. This was evident

within the examples of coaches 'dumping' their athletes, disabled people being 'invited to the party,

but not to dance', ableist assumptions and coaches not listening to disabled participants. Four of the

five disabled interviews shared examples of 'being dumped' or coaches just 'drifting off', despite often

the best intentions of coaches initially. Leah demonstrates:

"We contacted our local (sports) club and just asked if anyone would be willing to try coaching

(modified mainstream sport). And then we did have a guy that offered to. So yeah… It was

good for like a good while but then, I don't know like the other coach, it just started like, drifting

off. And he seemed very unenthusiastic… Like, yeah. So it just started off really good. And thenI

just slowly drifted off, again."

Similarly, Ella reflects on her experience of being 'dropped' from the next level of her chosen sport:

> *"I know what, I know what it feels like when, when you get to this point, and then they just drop you off because they don't know what to do."*

Ella's example suggests that being included in sport has been somewhat successful and the experience with her coaches positive to a point, until the coaches' knowledge had seemingly reached its 'apex'. Similar examples demonstrate how disabled people were 'dumped' by their coaches before they even began to be coached. Thomas explains:

> *"And I tried out for different teams…and they all go yep. Yep, we can see you. So you're doing that, that that's good. And then I never hear from them again. And Dani said to me, she said, if you try out for a team, and they didn't contact you, that's their way of dumping you."*

Ella echoes a similar experience:

> *"Yeah, I remember that guy. He was, he was one of the nice guys that was like, 'oh, yeah, it'd be really cool to have you' like, blah blah blah. And then obviously, didn't happen."*

The tone in both voices suggests that these were not one-off examples, with Thomas also indicating that he had tried out for multiple teams. Such examples from the perspective of disabled participants are scarce within disability sports research to date. Looking to a contemporary framework to help articulate such instances in the absence of comparative findings elsewhere, Myers (2017) explains how diversity 'is being invited to the party' whereas inclusion is being 'asked to dance'. Using this metaphor, the extracts above exemplify how disabled people have been invited to the party, only for the party to fizzle out, or they have been hopeful about the promise of a party, only to not receive a final invitation. The following data also shares examples of disabled people being genuinely invited to the party, but not asked to 'dance' - or fully participate in the sporting activity. Steven recalls his experience:

"And when I play with hearing people, I feel like I get less play and I have to sit out a bit more. And I have to work through things. Sometimes I have to sit on the bench and watch the other players. I feel like I'm a bit excluded. And that hurts. Yeah, it can be it can be, I want to play more. I want to be more involved… And I think there were lots more barriers, then, you know, I would, with different hearing coaches, I would try to, you know, try to be in the sport, but sometimes we kind of get pushed to the side, I think."

Ella adds:

"Yeah, and it's like that wording 'you're welcome to join it', but it's kind of like them being like, if you join it, it's gonna be like a learning curve for both of us (laughs). And it's like, okay, well, that's understandable."

Ella's further indicates how she felt the sessions:

"(W)ere only made for able bods. But just like, we're just like an add on".

Interestingly, these experiences mirror the suggestions from coaches that in some instances, inviting disabled people along to the session is indeed inclusion in action. Amy, a National Coach Developer, explains:

"So I was just thinking of it from that that regard, and people just want to be part of things. And want to belong. And it will look, it could look a little bit different for people. So it doesn't mean that (they) need to be in the center of the group. It just might be that they're asked to come along."

Amy's response highlights the recognition that being invited to take part is important, however it does not consider what a quality, inclusive experience looks like beyond this invitation. Tamati, a community coach shares similar views:

"I think, like you said there, and I haven't had some of the people with a physical impairment so much, but I think if you just give them the chance, I think that's awesome. Just see what they can do, they might be up and down the side-line. But as long as they're involved, you're given them a chance for that."

These findings highlight a discrepancy between the coaches' understandings of inclusion and what that means for their practice in action, and disabled interviewees expectations of 'inclusion'. Education for coaches that details inclusion in action that is based on the perspectives of disabled people with diversity in lived experience could therefore help to minimise this discrepancy. Furthermore, this finding adds to the argument established in Chapter 4 b) (4.4.1.1) whereby knowing your individual, and in particular their motivations and preferences for participating, are important considerations for coaches in improving their practices.

Further examples of subtle ableism in action also include disabled people not being listened to by their coach. Thomas highlights how despite the best intention of the coach to help him; he didn't feel listened to or that the coach was considering his personal preferences:

"Yeah, but one of the other guys, one of the bosses at the club says, oh you should have, it (adaptive equipment) should be more rigid than that, there should be an arm that goes around and holds you. And you should put your hand in a slot. So it doesn't move. I don't want that...I find, I struggle with Adam... And I think that's because we don't have that, well, he doesn't listen to me (laughs). Yeah. And I get frustrated. And then I probably become more negative because of that... (He) has been the worst, but he's also the one that said let's give it a go."

Similarly, Steven shares how his preferences were not listened to by the coach, although Steven highlights how, unlike Thomas' coach, this didn't necessarily come from a place of good intent:

"I was a halfback. But when I went with the hearing team, they told me I was better as a wing, on the wing. And I was like no, I'm not, that's not what I normally play. But you know, they wanted, they didn't want to communicate with me, it was difficult to communicate. So they put me out on the wing where I just stand to the side and they can't communicate with me. They don't, I never got the ball. And so it was no different, so I went back to basketball."

The importance of listening to and understanding the needs of disabled athletes has commonly been reported by coaches in existing literature (Tawse et al, 2007; Fairhurst et al., 2016; Townsend et al., 2019), however this was evidently not realised by Thomas and Steven's coaches above.

Collectively these examples of more subtle ableism highlight how although coaches (mostly) demonstrated a willingness to include the disabled person – an important factor of inclusion also identified by disabled interviewees (see 4.5 Small things, Big Impact) - the work of a coach in including disabled people within mainstream sport extends beyond being merely 'invited to the party'. Given coaches were mostly well intentioned, it is obvious that they are not aware of the unintended ableism inherent within their disabling practices. Thus, future coach education practices must consider how ableism can be brought to the consciousness of coaching practice. A key mechanism for ensuring coaches recognise the destructive influence of ableism is by sharing the perspectives of disabled people who have experienced disablement within their sporting experiences. The data extracts from disabled participants above highlight how nuanced ableism is within sports coaching anddemonstrates clearly how the unintended consequences of coaches (mostly) well intentioned actionscan and do impact their inclusion in sport.

4.3.3 Fear

Current research continues to position 'fear of the unknown' as a barrier for coaches in including disabled people in sport, even despite their best intentions (Townsend et al., 2017). The

understanding of coaches' 'fear' has been extended within the findings of this research however to also include 'fear or being wrong' and 'fear of causing offence' or a 'bad experience'. Simon (community coach) shares his fear of both the 'unknown' and of causing offence:

> "I think you'd be lying. If you didn't say that there wasn't ever a concern. Yeah. You know, for sure, I think. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, there is, and I think it is, it's a fear of the unknown. And how to ask the questions in a way that, you know, doesn't upset, doesn't offend?"

Also adding that:

> "Oh, look, I think you're nervous, you know, because you're just nervous. I suppose as a coach, you just thinking, you know, you don't, you don't want to offend, you don't want to upset, you know, you've got to think on your feet. And you've got, you know, is there any safety concerns or anything that you need to be aware of straightaway? Yeah, they can be quite, quite nerve wracking, I suppose... And I because I'm, I'm always very conscious. I just want people to have great experience. Yeah. And so it's just that, What can you do to make sure that they have a great experience without, you know, anyone sort of being been sort of hurt in any way. So my immediate is safety, nervous about safety would be my first priority."

Similarly, Jess (community coach) describes her fear:

> "Yeah, I guess, like with all kids, you know, because I generally coach kids and youth and stuff like that, you'd kind of you don't want to put them off. And I think that's the thing is your kind of like, you know, I don't want to ruin this kid's love of the game kind of thing and stuff like that by by, you know, it not being a good experience, and things like that. So I think, you know, there is a little bit of the, kind of the fear of not them not getting out of it, what the other kids do kind of things."

These examples from Simon and Jess are evidently coming from a place of good intention, whereby the coaches do not want to cause any harm or a bad experience, however they present unintended consequences for the disabled person being coached, as evidenced in the extracts from disabled people below. Similarly, the fear of causing offence by 'saying the wrong thing' was a common fear recognised by national coach developers. John illustrates:

> *"There's no, this is all really probably politically incorrect, and all that. Sorry, Sort of trying to find the right words all the time."*

Such fear from John also reiterates how disability is on the periphery of his vision, as he demonstrates having to think and speak differently when referencing disability, thus positioning disability as 'other'. Similarly, this lack of understanding around disability also contributed to fear and uncertainty for Michael, another national coach developer:

> *"I still don't know the, I still don't know the whole, like even defining what does disability look like? I feel sort of like uncomfortable saying it. Because, you know, I mean, like, I don't know, I don't want to offend anyone."*

It is difficult to determine whether the fear of some coaches who did not 'want to be wrong' does come from a place of good intent however, as this fear can be interpreted as only affecting the mana of the coach themselves, as opposed to having a direct effect on the disabled person being coached. Tamati, a community coach explains:

> *"(T)he fear is the big thing for coaches. Fear of looking like an idiot, or looking, you're looking like you don't know, I think that's the biggest thing coaches have in (our sport), because it's such an ingrained sport in New Zealand psyche that if you don't know (it), you don't really know too much. You know what I mean? The best way to describe it is the fear of our coaches of looking like a muppet."*

Mitch, another community coach concurs:

> *"(A)and I think that's the been the biggest thing with coaching, is, you're scared of being wrong."*

Considering the perspectives of disabled people, Thomas comments on his experience of being on the receiving end of his coach and teammate's noticeable fear:

> *"I know there is fear, you know, I've sensed it with the guys that I've (played sport) with. They didn't really want to go out with me. But once we've got back in, they'll want to go out again. Yeah, it's, it's that breaking of the first hurdle to get out there and do it."*

Furthermore, Ella describes how she's experienced:

> "*Like just that awkward, not knowing*" from her coaches.

Likewise, Leah adds that:

> "*They (coaches) talk to you differently, sort of, like, cause they're unsure*..."

These examples of fear highlight the epitome of this theme. Coaches have (mostly) good intentions of not wanting to cause offence and wanting to ensure the disabled person receives a quality experience, however this fear unintentionally translates to an awkwardness and uncertainty that is felt by disabled people, which is counterintuitive to the coaches' (mostly) good intent. Thomas gives the following advice to coaches in response to this fear:

> *"If something happens, it happens, I mean, (my wife) ... walks me into doors, she walks me to trees 'oh, I forgot to look up there…'. You know, it just happens. So I don't want them (coaches) to stress about things. Stress just makes it uncomfortable for everybody… I think the guys that are running it or coaching it need to know that they don't have to sweat it. Just do what they*

normally do. And let us (disabled people) work it out as well. They don't have to worry about making sure everything's perfect."

Jane adds to this, wanting coaches to know:

"(I)t's okay, you know, take your time with them (disabled athletes)…give them some time to get into the ropes of things, you know, and it may take them a while to get used to the environment, which is okay, you now, we'll just give them (the coach) the time, as well as they give us time to learn the thing…And you know, not everybody, is born to know everything about everybody, so, you know, it does take them time…"

4.3.4 Structure and competitive nature of mainstream sport

Alongside fear and ableism, there are some structural and cultural facets of mainstream sport in Aotearoa New Zealand that are also not conducive to inclusion. Thus, in some instances, despite the (mostly) good intentions of coaches, their inclusive practices are often restricted by the structural and cultural confines of their sport. Ella recalls her experience of not being 'allowed' to progress to the next stage of her sport, despite 10+ years of training, because of the inflexibility in the club structure and the normative rules concerning what people must be able to do to progress to the next 'level':

"The tutor at the time said to me that that I can't move forward. And I was like, 'why can't I move forward to the next one?' And they were like, 'well, you can do all that. Like you can do all the normal, like the strokes, like freestyle and backstroke. But you can't do breaststroke' Because my legs can't do the frog legs. And (they) said that I would find it very difficult to move forward if I'm not able to do that specific movement."

James, a National Coach Developer adds how despite there being a welcome flexibility within the rules to support the inclusion of disabled people at a NSO level, such flexibility does not always filter down to community coaches delivering mainstream sporting opportunities:

"Yeah, our rules within (the sport) are probably. We probably don't do a good enough job in having discussions with, especially like your volunteer-type coaches around common sense, a common-sense approach… Then what tends to transpire is they, they get the rules of whatever competition their team might play in. And then treat them like the, you know, like, this is hard and fast 'how the game has to be played'. And won't budge from that. … But as a parent coach who's got the rule sheet there and might be quite competitive, and then the opposition coach asks if their (player) can come up a few meters. That's where, yeah, that's where confrontation can happen (smiles)."

This example highlights how the inherent competitiveness of mainstream sport precludes the sometimes-necessary modification to game structure that support the inclusion of disabled people (Hammond et al., 2018; Carroll et al., 2021). Furthermore, the fact that mainstream sports rules need to be modified or made 'more flexible' to meet the needs of disabled people exemplifies how the design of mainstream sport was not based on a value system of inclusion and participation for all. Mitch, a community coach demonstrates the competitiveness within community level coaches that James is referencing above, explaining how it would be more feasible to include a disabled person within a training than in a game against another team:

"It's, it's a real hard one. Because it, yeah. It's, it's not competitive, but it is competitive sorts of things. Yeah, as you say, mixing both people (disabled and non-disabled players) together as a school versus schools sorts of things, I find it very, it'd be very, very difficult to do… But with, yeah, you'd work, and you'd sit there and you'd potentially come up with some sort of plan, if it was just in-school sort of things."

This data also highlights how competitiveness is inherently ingrained within the cultural fabric of mainstream sport in New Zealand. Such 'logic of competition' that dominates mainstream sport was

also noted by Hammond et al., (2018) for the barriers it presents in the application of inclusive policy in Australia. Despite the competitive bias permeating sport and regardless of whether community coaches exercise common sense when applying the rules, Sam, a National Coach Developer also highlights that the foundations of their game structure were developed according to a value system that privileges able-bodied normality and its associated values of competition, athleticism, and performance:

> "(when) there were a lot of women that wanted to start to play, wanted to be involved (in our sport), that felt excluded. And so, we had to change hearts and minds initially, but the actual physical ability to compete, we didn't have to change, if you know what I mean? It was more the attitude whereas, in the, in the disability space. Yes, there's a, there's an attitude change. And I think, you know, we, we shouldn't be seen to be saying, no, you can't play our game. At the same time, we recognize that physically, there are elements of our game that they (disabled people) , as we know it, that they can't play…

Sam also adds that:

> "(I'm) not supportive of changing the fabric of our game."

Although despite this, there was however a desire from Sam to better include disabled people, noting that:

> "You know, so there are modifications that that could be made. When, if we thought about it, if we were bit creative about things, we could certainly do that. Yeah… there's absolutely no reason why that (modification), that couldn't be incorporated. Within, within certain levels of the game. Absolutely."

Aside from competition and rule flexibility, Simon (community coach) also identified how the coaching structure and systems within his sport can also hinder inclusion depending on the 'stage' people join the sport at:

> "It's a very technical, technical game, and to try and come in, and even, you know... kids that do (play the sport) quite late, it's really challenging, because in a team environment where you're trying to keep everybody busy, it's very difficult to then pull yourself aside and give an individual all the work that they need in that time, whilst you have the rest of the groups going on… And it's hard to catch up. And again, and that's the reality is it can be pretty brutal… And I think that's the unfortunate thing... But there is, you know, clubs are under resourced...to take on all these kids and run really good educational and sporting programs, because the resource isn't there, so if you can have a couple more staff where, you know, you do get the situation kids do come in a little bit later, etcetera, you can give them the one on one time that they need, or the schools. And that, to me is a real concern."

Such an extract demonstrates that despite the best intentions of Simon, the under-resourcing of coaches who are expected to deliver quality experiences to a significant number of people in community sport presents a barrier to providing the sometimes necessary 1-1 support that individuals need. This finding is consistent with the findings of Lyons (2013) who also discovered that structural barriers such as resourcing were also preventing the application of inclusive policy intent. This is a significant concern when considering the perspectives of disabled interviewees, as Ella and Jane both explain how 1-1 support from their coach would help to support their inclusion in a mainstream sports setting:

> "And I would expect some coaching one on one. Maybe not for the whole time, but for at least a big, like a chunk of it…and with that coaching I would expect them to one build a rapport

with me, but, but, but also explain how to do that sport, but also probably find out a bit more

about me to see if there needs to be any adaptations done for it as well."

Unfortunately, such ideals of inclusion are unlikely to materialise in mainstream community sport in New Zealand, as it is widely recognised that community sport is generally underfunded and under resourced, as Simon's extract above also highlights. Like Ella, Jane also recognised the opportunity for 1-1 support to build a relationship with the coach:

"(M)aybe like one on one coaching sort of thing, you know, just so they can teach me

personally, instead of teaching like a whole class. And then I'm like, oh, God, I'm lost, you know,

it's like, coming into teach me one on one say, okay, you can do this. They'll show you how to

do things that way. Yeah...Even talking to you, even beforehand, you know, just having a chat

with you prior and just saying hello, how are you, getting to know you that way. And then,

when they get into the whole group environments, they can kind of teach you things on a one

on one, but still in the group, if that makes sense..."

The latter findings of this theme that illustrate the structural and resourcing barriers preventing coaches from materialising their good intentions of including disabled people are therefore significant challenges that ultimately impinge on the potential of mainstream sport to be fully inclusive. While education and coach development can go some way to reduce the earlier instances of ableism and the counterintuitive coaching 'fear' experienced by coaches, this can only do so much for the inclusionof disabled people in mainstream sport if the structure, competitiveness, and resourcing remains the same. Such findings therefore cast doubt on whether full inclusion can truly be achieved in mainstream sport within its existing confines.

Chapter 4 b) *4.4 Knowing*

Existing research continues to position knowledge as a barrier to achieving inclusion in sport (Culver et al., 2021; Jeanes et al., 2019; Darcy et al., 2020; Darcy & Dowse, 2013; Martin & Whalen 2014, Wareham et al., 2017). Yet, there is currently not a clear understanding of the specific knowledge that coaches need or would like to have, beyond a desire to learn more about the general physiological impacts of physical (Wareham et al., 2018) and intellectual (MacDonald et al., 2016) impairments, as well as 'classification, sport and event specific requirements, practice planning and delivery, sport science and sport psychology' (Huntley et al., 2019, p.6). Nor is there sufficient evidence of how coaches in mainstream sport should acquire this knowledge, beyond critique of existing modes of disability coach education (see Townsend et al., 2018). The following theme demonstrates the knowledge disabled participants wish coaches to know to support their inclusion, coupled with the knowledge that is desired by coaches of community sport, while also adding to our understanding on how is best for coaches to develop this knowledge.

4.4.1 What do Coaches Need and Want to Know?

4.4.1.1 Knowing the Individual

Consistent with existing research (Townsend et al., 2018; Douglas & Hardin, 2014; Tawse et all., 2012; Cregan et al., 2007; Allan et al., 2020) many disabled people, coaches, and coach developers within this study identified that knowing the disabled person you are coaching at an individual level is essential for coaches to effectively coach and include disabled people in mainstream sport. Beginning with the perspective of disabled participants, Ella highlights:

> *"I feel like coaches need to take a huge look at just the person… they need to look at all aspects*
>
> *of life, like what, where they're coming from, what they can do, what they can't do. You know,*
>
> *like, and that includes not even disability, but like financial situation and like… So, it's more*

like it's more about having, yeah, that holistic approach for each person, like call it having a

multi-dimensional approach. So, you're looking at, you're not just looking at how they are in

this sport, you're looking at their lifestyle, their, their availability, their social things, their

physical, their everything that like. Mental as well, like mental is a huge one, especially in both

fields of mainstream and disability... And also, looking (at) like I guess, what that person wants

to do. So for example, like we've talked about the pathway, but not everybody wants to be on

a pathway. Some people want to just do it socially, or like come in once or twice a week...and

just, you know, be social, right? And that's something that isn't fully looked at, as well."

Ella also explains how it impacts on her participation when coaches don't have this level of knowledge:

"I've had coaches where they've gone: 'okay, this is what I know, this is what you're going to

do. And we'll try it, if you can't do it, then we just have to come up with something completely

different' kind of thing. And, like it was, they didn't even bother finding out about my disability,

they didn't bother, like getting to know me as a person".

This example highlights the lived and felt effects of coaches trying to 'fit' disabled people within the confines of their 'normative' understanding of the sporting activity, without considering the individual's needs. Such practices evidently reinforce the feeling of being 'othered' (Smith & Bundon, 2018). Ella highlights a belief that better knowledge of her as an individual, and the multiplefacets that make up her life, including her experience of disability, her motivations, her impairment, and her experiences outside of sport would enable the coach to better meet her needs. While still animportant consideration, Ella also demonstrates that knowing the individual is far more than just theirimpairment. This is consistent with Townsend et al., (2015) and Allan et al., (2020) who argue that a holistic understanding of the athlete provides important context regarding their motivation(s) and goals for participating in disability sport. Viewing people holistically and multi-dimensionally is also an

important concept in te ao Māori (Durie, 1985), such worldview considers more than just the disabled person's impairment and has been found to support the inclusion of disabled tamariki (children) in mainstream, Māori education (kura kaupapa) as their needs were considered and met holistically (Bevan-Brown, 2013). This is also represented in Aroha's dialogue below:

> "People have told me I'm able to create a cool team culture…I would like to think, that when I am coaching, I am taking in the whole person. So, I'm thinking of the hinengaro, the mental ability or the impact that I'm having on them mentally, I'm thinking about their teinana. So physically, what does this mean for them? Am I pushing them past their limits? Or am I, am I not pushing them hard enough? I'm also thinking about the outside part, the whānau (family) but the whānau in this aspect is the rest of the team. If I'm doing this to this person, what impact does it have on the rest of the team? And then I also think about the spirit, that their spirituality, what impact am I having on the parts that I can't see? And they aren't willing to share?".

Adding to existing research, Jane demonstrates how coaches who know their individual athlete well can also support quality coaching experiences for athletes with intellectual impairments:

> "And they know what you can do. Even though you may think, 'Oh, I can't do that'. And it's like, 'No, you can do it. Just try it', and I'm like, 'Oh, I can do it. See?'

The understanding of what Jane can do and is capable of, as well as knowing how far she can be pushed, enabled her coach to extend her abilities beyond what she believed she was capable of. Such enthusiasm in Jane's voice noted in the video recording also demonstrates how important this was for her. Adding to the existing research however, Jane also adds from her perspective within the Special Olympics community that there are individual preferences relating to the environment that coaches also need to understand to support their inclusion in sport:

"Yeah, like they (the coach) would know, if they liked big crowds, or not, or loud environments, quiet environments, or, like light, lighting is another one because I know a lot of us struggle with lighting".

Coaches and coach developers also recognised the importance of knowing the disabled person at an individual level. John, a coach developer comments:

"So I'd love to think that it would just be focused around that more player-centred approach where we just do actually look who's in front of us. What are they about? What can they do? What can't they do? In every, every player we work with has got strengths, and challenges and opportunities, and yeah…. I just thought, isn't it just about knowing your people? And then from a coach perspective, take interest in them, work them out."

It is important to note that disability is however void from this coach developer explanation. Such 'player- centred' discourse has been scrutinised by Cushion et al., (2020) as being a concept that is 'taken for granted' as 'good' in the context of disability sport, without considering the realities of impairment and disability. Like the 'exactly the same' coaching discourse critiqued in the earlier theme 'Same, but Different' (Chapter 4a) 4.2), the sentiment of this 'player-centred' discourse is well intentioned, yet there is no recognition of the disabling aspects of coaching practice, psycho-emotional disablism or impairment effects. Again, highlighting the benevolent ableism that exists within coaching practice. Jess, a community coach adds how getting a better understanding of the individual she has coached, including his impairment, supported her coaching practice:

"(G)oing back to Max, the fact that his parents had sort of spoken to me about, you know, this is what we've found has worked for him in the past. And this is, you know, the technique that we use with him, if he's getting a bit overwhelmed, and, you know, things like that, it just made things so much easier."

Collectively these findings add to our existing understanding by suggesting that truly 'knowing the individual' requires a more nuanced understanding of the multiple facets that can and do impact on the disabled person's participation in sport. These include: the capabilities of the individual, their impairment, mental wellbeing, motivations to participate, participation preferences, environmental preferences, as well as their life 'outside of sport'. However, coaches and coach developers are clearly uncertain how to ascertain this understanding, and how to 'appropriately' ask about disability specific knowledge. This was also something disabled participants noticed of their coaches:

> *"I'll feel that people are uncertain and scared to ask me questions. Just because they don't know if it's rude or not. Yeah... they talk to you differently because they're unsure of like, what you can do and stuff like that"* (Leah, disabled interviewee).

Ella also echoed these experiences:

> *"I had one coach where they I guess they must have felt a bit awkward at the beginning... And then after a while, when we, when they got comfortable with me, they started asking questions about my disability, started asking a bit more about my abilities to do stuff, what I can and can't do, and then testing, testing limits as well. With like, challenging movements and things. And I think the only reason that they were able to do that was because of that rapport. But they, even they said at the beginning that they found it difficult to like, they didn't know how to ask the questions. They didn't know how to. Because it's so personal and vulnerable. They didn't know how to do it. But in their head, they, they didn't think about building that rapport."*

This example of awkwardness and uncertainty highlights the stigma felt by Ella as a result of her coach's response to difference. There is consequently a need to normalise difference within coaching practice and education. Specifically, Ella added that support for coaches around:

"(C)conversations you might need to have with athletes (would be valuable) because I think the conversation pieces is a big one that coaches probably don't feel 100% comfortable having...I don't know, I think it's more, it's not ignorance. It's just, it's more shyness, I guess. Around not knowing and then (not knowing) how to ask about it."

In terms of how coaches might go about building rapport and gathering such information on what the individual can and cannot do, Jane suggests:

"You don't have to jump right into the personal stuff straight away… yeah, just probably like, maybe like sporting questions first off, like, 'have you done this sport before?' or 'what sports have you done?'"

It is therefore no surprise that how to ask and have conversations with disabled people and whānau about the support they may need was an area that both coaches and coach developers wanted more knowledge on:

"You know, well, you know, I, I suppose that's the question is, you know, it's, it's how you gather all that, you know, if you're on a (coaching) course, for example, it might be something, you know, we always ask for medical, but, you know, we don't ask if there's any anything else that we need to be made aware of? Yeah, you know, although, you know, or they're not, you know, perhaps some ideas and around the wording and all that sort of side of things will be quite useful." (Sam, Coach Developer).

Sam's extract also reiterates how medical model discourses are dominant in coaching practice whereby medical conditions are at the forefront of coach development thinking and practice.

Similarly, Jess a community coach adds:

"So you know, it just, like maybe a way to approach them and stuff like that, and saying, you know, how can we work together to make this as successful as possible? When, and what are your expectations of the, you know, the outcomes of this? And what, what do you want out of this? You know, do you want him to learn to be part of a team? Do you want him to get some physical activity? Do you want him to, you know, kind of thing? So, it's just like, maybe some of those questions?"

While seemingly straightforward and assumed as 'common sense', these findings suggest that supporting coaches and coach developers to ask 'appropriate questions' and to have effective conversations with disabled athletes is an important consideration for future coach education opportunities. This is supported by the findings of Fergusson and Spencer (2021) where coaches who were willing to ask about an athlete's and differences were recognised as being 'more invested, and better able to create a trusting and inclusive environment' (p. 286).

4.4.1.2 Knowing How to Adapt Coaching Practices

A common discourse in para coaching is the need to 'adapt' coaches' behaviour, practice-design, and communication methods for disabled participants (Darcey & Dowse 2013). In line with the findings of Alexander at al., (2020) and Culver & Werthner (2018), both participants with physical impairments also identified the need for coaches to know how to adapt the sport or activity to support their inclusion. It is generally suggested though that coaches lack knowledge specifically in adaptive methods that enhance feelings of inclusion for disabled people (Alexander et al., 2020; Culver & Werthner, 2018; Darcy et al., 2020). This was evident in the findings of this research, when Leah highlighted how her teacher's lack of this knowledge had negatively impacted her experience in a PE setting:

"He wanted me to try to include myself into the thing that they were doing instead of him thinking of other ways that they can adapt the sport to include everyone. So, he was like playing the sport as normal and making me think of ways to include myself. I probably would have preferred that he would actually have (tried to adapt), because I had him as a teacher for the whole year. You know, so he had some (understanding), he could've thought of different sports, or adapted different sports a bit differently."

Such negative experience within PE due to the lack of the teacher's ability to adapt to her needs also mirrors the experience of physically disabled young people in the study by Wickman (2015). Conversely, Ella demonstrates how a coach's knowledge of how to adapt an activity can contribute to a positive experience:

"I'm always thinking of ways to adapt things. So my knowledge is like, I look at something and straightaway in my head I will try and adapt it. But for a coach, if the coach does it before you can do it. That's such a weight off your shoulders because majority (of) people with disabilities probably will find a way to adapt stuff for themselves. But if the coach is able to do it, that is like one step further that you don't have to think about."

This example also highlights how commonplace ableist environments and practices are within society. Ella's knowledge and skill of adapting has evidently been developed over time as a result of having to adapt to practices and places that are not designed for her. So much so, that adapting has become an inherent and autonomous practice. The knowledge disabled people have developed through their lived experience of adapting could therefore be a valuable source of learning for coaches and coach developers in the co-production of disability sports coaching knowledge.

Recognising the importance of adapting in her practice, Aroha, a community coach comments:

"I've found in my coaching experience, whatever the drill is, you can always modify it to suit the athlete in front of you. If you've got one that requires a lot of jumping, and the person can't jump, then you bring that bring whatever it is down lower, so they're not required to jump, you cater to whatever the need of the athlete is, you don't set them up to fail, you set them up to succeed."

It is interesting to note that knowledge of adapting an activity was only made in reference to physical ability and was further only mentioned explicitly by interviewees with physical impairments within this study. Such findings suggest that knowledge of modifying activities may be more relevant to the inclusion of people with physical impairments. However, this contrasts with the findings of Darcy and Dowse (2013) where the coach's knowledge of adapting was also noted as being important by a participant with an intellectual impairment.

4.4.1.3 Impairment Specific Knowledge

Generally, the understanding of disability by coach developers was limited to their narrow, medicalised understanding of impairments. James describes:

"How I perceive disability? It's a range of different things. So, whether it's physical disability, physical disability, mental. And, and there's probably within that. Yeah, there's obvious sort of things like, behavior and, and, other things that can be caused by, by whatever a child might have, whatever condition or whatever disability they might have. And then obviously, the, the physical is. Yeah, can sometimes limit their, the range of motion that they can do when being physically active or? Yeah. All those sorts of things. So yeah, those, those couple of key, those are a couple of the key things I've encountered as participants with physical disabilities, and then participants with mental or social type disabilities. And, yeah, that's, I guess from, I'm a pretty basic person. So that's how I sort of classify and try and make sense of what what's,

what's what. And, yeah, that's, I guess I don't really have too much more of, and obviously,

then once you identify or understand what the disability is, then you can work to try and

provide the best possible experience. Given whatever constraints, you're working with?"

Such medicalised, deficit views of disability are also echoed by Sam (coach developer):

"Yeah that's, that's interesting, I suppose. The first thing, the first thing that you probably look

to is the disability that you as a person can physically see yourself that's that, you know, the

wheelchair, that the limb, the moto, motor skills, disabilities, you see that. The, the, the the

hearing and sight loss, that's, that's there. So that's, that's, that's probably my experience. I

have had about, other, you know, with, with medical issues that that preclude full, full

participation or full physical activity. Yeah. So that's, yeah, that's probably that's probably how

I view it. Even though, even the term disability I suppose is disability in comparison to what?"

Describing disability as 'issues' and 'constraints', and likening disability to a 'condition' that is 'encountered' by coaches demonstrates the 'powerful and entrenched medical model' perspective of disability as it is understood by coach developers (Townsend et al., 2018, p. 354). Such ingrained medical models position impairment as the cause of disability; completely disregarding the social, cultural, and historical barriers that constitute disability (Townsend et al., 2018). Both coach developer extracts above also illustrate a stuttered, and hesitant conversation style which is not consistent with the data extracts discussing topics they are confident and knowledgeable in i.e., their respective sports. The uncertainty within their extracts further demonstrates their lack of confidence and understanding around disability.

When considering the knowledge that would support community coaches to improve their inclusive practice, it is no surprise that impairment specific knowledge was referenced as an area they see value in gaining a better understanding of:

"(Y)you know, even if it's just a fact sheet kind of thing, saying, you know, this is, this is what, you know, in a typical kid with, you know, this disability, this is kind of maybe what you can expect, they will find this a bit more difficult. That, but they might be good at this or, you know, just some bits and pieces like that, maybe" (Jess, community coach).

Tamati (community coach) adds:

"And then yeah, I think I mentioned to you, I don't know, how you would do in and around grouping some of the, the impairments, to what they can actually do. I know, there's, there's obviously a scale with each impairment. But yeah, if it was three or four things on a scale of up to, I don't know, whatever it is. They can do the running, they can do everything. Or they can only do these sort of activities. They only need to be general because, for the most part, most of our activities are general activities at the community level."

While talking about impairment specific knowledge, it is clear that coaches are specifically talking about understanding what people with different impairment types can and cannot do. Leah (disabled interviewee) appreciates the complexities within this approach, despite also recognising that this knowledge would be valuable for coaches:

"I think just more understanding around different disabilities and what they, what they're capable of... Um, just, Like, I wouldn't say like, all of the different kinds of disabilities because there's heaps of them, but like, just like the general ones like, oh I don't know. It's quite hard.I think the more common ones, but then also, what about the people who don't have a common disability, as well?"

It's important to note that Leah was the only disabled person who identified that impairment-specific knowledge would be beneficial for coaches. Leah's language is also representative of a strengths-based approach, emphasising the understanding of what individuals *can* do.

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In disability sport coaching it has been argued that any transformation in existing structures relies on a skilled and confident workforce to deliver on social policy (Townsend et al., 2022). However, changes in wider social attitudes and structures frequently lag behind re-framings of social discourses and progressive legislation. One reason is perhaps that those who are positioned to develop and enhance these systems are often not supported and lack the relevant knowledge to do so (Townsend & Peacham, 2021; Hammond et al., 2020; Jeanet et al., 2019; Lyons, 2013). A further knowledge gap identified among coach developers in this study was their lack of understanding of key documents and policies that support the inclusion of disabled people in New Zealand. At best, coach developers may have 'heard of' the Sport New Zealand Disability Plan, however they demonstrated limited knowledge on its contents. Coach developers were also largely unaware of the UNCRPD and the New Zealand Disability Strategy. Amy, a national coach developer demonstrates:

> *"And so complete honesty here. And so, the Sport NZ Disability Plan. I've heard of. the rest (NZ Disability Strategy and UNCRDP) I've somewhat heard of, but they're not, they're not documents or policies that I would engage with. Sorry. And that could be a probably a bit of a flag around - interesting to see what the group that were working on the inclusion module if they looked back on any of that as well. I wouldn't be sure around that. But no, sorry. That's something that would be no."*

John adds that he was unaware of all three documents:

> *"Nope, not in my role. So that's the first time I've heard of those documents (laughs) our participation team might be a bit different, because they've gone down that track, but it hasn't been filtered down. It hasn't filtered to me."*

Such limited understanding of these key policies supporting the inclusion of disabled people in sport is inconsistent with existing research on inclusive policy translation in sport. In the instances of Hammond et al., (2020) and Lyons (2013) the research participants were at least largely aware of the policy commitments and were able to speak in inclusive terms, however they lacked understanding of how to practically deliver on policy. In the case of this research study however, participants are generally not aware of policy commitments, nor are they able to confidently speak inclusive terms, as demonstrated in the fragmented extracts cited above. Such findings are therefore a significant concern for the translation of inclusive policies in NZ. Not knowing how to enact inclusive policy is one thing, but not being aware of the most significant policies in New Zealand that support the inclusion of disabled people in sport to start with, is a far more of a significant knowledge gap to address. This is recognised by one of the national coach developers however, who suggest that education leads should have a better understanding of inclusive policies:

> "But yeah, as the leader of coach ed(ucation), yeah, it's something that again, I would probably want to understand a bit better." (Luke).

It is therefore suggested that coach developers need to understand the significance of policies concerning the inclusion of disabled people in mainstream sport, as a starting point to translating inclusive policy within their coaching systems. Looking to implementation science, it has been suggested that policy enactors and protocol implementers who position polices as a priority and a professional responsibly are more likely to implement policy aims (Synder et al., 2019). Thus, an optimistic potential lies within the opportunity to educate coach developers on the significance of the UNCRPD which outlines the rights of disabled people to participate in mainstream sport in New Zealand, and the important responsibility of the state to uphold these rights. Greater knowledge of the UNCRPD therefore has a potential to influence coach developer perceptions about their professional responsibilities to include disabled people within their respective sports.

4.4.1.5 The Value of Indigenous Knowledge

The potential value of indigenous Māori knowledge to support the inclusion of disabled people in mainstream sport is also evident within the research findings. Such discoveries have not been explored within the context of inclusion in sport specifically before. However, there is a small body of literature that recognises the value of te ao Māori for supporting the inclusion of disabled people in education settings (Bevan-Brown, 1989, 2004, 2013). When asked about his preference between mainstream and disability sports, Thomas (disabled interviewee) explains how he particularly enjoyed participating in a mainstream, traditional Māori sport for its inclusive community:

> *"But I think that's what I loved about the (sport) really, they're a very accepting community. They're just like, 'oh you're blind', but there was no easing off. They expected me to perform as hard as they were performing which I also like... And that's why I love (the sport) because the guys thought 'well, how do we make this work for him?' Not, how do we make it easier, but how do we make it work?"*

Similar to Thomas' experience, Aroha, a Māori community coach also adds:

> *"Um, I didn't, I didn't treat them (disabled athletes) any differently. Yeah, I didn't see them for having an impairment. They were just, that was just how they were."*

These findings mirror that of Bevan-Brown (1989) where Māori talked about disability as a 'fact of life' and disabled people were recognised as having value and mana (prestige, power), as of right.

Thomas also comments that:

> *"(H)honestly, sometimes I think they thought I was sighted. And they just shouted 'Thomas, give us a hand with this'. And I would walk in and get a (piece of equipment) right*

between...the...legs, you know? 'Yeah, ah, should've mentioned that'. Sometimes it might have

been on purpose (laughs)."

The notion of not 'seeing' the person's impairment is also referenced by Aroha:

"So when I'm coaching, as I said to you, when I'm coaching a person, I don't see their disability.

Yeah, I see them, and what they have, and what they can offer, and what they need, and then

I clarify what the need is, and then we go about it the best way to find it."

Māori values such as whanaungatanga (relationships, kinship and sense of family connection), wairuatanga (a recognition, respect and embracing of the spiritual dimension in others), āwhinatanga (an obligation not to 'trample on people's mana' by excluding them) and manākitanga (being 'welcoming, nurturing, hospitable and inclusive') are also supportive of including disabled people and (Bevan-Brown, 2013. p. 579). Demonstrating such values 'made a hell of a difference' for the inclusion of disabled Māori in education, and this research supports their further value in the context of mainstream sport. Of all of the community coach participants in this study, Aroha recalled the most examples of genuine inclusion in her coaching practice. When asked about her inclusive philosophy and Māori values though, she simply shared:

" Kotahitanga (togetherness, working as one), whakawhanaungatanga and manaakitanga.

It's just part and parcel of what you get. (laughs)."

These findings necessitate further research to explore the opportunities within coach education to learn from and demonstrate Māori values in a way that recognises their value in supporting the inclusion of disabled people

4.4.2 How do Coaches Develop this Knowledge?

With a better understanding of the knowledge required for coaches to be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream sport, we now look to the findings that support our understanding of *how* coaches and coach developers can ascertain this knowledge. Consistent with international findings, there was no universal agreement among coaches and coach developers on the preferred, or most valuable form of coach education to develop their knowledge on including disabled people (Huntley et al., 2019; McMaster et al., 2012). There was however one key method of developing knowledge that was consistently referenced between all three participant groups: developing knowledge through experience.

4.4.2.1 Developing Knowledge Through Experience

It was noticed by disabled interviewees that the prior experience of their coach in either including disabled people in sport, or having disabled family members, enabled the coach to develop a level of inclusive 'understanding'. Jane explains:

> *"I've forgotten to mention with my coach, my powerlifting coach, he has a brother in law who is also special needs and he's autistic and everything and, like, I think having him in his family,I think it kind of helps as well, even having someone you know. Not everyone has someone that they know who is disabled, but you know, having someone they know is disabled kind of helps them have that knowledge in some way. Some knowledge in their pocket, anyway."*

This finding is consistent with the research of Duarte & Culver (2014) and Taylor et al., (2014) who report that family and early socialisation experiences were important in shaping the inclusive attitudes of coaches. As Jane recognises though, not everyone may have a disabled whānau member, or know someone personally who is disabled to gain this experience and level of 'understanding' from. There is however a recognition among coaches and disabled people that gaining first-hand experience in

supporting disabled people is valuable for gaining knowledge and confidence on inclusive practice in sport. Steven (Deaf athlete) identified the value of his coaches' previous experience coaching a disability sport:

> *"(T)hat coach was a lot better, it was a lot easier because they had been involved in the Australian woman's wheelchair basketball, so they had more experience, and I learned from them in that context. So it was a little bit smoother in terms of that relationship. I think he just had an understanding, you know. If I was struggling to coach, he knew how to sort of help me and work around that…"*

From a community coach perspective, Tamati adds how practical experiences supporting disabled people within a sports context has also enhanced his confidence:

> *"Yeah, like I said, I've done the (special education school) sport coaching stuff, (regional disability sports) stuff, I've have seen the Sense stuff, I've done the (school programme). So I've had four pretty positive experiences. So it doesn't, it's not as scary for me to go into those sorts of situations (now)."*

For a community coach who has not yet had this level of experience however, Mitch adds how he would value the opportunity to gain more first-hand experience:

> *"But just going to spend a day with them, a couple of hours with them, just to see how…is that you'd go to one of those things first, see how they all are, say boo to them all… Even if it's an art class or something like just sitting there and watching how they interact with them how they do things, it's not, doesn't have to be just sport, just kind of going and hanging out with them (disabled people) sorts of things for an hour. And you just sitting there watching, just watching what they do, what they do, how they do it, you're always learning, with it all."*

This also aligns to a disabled interviewee's recommendation to coaches:

"And even like, go to a setting where a coach, like, for example, like my coach with Special Olympics, they (mainstream sports coach) go to a place where they can see how the coaches coach disabled people and how they do it. And then how they can learn from that as well, like seeing it, as well." (Jane).

Similarly, Ella suggests that practical experience is also valuable for gaining knowledge on adapting activities:

"Getting them (coaches) to actually physically do it. Because I guess lecturing or like teaching somebody on how to do adaptability... (but) they actually need to experience it for themselves, to be able to see how they can adapt things. I think also even putting themselves in a situation with disability like volunteering is a good way to learn, as well."

Collectively these research findings demonstrate the value of practical experience in coach education, from both the perspective of disabled interviewees and community coaches. This also supports the findings of Huntley et al., (2019) who discovered that coaches perceived learning from experience as the most effective method of coach education. Thus, while there is no universal agreement on the most effective method of coach education, this research helps to strengthen the argument for practical experience in the coach education hierarchy.

Simulation is another form of practical experience that coaches can gain knowledge and understanding from. This method includes coaches experiencing using adaptive equipment or using blindfolds, earmuffs, and wheelchairs to gain a greater understanding of the 'experience' of disability. However, such methods have received mixed endorsements both internationally (Maher, Haegele, & Sparkes, 2022; Flower, Burns & Bottsford-Miller, 2007; Douglas et al., 2016; Allan et al., 2020) and within this research. Thomas (Blind Interviewee) goes as far as to suggest:

"(T)he best thing they (coaches) could do is put themselves in that position. If you're going to coach a blind person, put on a blindfold, you're going to coach somebody in a wheelchair, get in the wheelchair, actually feel what they are feeling. Because I mean, Shirley was my star, she really was, because she did that, without being asked to do that. Yeah, So I think that's the biggest thing that coach of a disabled person can do."

While all community coach participants within this study also recognised the merit within this method, there was also an acknowledgement by a community coach, Jess, however that:

"You know, I mean, you can do things like, you know, putting blindfolds on, and bits and pieces like that, which gives you a bit of an idea and stuff, but, you know, you're never gonna actually be kind of in their shoes."

Simulation has been critiqued by French (2007) for its failure to represent impairments correctly, while also failing to address the cumulative social and psychological barriers experienced by disabled people. A similar view was shared by a DAG member in this study, who believed that 'simply' walking alongside a disabled individual and asking them questions about how they experience disability and what it means for them in a sporting context is far more valuable than simulation. Furthermore, it has been suggested that by focusing on challenges and barriers, and by medicalising disability, simulation can provide 'false and misleading' information about disability that contributes to negative attitudes towards disabled people (French, 2007. p. 257). Interestingly the remaining three DAG members were advocates for the use of simulation, however. The popularity of simulation could be suggested to be because of how common it has become within current disability awareness trainings however, rather than their relative effectiveness comparative to methods that learn from the disabled person themselves (French, 2007).

4.4.2.2 Sourcing Knowledge from Disabled People + Wider Support Networks

As well as gaining knowledge through experience, disabled interviewees, coaches, and coach developers also recognised the value of developing knowledge with disabled people themselves, or with their wider whānau and support networks. Leah (disabled interviewee) suggests that coaches and coach developers:

> *"(Get) different people with disabilities, like all their different opinions, like I was working with (regional sports organisation) about adapting (a national sport) which can be played with people with different disabilities. And they got me and a few others with different disabilities to help come in and we thought about different, how we can adapt the rules, so I think just getting lots of different opinions from different disabled people… So that way, you've got all different viewpoints sort of, yeah."*

Community coaches also identified the potential value in learning from disabled people about their previous experiences of being coached. Simon describes what he would like to see within a coach education webinar:

> *"I would like to see advice around understanding how participants feel, you know, I think empathy on what their sort of feelings are, I suppose. I think it's one of the things you know, things that, I suppose from a coaching perspective, that they find annoying. You know (laughs) about both, you know…wording, behaviours, experiences…You know, if there's any experiences where they've had where it's, it's made the experience far from enjoyable, you know, anything, any patterns. Yeah, things to avoid and sort of advice, you know… for example, would be really good to understand, you know, how they felt they've been included,the process of inclusion, and…maybe a couple of stories (like) that… would be helpful."*

These data that highlight the value of the perspectives of disabled people within coach education also align to the findings of Townsend et al., (2021) who suggest that it is important to give disabled people the 'space' and 'agency' within disability sport coach education. Furthermore, these extracts support the need for future coach education opportunities to be co-produced with disabled people themselves, for the value they bring as 'experts of their own experience' (Grant & Ramcharan, 2007.

Thomas (disabled interviewee) adds how valuable knowledge can also be sourced through the wider support networks of disabled people:

> *"Need to know (about disability)? No, I suppose that goes back to that needing to know or needing to talk to people who are involved with those people (e.g., Blind Low Vision NZ)."*

Jess, a community coach similarly recalls how whānau members have been a key source of knowledge for her in including a person with an intellectual impairment in her team:

> *"But his mum was really fantastic. Like, I met with her before I started coaching him, and she sort of talked me through kind of what he was like, she's a teacher herself. And, you know, just like a few little pointers like that and stuff, which made it a lot easier, because I kind of already had some boundaries about what to do, what not to do, and things like that."*

The wider support networks of disabled people are therefore a further source of valuable knowledge for coaches and coach developers to consider within both current coaching practices and future coach education opportunities. This is supported by Fairhurst et al., (2016) who also endorsed the wider support networks of disabled people as valuable sources of knowledge for coaches.

4.4.2.3 Formal and Informal Methods of Coach Education

Consistent with existing research (e.g., Douglas et al., 2016; Huntley et al., 2019) there is an obvious inconsistency in the way coaches like to engage in with education opportunities provided by national sporting bodies:

> *"And also, workshops are finding that, you know, you don't get a very big uptake from people… we reckon only 10% of coaches engage in a formal (Level 1 mainstream coaching) workshop … so we're starting to look at, okay, well what are some other ways that we can support, develop coaches, and so some of them are online content". (John, National Coach Developer).*

Conversely James, another National Coach Developer shares:

> *"77 out of the 91 (registered coaches) have done the practical (for the mainstream Junior Sports Coaching Programme). So big uptake for the practical, but and then about a third have done the (accompanying) online learning."*

John (National Coach Developer) also adds that not only are there different learning preferences of coaches, but there are also different 'coaching personality profiles' to cater to:

> *"(W)we have nicknamed (them) 'Keen as Karen', so Karen, she is invested in learning and likes to get things and read about it. And she's a passionate coach, and she turns up to everything. And she engages the stuff, and we reckon that is less than 10%. And then we've got this big group called "Sweet as Sue". So yeah, no, 'm all good. Don't need you, blah blah blah. And then we've got this big group called, which we reckon is probably about 40%...Called, Joanna, or basically a survivalist…So Joanna is either a mum or a student coach…and she's real busy. And she's just put her hand up to coach and she just really wants to survive the season".*

John (National Coach Developer) further comments:

"(E)specially the newbie coaches, what they actually want is…the latest activity, drills and games and stuff. And that's where they always go to… So (we've) got to hook them in through what they want, and then…ingrain the positive messaging around that, I guess… once you hook them in then you can subtly layer stuff, but it's too overwhelming if you give them everything. Yeah, but then maybe the other end of the spectrum, they're ready for that kind of stuff. They know the game, well, they've coached for a while. They've got, you know, all the coolest drills and their skills."

However, despite the inconsistency in coaches' education and learning preferences, there is one key constancy in the opinion of coaches and coach developers: when disability-specific knowledge 'becomes relevant' it needs to be readily available for coaches looking to source it. Jess, a community coach explained:

"So stuff that you can access when it's relevant. Because like, you could go to a course and stuff like that, and not be, not have anything to do with kids with disabilities for ages. And then all of a sudden, you know, something crops up and you're just like, shit, what did we learn in that course?"

Similarly, Simon (community coach) adds:

"Oh, look, anything that is quickly accessible? Like I think the biggest thing from the coaching side of things is to know, you know, to try and avoid the unknown... And I think that's the thing is, it's, I suppose no one, no one ever thinks they need to know it until it actually happens. Yeah. You know, and, and like I said, you know, it's just it's one of those things, and, you know, like I said, I just want to give the kids as good an experience as possible."

This view was also reiterated by a national coach developer (Amy):

"I think there needs to then be an opportunity for more in depth information for people to then access when it's required. I think that sort of flexibility, because things don't become important until you really need them. Sorry. And also, it's hard to, I don't know how many things I've gone back to and gone, God, I remember someone talking about that. But now, I need it now. And it's relevant now. So I need to go back and read it again."

These findings suggest that in order to be effective and to reach as many coaches as possible, disability specific coach education must be provided in multiple different modes of education (informal, formal, online, practical) to support the different education preferences of coaches, whilst also being readily available when 'needed'. These findings are indicative of an 'inclusion approach' where disability knowledge is an 'add on' to mainstream coach education (Townsend et al., 2021). When disability specific knowledge is positioned as this 'sub-field' and 'add on' to 'mainstream' coach education, it perpetuates the politics of knowledge by positioning disability as 'other' and 'outside' of mainstream coach education practices (Townsend et al., 2021). Furthermore, the concept of disability specific knowledge not being required until it is 'relevant' or 'important' for coaches suggests that being inclusive is not an internalised coaching practice. Rather, coaches are portraying an idea that inclusive practices are instead intermittent and are not consistently extended throughout their coaching practice. Interestingly, embedding disability specific information within existing coach education was however consistently supported by national coach developers:

"(W)e're really good at writing massive resources. And that's what I can see is going to happen (here). (It is) my fear that will happen. And (it will be another) massive resource that gets emailed out and sits on a shelf, it's just overwhelming. It's just too much. I think it (needs to) be like a paragraph on inclusion or whatever, embedded into something. That would be gold. So (in) all of these 40,000 words, or whatever you going to write… (embedding information) is the key." (John)

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Similarly, Amy also advocated for an 'infusion' approach whereby 'disability content, topics, and issues are threaded throughout curricular' (see Townsend et al., 2021, p. 16):

> *"So I think it would be integrated in to what we do. And to just grow everyone's awareness… there'd be a lot of different areas that we could yeah review and make tweaks to that could easily capture (disability). And I think that's always the key is, isn't it? How do we integrate something, instead of making it an extra or something separate? It should just be how we how we operate."*

4.4.3 Where Do We Even Start?

With several suggested ways of developing and enhancing coaching knowledge as referenced above, it begs the question: where do we even to start? There is a general willingness among national coach developers to provide more disability-specific coach education opportunities to their coaches and regional coach developers. However, there is a stark uncertainty among coach developers with where to begin this process themselves, identifying that they need support to get started:

> *"Yeah, so…rolling back to your question, what do I need? I probably, probably need some PD in, yeah. Whether that is, I don't know, do we start with, is it a tiered approach where the coach development leads of the NSOs go through something? And then they sort of trickle-down type effect? Or? I don't know." (James, National Coach Developer).*

Luke, another National Coach Developer adds:

> *"(O)nce we know how we can support developers and coaches... It's, it just comes back to time to develop resources and modules we need. It's access to people in this area that can come and access our courses and support our development as developers so that we can then start pushing it down the pathway and into the community and things like that. I actually, yeah, I don't I don't believe there's a massive barrier. Probably to start with, like anything. It's just*

education around what we need to know, and what we want people to know to support

disabled athletes, or coaches."

Furthermore, Amy suggests a collaborative approach between NSOs:

"And I think the developer space would be a great one to start with…And that's something that

we can connect all codes to, to be able to bring together. So I think that ability to be able to

have somebody who can facilitate that, versus us going God, we need to get our developers

together, God, we need to share this information. Actually, who's an expert or the right person

to be able to do this? So I think that guidance around how do you do it, and also the resources

of a person to facilitate it? and ongoing support? …If I went quite detailed, I'd say, probably

creating resources in a format that can be adaptable by all sporting bodies… So, using our

platforms that already connect with our coaches but having a generic resource that we can

use it that? Sorry, if that makes sense? So, I think that would accompany workshops for

developers to better understand this space, but then some resources to be able to use to

facilitate… And provide some guidelines to how to do that?".

These findings highlight the importance and need for system change to be driven by national coach

developers within NSOs. However, for such change to be successful the findings also emphasise the

need for and importance of coach developers to first enhance their own understandings of disability,

to in turn be able to influence or action necessary changes within their education systems. Layering in

findings from the earlier section of this theme, it is also suggested that educating coach developers on

the nuances of disability beyond the impairment, as well as education on the significance, contents,

and context of key inclusion policies and models of disability would all provide a good starting point

for enhancing the understanding of coach developers, that address key knowledge gaps. There is also

a significant opportunity, as identified by coach developers, to design resources that can be shared

across multiple sports codes to improve efficiencies in coach developer and coach education training.

4.5 Small Things, Big Impact

"If nothing else, I want coaches to know this (theme). It really is the small things" – Melissa, DAG

member

Aside from developing the knowledge and understanding of coaches, disabled interviewees have also identified several 'small things' that coaches can do to better support their inclusion in mainstream sport. These include: 1) a genuine willingness: to both learning about and including the disabled person. 2). Developing inter-personal skills; communication, relationship building, empathy and encouragement. 3). Practical impairment-specific actions and considerations that make a big impact on the experience of the disabled person being included.

4.5.1 A Genuine Willingness – to Learn and Include

Disabled interviewees commonly valued coaches who expressed a genuine willingness to learn about and include disabled people within their mainstream sports. Leah (disabled interviewee) demonstrated the willingness of her coach who went above and beyond to provide an opportunity for her to be included in mainstream sport as an umpire:

> *"So she was really good about it. She actually, like not a lot of umpires do get coaching, but she was very keen on helping me get coaching for being an umpire."*

Thomas also described how he valued coaches who were willing to include him and 'give it a go':

> *"But all of the coaches that I have dealt with, have wanted to try. When I approached the archery club, and I said, I want to give it a go. Would you be willing to have a blind person in your club? And (he) came back with and said, why not? Let's give it a go. 'Yeah, you see, we can only try'. And that is all I want to hear. I don't want to I don't want to have yes, this is*

gonna happen. I just want this. Give it a go. Yeah, see what happens. Once people are open

like that. It's fantastic. Yeah."

The language Thomas uses demonstrates his acknowledgement of mainstream sport not being set-up to be inclusive of disabled people and thus there is a sense of burden he has developed consequent to the many challenges he has faced to being included in sport. While this willingness was important to Thomas because of the suggested previous exclusion he has experienced, the willingness of coaches comes with a warning from Townsend and Peacham (2021) who suggest that often coaches are allocated a disability coaching role by 'availability or willingness, rather than qualification'. This willingness was also referenced by a community coach who adds from her perspective:

"I think the most important thing is like to show them that you're interested, you know, and

show them that you want to help and that you want them to be involved in, how can I help

make that happen, basically." (Jess).

As well as the willingness to provide opportunities and to be more inclusive, disabled people also valued coaches who were willing to learn. This finding recognises that while the research can identify areas for coaches to develop a better understanding of disability, ultimately there must be a willingness by the coach to develop such knowledge, or the recommendations are largely redundant. When asked what coaches need to know to better support disabled people in mainstream sport, Ella explained:

"(Y)you're guiding them within that sport or recreational activity, you're not, you're not doing

it for them, you're not, you know, you're making it so it's inclusive for them to be part of. So. I

guess they just need to know that. It's, it's okay not knowing, but you have to be willing to

learn…For me, like people who are willing to learn, I love, I love people that are willing to learn

and people who are open to try new things."

Similarly, when describing her ideal coach, Jane details:

"I guess, you know, willing to learn. Willing to learn about the person as well, like learning what they learn like, and being open, being open, I guess, is that right?"

From his perspective as a Deaf athlete selecting coaches for his team, Steven positioned the willingness of coaches to learn and develop their communication skills as a key attribute to facilitating inclusion:

"If they're not interested in learning the language…I think it's about the attitude, you know. If they've got the right attitude, they want to learn sign language, then they're going to get hired. So attitude comes into that a lot."

Although the 'openness' of coaches has been recognised as important in existing research (McMaster et al., 2012; Duarte & Culver, 2014), there is little detail provided that describes what this openness is in relation to, specifically. The findings of this theme therefore extend our current understanding by suggesting that the openness of coaches must include the willingness to genuinely include disabled people to start with, coupled with a willingness to learn about the individual and their needs.

4.5.2 Inter-personal Skills

As well as a genuine willingness, disabled participants also recognised several inter-personal skills that were required of coaches to support their inclusion. For Jane, patience was a key skill she valued of her coaches:

"Because like again, he's very patient, he'll, and that's the whole thing. He wants to be patient and he'll know to take the time to and he wants to take the time to teach you."

Similarly, Steven (disabled interviewee) also comments:

> *"Sometimes the hearing coaches had great attitudes, and sometimes they didn't have any patience."*

Patience has been a key skill recognised by coaches of athletes with intellectual impairments before in the works of Townsend et al., (2019) and Cronin et al., (2018). However, such skill has not been noted in relation to supporting Deaf people in sport within existing coaching research. This is likely because the perspectives of Deaf people have been largely omitted from coaching research to date. The findings of this research therefore support the need for greater diversity within the lived experiences of disabled people involved in both future coach education research and the co-production of coach education resources. For Ella and Thomas, they also valued coaches who demonstrated empathy and a genuine understanding of their individual circumstances:

> *"And again, she went out of her way to see what I had to listen for. And to get my timing right. But yeah, and (she) was great. I mean, (she) taught me a lot as well."* (Thomas).

Ella adds:

> *"(a)nd then having that understanding and empathy for you know, things don't go always plan, as in, like, health issues arise, like how do you, how do you as a team deal with that, and,and like, making sure that the person feels like they're supported, and not just on their own doing stuff, as well."*

Empathy has been reported in a number of studies to support the inclusion of people with autism (Kimber, Burns and Murphy, 2021), sensory (Ferguson & Spencer, 2021) and physical impairments (Culver & Werthner, 2018; Alexander et al., 2020; Allan et al., 2020). The findings of this research study, coupled with these findings evident in existing literature therefore suggest that empathy is a key skill for coaches in supporting disabled people with diversity in lived experience. Furthermore, coaches who were enthusiastic and encouraging were also valued by a number of disabled

participants. Leah demonstrates how such enthusiasm by acoach lead her to take up a new sport she is now thriving in:

> "(E)ven though I wasn't even supposed to do that (event)… He just made me feel, he really included me into, I don't know, trying to give it a go…he was just giving me all these like, compliments. Like, 'oh, my gosh, you did so good.' So it made me want to do it again. And then just (his) enthusiasm, it really just helped me feel included, he saw me (play in my day chair). So he was like, 'Oh, my God, imagine what you'd be like in a (sports chair)!'.

Similarly for Jane, the encouragement of her coach also prompted her to participate in a new sport:

> "He got me into (it). You just did it once in a class. He just did (it), he popped it in there. And he just he just said to me, 'You know, you're a natural. You could do this', and I'm like, okay, I'll do it. Sure. And here we are… (They) just kind of like, probably like hype you up and kind of, like, make it exciting as well, and that makes you excited. Like, 'oh my gosh, okay, we're training today'. Instead of like, 'oh, we're just training' (flat tone of voice). It's more like 'ohh, we're training today' (higher pitched, excited voice)."

As well supporting her to feel included in the sport initially, Ella also illustrated how the continued encouragement and enthusiasm of her coaches keeps her coming back to the sport:

> "(They were) so excited to have me join them and, and then they actually, they were the ones that introduced me to it… which I never thought in a million years that I'd be able to do. And I guess with that, they gave me the confidence…Everybody, everybody is everyone's cheerleader. So, like, everyone's like cheering… and like, I'd be cheering on other people as well, when they were achieving stuff as well."

It is important to note that in all of the three examples above that reference the importance of enthusiasm and encouragement, participants are only referencing disability sport specific examples. Comparatively, such examples of their coach's enthusiasm and encouragement are not evident in the examples disabled participants shared of their experiences in mainstream sport. This highlights the potential value of mainstream sports coaches learning from disability sports providers on enabling inclusive experiences. Such trends also prompt the question: is the enthusiasm and encouragement of mainstream sports coaches currently diluted by their fear, and lack of knowledge and experience when supporting disabled people? Or are such skills generally not as prominent in coaches of mainstream sport? Further, how different would the experience be for the disabled people if mainstream sports coaches dialled up the encouragement and enthusiasm in place of the existing fear and uncertainty? Instead of the stigma felt by disabled people when presented with their coaches' fear, greater enthusiasm and encouragement can also be suggested to reduce instances of psycho emotional disablism, as evidenced in these findings.

In line with existing research (e.g., Culver & Werthner, 2018; Alexander et al., 2020; Allan et al., 2020), good communication and relationship building skills were also valued by disabled interviewees for their ability to further enhance inclusive opportunities. Disabled interviewees also recognise the interconnectedness of these two skills, highlighting how they are essential in supporting each other. Jane demonstrates:

"It's really good we can have that conversation (about extra support needed with learning drills) with our coaches and it's really important I think too, to have that good communication thing with your coach. As well as to build that relationship and be comfortable enough to talk to them about how you're feeling as well is another big thing…as they get to know you personally, and you get to know them personally. I think it's one thing you kind of build up the confidence and the comfortability to say, hey, like pretty comfortable in that sense."

Furthermore, there is a recognition that the communication and relationship building between disabled participants and coaches is a 'two-way thing':

> "Even my mate that that helps me with the (sport), It's taken him a long time to get his head around how to help me. And a lot of lot of my problem too, is I don't communicate well enough to say what I need." (Thomas, disabled interviewee)

Thomas also highlights how descriptive communication is particularly important when coaching blind people:

> "Communication would have to be paramount… I would expect them to know how to communicate to me what needs to be done. So if I'd never rowed before, I would need to have a whole boat described to me. I would need to know, I suppose it's a big thing for a coach, to be so verbal all the time. Instead of just yelling at you. More descriptive communication, than anything else. So verbal description and communication for blind."

Steven adds that there are also a number of 'small' things that help with communication for Deaf people:

> "(y)ou gotta get a deaf person's attention first before speaking with them, that's key, you know, eye contact before communication is really important. Lots of small things like that makes communication work for deaf people. And hearing people need to know about these things."

These 'small things' have also proven useful for Jess in her experiences coaching people who had cochlear implants, explaining:

> "And it's just a matter of kind of knowing that you need to be in front of them when you're talking to them and stuff like that. So that you know, any, you've got their eye contact and

those kinds of bits and pieces. You know, just little bits and pieces like that just to make things

a little bit easier for them."

As well as the value of communication, disabled participants further highlighted how building rapport and a good relationship can help to also support the co-construction of knowledge between the athlete and coach. Ella describes:

"(T)his particular coach was really good. So like, he built rapport really quickly with me. And because I was comfortable talking with them, and we had like that friendly banter it, was it was easy. Like, I didn't feel uncomfortable, whereas if was somebody who, like, for example, if it was the first person who, like, you know… hadn't built that rapport and he asked me straight off the bat, depending on how he asked, obviously, then I'd feel a little bit awkward diving into all of it…I feel like if we hadn't built that report, I probably wouldn't have told him a lot of other stuff. So I don't know. If I hadn't told him the other stuff, I feel like he wouldn't have come up with the challenges that, that pushed my limits because he wouldn't know how to."

Thomas also comments:

"I can't just expect people to go… 'This is what you need to be doing' when they've never been blind. So, I need to communicate what it's like for me. And I don't think you can just say to coaches, this is what you need to do. The person themselves who's got to work with you, they've got to work together. There's just no rules. Everybody's different. And it's the same with the sighted, eh? When you've got a coach working with somebody, it's that connection? And you've got to have that connection."

Suggesting where to start with building rapport with disabled interviewees, Jane shares:

"Just having a little chat to them, I guess, like, just chat about who they are and what they like to, you know, share about themselves. You know, yeah, that make sense?"

Looking to the findings of Chapter 4 b) 'Knowing' and the obvious support coaches require to better 'know the individual' they are coaching, the communication and relationship building findings identified by disabled interviewees above could therefore be an important consideration for coaches in ascertaining knowledge about the individual they are coaching. Interpersonal skills are also considered a core component of effective coaching practice (Côté & Gilbert, 2009), thus highlighting the importance of including relationship building and communication skills within coach development opportunities, not only for developing effective coaching practice more broadly, but to enhance the inclusion of disabled people specifically in coaching practice.

4.4.3 Impairment Specific 'Things'

As well as the many 'small' inter-personal skills that can support coaches to better include disabled people, there are also several impairment-specific actions and considerations for coaches to take into account to further facilitate quality experiences for disabled people. Considering the perspective of a wheelchair user, Ella comments:

"(the environment) needs to be physically accessible, because if it's not accessible, that causes me a lot of anxiety."

Leah adds that the ground surfacing in particular is also an important consideration for her as a wheelchair user:

"I don't know, because like, for example, we would play a game on the field and playing for me on the grass it's really hard, but he could have taken that game and played it in the school gym. Because I can get around to the gym. So it's just things like that. Yeah"

Considerations from the perspective of a blind interviewee who has no functional vision also includes physical guidance:

> "There's nothing worse for me as a total blind to be left standing. Not knowing what I've, where I could go or what I can do. You can hear everything going on around you and you want to be involved in that. So all you need is somebody to say right, hook onto my shoulder and I'll walk in to wherever and this is what we're going to do."

As a Deaf person who uses NZSL to communicate, Steven adds the most important thing to support his inclusion in sport is access to an interpreter:

> "For example, if I was to play with hearing people with an interpreter there, I would be able to be fully involved and I'd be able to interact and communicate, but without them, It's a lot harder."

From her perspective as an intellectually disabled athlete, Jane shares that as well as the patience suggested above, there are things that coaches can do to support her in learning new skills, noting earlier that it can sometimes take her longer to learn new skills and rules, comparative to her non-disabled peers:

> "Yeah, yeah, I guess as well as going through it, like walking it through first, like of, like, instead of rushing it, and just doing it and doing it, it's just like walking us through it. So like, one person goes there, then this person goes there, or this person goes there, or this person catches a ball, that sort of thing. So like, really, each person's got a different thing to do. And we swap the roles as well, when we kind of picked it up. So we know different people in different places. And then we start like making more of a jogg it through and then it's running it through properly. And then it's the game. But it can take a while. Like, yeah. (laughs)"

Aroha also recognises the value of this approach in her community coaching setting, demonstrating the interlink between coaching pedagogy and accessibility:

> *"So you can have, and I do, I have some really complicated drills that I've drawn that I look at and go oh, God, I have no idea what I'm drawing. Let alone how to explain this. So you can have really complicated drills that you want someone to do. But if you break it right down and start at step one, and move logically through the steps, everyone will get it. Full stop."*

Disabled interviewees also shared more 'small' things that coaches can do to further support their inclusion in mainstream sport, that are broader than the physical dimensions of access highlighted above. Ella suggests that coaches' being proactive in initiating introductions and actively encouraging the inclusion of the disabled person within the team environment is really important:

> *"And like, if it's a sport that or an activity that's with other people, then getting the coach to introduce, make the opportunity to for everybody to be introduced or like mix and mingle, so they get to know people, which is actually a huge thing, especially in the disability community, because I guess a lot of people with disabilities, like later on probably feel more left out. And by themselves, they don't really interact as much as they feel like they should. And so being out and about and actually being part of something and mingling with people…It kind of builds your self-esteem a little bit as well, because you're like, oh, this wasn't so bad. Like, I made friends and like I had a good time. And, you know… Yeah, like you kind of want the coach to do like the first step… like, tries to find the commonalities between the people and get them to talk on it. And, you know, or like, pair, buddy them up so they can do learning together. So they've got somebody else there, so they don't feel left alone."*

Ella also explains how having a support person with her is another enabler to participation:

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"(Being able to) bring a person with you, because then that way, obviously, it helps that person

to feel a bit more comfortable because they might not be comfortable going by themselves."

Such practical advice from the perspectives of disabled people that extends beyond the more common general skills and advice for coaches is largely absent in existing coach education research. While illustrating the different dimensions of access that coaches need to consider in their practices, these findings also direct focus back to conversations on access relative to an individual's impairment, which research has commonly shied away from (Townsend et al., 2017). While adding to a relatively unreported area of literature, these findings also have the potential for providing coaches with pragmatic considerations to implement within their future coaching practices. Such practical recommendations come with a caveat however, that impairment specific considerations must be taken into account alongside the disabled individual's personal experience and individual preferences, so as to not reinforce medicalised, deficit models of disability (Townsend et al., 2017).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This research initially set out to address the question: '*how through coach education can we improve coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream sport'.* The research analysis and supporting discussion in Chapter 4 have gone some way to answering this, by outlining opportunities for coaches to improve their practices at a relational level with disabled people as well as identifying both the challenges and opportunities to improve disability specific coach education at a systemic level. However, much of the analysis contributes to a greater understanding of the wider factors at play within the mainstream sporting system that are currently counterproductive to achieving fully inclusive opportunities. In part, this shift in focus was driven by the advisory group and disabled participants as well as my intent to privilege their experiences. As such, by centralising their perspectives the attention is directed to; the barriers to achieving inclusion in community mainstream sport, issues in coaching practice and knowledge, and the implications for coaching practice, coach developers, and coach education systems. The implications for researchers doing inclusive research and centralising athlete voice are also given focus before concluding with my researcher reflections.

5.1 Athlete Voice and Implications for Coaching Practice

Through ascertaining the voice of disabled athletes, the findings of this research were consistent with existing literature in that disabled athletes commonly wanted to be treated 'the same' as their non-disabled peers in sport (Douglas and Hardin, 2014; Cregan et al., 2007). *But* their impairment can and does impact on their experiences in sport, and therefore must be considered within coaching practice (Culver & Werthner, 2018). The findings of this research also add to the existing literature by demonstrating that being treated 'the same' meant coaches recognising, validating, and meeting the athletic aspirations of disabled athletes as they would with their non-disabled athletes, and furthermore that a sense of belonging within a mainstream team can also contribute to disabled

participants feeling the 'same' as non-disabled athletes For coaches, pragmatically this means understanding and meeting the individual athletic aspirations and motivations of their disabled athlete, and that facilitating a sense of belonging within mainstream teams is important (Maher, McVeigh, Thomson & Knight, 2022), especially for athletes wanting to feel the 'same' as their non-disabled peers. The findings further suggest that facilitating an inclusive environment can be achieved by enabling introductions between team players and setting an expectation as the coach that everyone is included and valued.

This research also highlighted the need for coaches to understand athletes' preferences in sport, their goals, their abilities, and what motivates and challenges them from both within and outside of sport, as well as an understanding of any impairment effects, physical accessibility barriers, and any 'small things' you can do to facilitate an inclusive experience. Such holistic understanding of the individual aligns with the findings of Townsend et al., (2015) & Allan et al., (2020) whereby 'knowing the individual' goes beyond the 'player-centred' model often referred to by coaches and coach developers, recognising that disability and impairment effects can, and indeed do impact on the coaching practice. Simply put, for coaches this means ascertaining, listening, and responding to the holistic needs of disabled athletes. Moreover, a multidimensional understanding of the individual that considers the individual's abilities and impairment effects can also support coaches to make the necessary adaptations to coaching practices that further support the inclusion of disabled people, without assuming the abilities of the individual.

Consistent with existing literature, disabled interviewees within this research also valued coaches who built a good relationship with them and their wider support networks (Fairhurst et al., 2016; Townsend et al., 2019). This research also identified how a strong coach-athlete relationship can support coaches to gain the holistic understanding of the disabled person, as recommend above. Further to this, the inter-personal skills that are referenced as being 'essential' in both disability sports

coaching and wider mainstream coaching literature were also found to be important from the perspectives of disabled people in this study. Coaches who were encouraging, enthusiastic, empathetic, and patient were valued by disabled participants for their ability to support the individual's inclusion in sport.

While existing research has identified how coaches are commonly fearful of 'the unknown' (Townsend et al., 2017; Wareham et al., 2018) this research both supports and adds to this notion by affirming that such fear was also noticeable by disabled participants who had received negative experiences from notably 'uncertain' and 'awkward' coaches. Interestingly however, the findings of this research also demonstrated how disabled people did not mind such fear and uncertainty, so long as the coach was willing to develop their knowledge and understanding alongside the disabled person, to co-create quality, inclusive opportunities for them as an individual. Disabled participants also suggest to coaches that gaining practical experience supporting disabled people both within and outside of sport can help to reduce such feelings of fear and uncertainty, as can learning from disability sport coaches, and individuals and organisations who support disabled people outside of sport.

5.2 Implications for Coach Developers and Coach Education

Moving to the systematic implications of this research, national coach developers are generally unsure where to start with developing disability specific coach education opportunities for their sport and coaching system. Further compounding this issue, national coach developers are also unsure where they can go to for support and guidance on where to start, suggesting a lack of consideration of disability at national trainer and leadership level. This is a new finding within coach developer research; but nevertheless, it is a significant concern. Despite this lack of support and knowledge however, there is still a genuine desire among coach developers to provide more education opportunities for their coaches, and in-turn more opportunities for disabled people to participate in

their relative sports. There is also a recognition among developers that they first need some education themselves on disability and inclusion before they can begin to influence their respective systems. At a national level there is an opportunity to lead a cross-code education offering that can therefore support national coach developers to gain knowledge on disability and inclusion, to in turn support them in delivering coach education opportunities for their own coaching and educator networks. It is also apparent that the coach developers in this study had a very narrow, medicalised view of disability, alongside minimal, if any knowledge of key documents and policies that support the inclusion of disabled people in sport in New Zealand (e.g., the Sport New Zealand Disability Plan, New Zealand Disability Plan and UNCRDP). Education on disability that does not reinforce medicalised, deficit views, as well as education on these key inclusive policies are suggested starting points for coach developer education.

Looking at the coach education system more broadly, the double bind of exclusion identified in this study demonstrates a significant opportunity and need for the transformation of coach education practices. In illustrating a double bind of exclusion, the low visibility of disabled people participating in mainstream sport and the invisibility of disability within existing coach education opportunities are both contributing to the exclusion of disabled people. There is evidence to suggest that both exclusions are interlinked, causing cyclical, self-perpetuating exclusion. The most significant opportunity for coach developers to address this cyclical exclusion lies within the visibility of disability within existing and future coach education opportunities. The findings of this research recommend enhanced visibility of disability through coach development roles, the 'infusion' of disability within coach education practices, and finally the 'inclusion' and addition of impairment specific information (Townsend et al., 2021), that is co-designed with disabled people themselves.

When disability is not reflected in coach education opportunities it unintentionally sets a precedent for coaches that they are not likely going to include disabled people in their practice. The

exclusion of disability within coach education also positions disability as optional, and further reinforces disabled people as 'other' within the 'institution' that is coach education. Therefore, the invisibility of disability is perpetuating institutionalised ableism (Lalvani, & Broderick, 2013).

Because there is no universal agreement on the most effective or popular method of coach education as identified in existing research and within this research study, it is recommended that disability specific coaching content is both imbedded throughout existing coach education avenues, as well as being provided in more detailed formats. Such actions ensure that one: at a bare minimum, all coaches are seeing and engaging with disability content in some capacity, and two, it ensures there are avenues of support available for coaches who want to search for more detailed, practical information when it is 'needed'.

Regarding what kind of knowledge to 'include' and 'infuse' however, it was obvious within this research that coaches need support with gaining a multidimensional and holistic understanding of the disabled athlete they are coaching. Coaches also demonstrated a need for guidance on building relationships with disabled athletes, including support on suggested ways to ask 'appropriate' questions. Given that 'knowing the individual' has been positioned as a fundamental piece of coaching knowledge within this research, it is recommended that providing support to coaches on developing effective relationships and communication with their disabled athletes is key knowledge that can be 'infused' within existing coach education practices.

The findings suggest that coaches would also value more impairment-specific information pertaining to different capabilities and challenges when participating in sport. A suggestion from disabled interviewees however is that 'small things' can make a big impact to their access of sports opportunities which can be specific to their impairment effects. A further recommendation is to again co-produce resources with disabled people that focus on the 'key' 'small things' that would make a big difference for disabled people being coached and included in sport. This is knowledge that could

be shared across-code and does not necessarily need to be sport-specific. These research findings also support recommendations from existing literature that developments in coaching knowledge - either 'infused' or 'included' - should be co-designed with disabled people who can highlight their perspectives and experiences to support coach learning (Allan et al., 2020; Cregan et al., 2007; Townsend et al., 2021; Duarte et al., 2021). Moreover, this research also recognised the need for co-designed practices to include disabled people who have diverse experiences of disability and sporting experiences.

With the growing research in this field intended to help inform the design of future coach education opportunities, there is a real need for research to now investigate the development, implementation, and effectiveness of disability specific coach education programmes. Examining both the method in co-designing coach education resources, and their effectiveness in influencing coaching practice would also prove valuable. This research has also highlighted the exciting potential that lies within indigenous knowledge to support the inclusion of disabled people in sport through inclusive coaching practice (Bevan-Brown, 2013). That is, to explore the possibilities within Māori values and te ao Māori (Māori world view) for their ability to support inclusive coaching practices.

5.3 Issues in Coaching Practice

Despite the number of opportunities that have been identified to improve coach education and coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people within the research findings, there are also a number of barriers that have been highlighted within the mainstream sporting system that are counterintuitive to achieving inclusive coaching practice ideals. That is, the inherent ableism that exists within the fabric of mainstream sport and PE, the existing structure and rules of mainstream sport, and the limited resourcing that is available to assist coaches in providing more support to disabled participants, if required. There are consequently a number of significant barriers that have

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been highlighted in this research, outside of coach education, that also need to also be addressed if mainstream sport is ever to become more inclusive of disabled people.

In response to the structural barriers identified above, it is suggested that increased resourcing and greater flexibility within current funding avenues could support NSOs to cover the additional costs of actions to support greater inclusion, i.e. funding for interpreters, extra coaching staff to allow for more 1-1 time for individuals who need more support, costs associated with making physical accessibility changes to spaces, and the flexibility and funding to trial hybrid and modified formats of games where the rules are currently precluding inclusion. In addressing the inherent ableism that exists in mainstream sport however, this research suggests how disabled people sharing their experiences of disablism and exclusion may go some way to shifting the attitudes of key influencers in mainstream sport. Currently coaches and coach developers are largely unaware of a) ableism even existing and how this is represented within their own attitudes and practices and b) the effects of such ableist attitudes and practices on the exclusion of disabled people in mainstream sport, and the psycho-emotional impacts of disabled athletes.

5.4 Inclusive Research and Centralising Athlete Voice – Implications for Future Research

Unique to this study in the field of disability sports coaching, this research has also highlighted the value of employing a disability research advisory group for the co-construction of knowledge in this research context specifically. As well as providing a level of validity to the research that enables findings to be checked and contextualised by disabled people themselves (Kitchin, 2000), the use of a disability advisory group in this setting also enabled the recruitment of information-rich participants that were not accessible to me as a non-disabled researcher, as well as the development of invoking interview guides that elicited rich data, as evident in Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions.

Establishing an advisory group for this research project has also initiated an ongoing relationship and commitment to the DAG, who are interested in further developing the ideas and findings of this research, with two advisory group members already expressing their interest in supporting the publication of the research. Employing an advisory and inclusive approach to this research has also influenced and benefitted my professional work, whereby DAG members from this research have also provided insight and guidance to benefit outcomes for disabled people outside of this research project. Thus, it is a recommendation for future researchers in the field of disability sports coaching to consider more inclusive research methods in their practice, for the opportunity it affords to discover more nuanced and pragmatic findings both within and beyond the context of empirical research.

5.5 Researcher Reflections

In reflecting on this research, I hold a cautious optimism for the potential of coach education to improve coaching practices to be more inclusive of disabled people in mainstream sport, in Aotearoa New Zealand. The genuine desire by coaches and coach developers to provide more opportunities for coaches within education, and for disabled people within their sports is encouraging, as is the potential of our indigenous knowledge to further inclusion in sport. However, the significant gaps in the knowledge of coach developers surrounding disability and inclusion and the lack of support available for coach developers to enhance this knowledge, coupled with the double-bind of exclusiondiscovered within the invisibility of disability in coach education and disabled people in mainstream sport, present significant, systemic challenges to navigate. Such findings add a novel contribution to existing coaching research. These findings alone highlight concern for the potential of mainstream sport to become fully inclusive, that is without even considering the ingrained, ableist views and competitiveness that is woven in the fabric of mainstream sport in New Zealand, or the structural rules and systems within mainstream sport that preclude full inclusion. Needless to say, understanding

inclusion within mainstream sport really is the enigma that McBean et al., (2021) have described it to be.

Despite these competing challenges however, I hope this research can provide a useful starting point for influencing practice in the field that considers how action can be implemented at both a relational and systemic level for coaches, coach developers, and wider system influencers. Additionally, I hope this research provides a useful base for future research to explore the potential effectiveness of co-production in coach education resource development. I am excited by the interest this research has generated among wider industry professionals, as well as within the community of coaches, coach developers, disabled people and DAG members that have been integral to this research.

Finally, it is imperative to finish by highlighting how integral the Disability Advisory Group have been throughout this knowledge production process. Without them, the findings of this research would have been significantly different, and I simply would not have been able to elicit such pragmatic, nuanced findings alone. I hope this research has given greater volume to the voices and experiences of disabled people in sport, while illuminating a path forward to navigate the many challenges and opportunities that lay ahead for coach education and improving inclusive coaching practice in mainstream sport in New Zealand. With the ongoing support of the disability advisory group, my supervisors, and wider stakeholders in the sector, I am sure this is only the beginning of my inclusive research journey.

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Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
Te Kura Kete Aronui
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4080
www.waikato.ac.nz/fass

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Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Participant Information Sheet- *Disabled athletes/participants*

Enhancing inclusion in sport: Requirements for the development of quality disability and inclusion coach education programmes

Who is doing the research?

Katie Owen, from the University of Waikato.

What is the purpose of the research?

The research is for a Masters research project which aims to provide a set of recommendations to support the development of future coach education programmes that aim to upskill coaches on disability and inclusion, to ultimately enhance inclusion within mainstream sport.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked about your experiences of being involved in sport, your experiences of being coached in sport, and on your opinions of what quality coaching means to you. You are welcome to have a support person(s)/network along with you for this process.

This information will be recorded, and you will have an opportunity to review this, and make any changes, before the information is analysed.

Where will this take place?

This will take place in person, at a location of your choosing, but if this is not possible, it will take place online via Zoom.

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

Yes, you can withdraw at any time up to three weeks after the interview by communicating to the researcher in a method chosen by you (e.g by text, email, phone call, video, letter etc.) that you no longer wish to participate, and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing. You will be advised at the time of your interview of the date when any withdrawal must be made by. You also do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to during the interview process.

How long will it take?

The demand on your time will be minimal, we estimate 1-2 hours in total.

What personal information will be required from me?

Some personal information may be asked regarding your experiences of disability sport and on your opinions of coaching and inclusion. All information will be kept strictly confidential and shall not be kept for longer than is necessary.

Are there any risks in participating?

There are no risk to participating in this research for participants.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All data obtained from the interview, and any conversations or interactions outside of the interview in relation to this project, will be kept strictly confidential and will only be available for the researcher. Under the data protection act, interview, visual and audio data will be saved onto a password protected file. Your name, or any identifying features or details will not appear in the research unless you want to be identified. In any written accounts of the research, you will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity.

I have some more questions; who should I contact?

Please contact Katie Owen, Masters Student, School of Health, Sport and Human Performance, via email ko129@students.waikato.ac.nz or phone 027 359 4381

What will happen to the research?

The research will be used to provide recommendations to Sport New Zealand, other National Sport Organisations and organisations with a focus on coach development, on developing quality coach education programmes to support coaches to become more inclusive within mainstream sport.

The research may be published to share the recommendations with the wider research community. Should the research be published, you will be consulted beforehand to ensure you are happy with how your experiences and opinions have been represented within the study.

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

If you are not happy with how the research was conducted, please contact Katie Owen via email ko129@students.waikato.ac.nz or phone 027 359 4381 or the University ethics committee, humanethics@waikato.ac.nz. This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato as HREC(Health)2021#64.

Appendix 1 b) – Participant Information Sheet (Coaches)

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
Te Kura Kete Aronui
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4080
www.waikato.ac.nz/fass

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Participant Information Sheet- *Coaches*

Enhancing inclusion in sport: Requirements for the development of quality disability and inclusion coach education programmes

Who is doing the research?

Katie Owen, from the University of Waikato.

What is the purpose of the research?

The research is for a Masters research project which aims to provide a set of recommendations to support the development of future coach education programmes that aim to upskill coaches on disability and inclusion, to ultimately enhance inclusion within mainstream sport.

What will I be asked to do?
You will be asked about your experiences coaching sport and including disabled people, and on your thoughts regarding disability coach education opportunities.

This information will be recorded, and you will have an opportunity to review this, and make any changes, before the information is analysed.

This is to support us to better understand the needs of coaches, to ultimately enhance disability and inclusion development opportunities. You are welcome to have a support person(s)/network along with you for this process.

Where will this take place?
This will take place in person, at a location of your choosing, but if this is not possible, it will take place online via Zoom.

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

Yes, you can withdraw at any time up to three weeks after the interview by communicating to the researcher in a method chosen by you (e.g by text, email, phone call, video, letter etc.) that you no longer wish to participate, and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing. You will be advised at the time of your interview of the date when any withdrawal must be made by. You also do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to during the interview process.

How long will it take?

The demand on your time will be minimal, we estimate 1-2 hours in total.

What personal information will be required from me?

Some personal information may be asked regarding your experiences as a coach and coaching disabled people, as well as your opinions regarding the further support required to facilitate quality experiences for disabled people in sport. All information will be kept strictly confidential and shall not be kept for longer than is necessary.

Are there any risks in participating?

There are no risks to participating in this research for participants.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All data obtained from the interview, and any conversations or interactions outside of the interview in relation to this project, will be kept strictly confidential and will only be available for the researcher. Under the data protection act, interview, visual and audio data will be saved onto a password protected file. Your name, or any identifying features or details will not appear in the research unless you want to be identified. In any written accounts of the research, you will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity.

I have some more questions; who should I contact?

Please contact Katie Owen, Masters Student, School of Health, Sport and Human Performance, via email ko129@students.waikato.ac.nz or phone 027 359 4381

What will happen to the research?

The research will be used to provide recommendations to Sport New Zealand, other National Sport Organisations and organisations with a focus on coach development, on developing quality coach education programmes to support coaches to become more inclusive within mainstream sport.

The research may be published to share the recommendations with the wider research community. Should the research be published, you will be consulted beforehand to ensure you are happy with how your experiences and opinions have been represented within the study.

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

If you are not happy with how the research was conducted, please contact Katie Owen via email ko129@students.waikato.ac.nz or phone 027 359 4381 or the University ethics committee, humanethics@waikato.ac.nz.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato as HREC(Health)2021#64.

Appendix 1 c) - Participant Information Sheet (Coach Developers)

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
Te Kura Kete Aronui
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4080
www.waikato.ac.nz/fass

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Participant Information Sheet- *Coach Developers*

Enhancing inclusion in sport: Requirements for the development of quality disability and inclusion coach education programmes

Who is doing the research?

Katie Owen, from the University of Waikato.

What is the purpose of the research?

The research is for a Masters research project which aims to provide a set of recommendations to support the development of future coach education programmes that aim to upskill coaches on disability and inclusion, to ultimately enhance inclusion within mainstream sport.

What will I be asked to do?
You will be asked about your experiences and current practices as a coach developer, and on your thoughts regarding disability coach education opportunities.

This information will be recorded, and you will have an opportunity to review this, and make any changes, before the information is analysed.

This is to support us to better understand the needs of, and opportunities identified by, coach developers, to ultimately enhance disability and inclusion development opportunities. You are welcome to have a support person(s)/network along with you for this process.

Where will this take place?
This will take place in person, at a location of your choosing, but if this is not possible, it will take place online via Zoom.

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

Yes, you can withdraw at any time up to three weeks after the interview by communicating to the researcher in a method chosen by you (e.g by text, email, phone call, video, letter etc.) that you no longer wish to participate, and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing. You will be advised at the time of your interview of the date when any withdrawal must be made by. You also do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to during the interview process.

How long will it take?

The demand on your time will be minimal, we estimate 1-2 hours in total.

What personal information will be required from me?

Some personal information may be asked regarding your experiences as a coach developer, your current policies and practices regarding coach development and learning, and regarding the further support required by coach developers specific to disability and inclusion in sport. All information will be kept strictly confidential and shall not be kept for longer than is necessary.

Are there any risks in participating?

There are no risk to participating in this research for participants.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All data obtained from the interview, and any conversations or interactions outside of the interview in relation to this project, will be kept strictly confidential and will only be available for the researcher. Under the data protection act, interview, visual and audio data will be saved onto a password protected file. Your name, or any identifying features or details will not appear in the research unless you want to be identified. In any written accounts of the research, you will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity.

I have some more questions; who should I contact?

Please contact Katie Owen, Masters Student, School of Health, Sport and Human Performance, via email ko129@students.waikato.ac.nz or phone 027 359 4381

What will happen to the research?

The research will be used to provide recommendations to Sport New Zealand, other National Sport Organisations and organisations with a focus on coach development, on developing quality coach education programmes to support coaches to become more inclusive within mainstream sport.

The research may be published to share the recommendations with the wider research community. Should the research be published, you will be consulted beforehand to ensure you are happy with how your experiences and opinions have been represented within the study.

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

If you are not happy with how the research was conducted, please contact Katie Owen via email ko129@students.waikato.ac.nz or phone 027 359 4381 or the University ethics committee, humanethics@waikato.ac.nz.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato as HREC(Health)2021#64

Appendix 2 – Informed Consent

Faculty of Arts & Social
Sciences
Te Kura Kete Aronui
The University of
Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New
Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4080
www.waikato.ac.nz/fass

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Informed Consent
(to be completed after the participant information sheet has been read).

Enhancing inclusion: Recommendations for the development of quality disability and inclusion coach education programmes

The purpose and details of the research have been explained to me. I understand that all procedures have been approved by the University Human Research Ethics Committee.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that I am under no obligation to take part.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage, up until 3 weeks after the interview takes place, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence.	Yes ☐	No ☐
I agree to participate in the project.	Yes ☐	No ☐

Your name

Your signature

Signature of investigator

Appendix 3 a) – Interview Schedule (Disabled Participants)

Interview Schedule- *Disabled participants*

Objectives: To understand from disabled people what they believe is a quality coaching experience, what they expect from coaches, what they would like coaches do to enact inclusion and what education they feel coaches need.

Guide

- *Introductions*
- *Summary of the research*
- *Participant information*
- *Obtain informed consent.*

1. **Background:**

   Tell me a bit about yourself

   Do you identify as disabled? Why?

2. **Participation and inclusion in sport:**

   My research aims to provide some recommendations to help educate coaches on how to better include disabled people in mainstream sport.

   Tell me a bit about the sports you like to play or have been involved with. Do you currently participate in sport?

   Have these experiences have been in mainstream or disability sports?
   Was this way of participating your preference?

   Regardless of preference, what has encouraged you to participate in mainstream or disability sport? What kept you coming back?

   How important do you think it is for disabled people to be included in mainstream sport?

3. **Coaching:**

Tell me about your coaches. What is your relationship like with them? Do you feel they meet your needs as both a disabled person and an athlete?
Do you think your impairment impacts on you participating in sport and the relationship you have with a coach? Why?

Can you give me a couple of examples where a coach made you feel included in sport? How did they achieve this?

Can you tell me about any negative experiences or interactions you have had with coaches?

Do you think coaching disability sport is different to coaching disabled people in mainstream sport? Why? Is there anything you think a mainstream sports coach could learn from a disability-specific sports coach?

Coaches use a range of techniques when they're teaching skills and drills to players. Can you describe some of the techniques that your coach used? Could you describe anything that was modified for you? What is anything did the coach do to make these accessible for you?

Coaches are generally not trained to coach disabled people. What training do you think is needed for coaches to provide the best support to athletes?

If you were educating coaches on how to better include disabled people in mainstream sport, what key things would you like coaches to consider?

Is there anything coaches *need* to know to coach and include disabled people?

Sometimes coaches are afraid to coach disabled people in mainstream sport. A common thing I hear is a "fear of the unknown" or being scared to "do or say the wrong thing"- What advice would you give to coaches to encourage their involvement?

Imagine you're going to a new sporting activity, and you're told its going to be fully inclusive and you're guaranteed a quality experience. What does that quality, inclusive experience look like for you? What do you expect the coach to be like, and how to they create a quality experience?

Appendix 3 b) – Interview Schedule (Coaches)

Interview Schedule- *Coaches*

Objectives: To understand what education and support community level coaches feel is necessary to support them to better include disabled people within their mainstream sports.

Guide

- *Introductions*
- *Summary of the research*
- *Participant information*
- *Obtain informed consent.*

1. **Background:**

   Can you tell me a bit about yourself and how you got into coaching?

2. **Coaching and inclusion in sport:**

   My research aims to provide some recommendations to help educate coaches on how to better include disabled people in mainstream sport, to start with we'd really like to get a good understanding of your experiences as a coach.

   Can you tell me a bit about the sports you have been involved with coaching?
   Have these experiences been in mainstream or disability sports?

   Have you worked with people with impairments? What was your relationship like with them?

   From your perspective as a coach, can you tell me what inclusive coaching is and what that looks like for you?

   As coaches, you use a range of techniques when teaching skills and drills to players. Can you describe some of the techniques that you have used when coaching a disabled person?

Do these techniques differ to coaching a non-disabled person?

What challenges do you face when including disabled people within sport?
For example, people within our advisory group are interested in understanding how you might respond to including a deaf person who turns up to your session.

3.   **Coach education:**

A big part of our research is understanding how coach education can improve coaching practices to better include disabled people in mainstream sport.

Can you tell me about the education opportunities you have received to date within your sport. Has there been any disability specific information shared within these opportunities?

We appreciate that coaches are generally not trained to coach disabled people. As a coach, what information do you wish to know to improve your practices to better include disabled people?
        Would impairment-specific knowledge be useful? Why/why not?

What types of education opportunities would be useful to build your knowledge and confidence?
        Is it a one off, do you need to revisit the information over time, practice in
        the field etc.

Some people within our advisory group believe that some level of experience is useful when coaching disabled people e.g. using a blindfold to understand specific techniques within blind football for example. How would you feel participating in a learning experience such as this?

Sometimes coaches are afraid to coach disabled people in mainstream sport. A common thing I hear is a "fear of the unknown" or being scared to "do or say the wrong thing"- Is this something that resonates with you?
What support could be given to coaches to reduce the feelings of uncertainty around this?

Appendix 3 c) – Interview Schedule (Coach Developers)

Interview Schedule- *Coach Developers*

Objectives: To understand what resourcing and support is required by the coach developers of the 5 NSOs, to enable disability and inclusion coach education to be embedded within their education practices.

Guide

- *Introductions*
- *Summary of the research*
- *Participant information*
- *Obtain informed consent.*

1. **Background:**

   Can you tell me a bit about your Coach Developer role and how you got into this position? Have you worked with disabled people before?

2. **Disability and Inclusion in sport:**

   My research aims to help find out more about how we can educate coaches on better including disabled people in mainstream sport.

   To start with, can you tell me a bit about your understanding of Disability?

   What does inclusion mean to you and how have you developed this understanding?

3. **Coach learning experiences:**

   We'd really like to get a good understanding of the learning experiences that (your organisation) develops and offers to your coaching community.

   Can you tell me a bit about the learning experiences or qualifications that coaches of your sport are required to undertake to coach your support?

   Can you tell me a bit about the learning opportunities that are available for coaches that aren't necessarily a requirement?
   How is disability and inclusion addressed within these opportunities, if at all?
   How can disability be embedded in existing coach education?
   Where in the 'pathway'?

4. **Inclusive coaching and the disability specific coach education:**

Our research is supported by an Advisory Group of people with a lived experience of disability, and they are really interested in what your understanding is of documents and policies that support the inclusion of disabled people in sport, such as the Sport NZ Disability Plan, the NZ Disability Strategy the United Nations Convention on the Rights of people with disabilities and how that relates to your work in developing coached for your sport?
Are these a point of reference for you?

What would it take to develop coach capability to understand how to be inclusive of disabled sportspeople in their coaching?
    What resources do you think are needed?
    What support as a coach developer do you need?

Through our research to date we've been given some recommendations from disabled people on what they would like coaches to know, and from coaches on the education opportunities they would see as being valuable for their development.

For example, our advisory group are interested in:
- Understanding whether there is room within your current rules and coach education to be more inclusive of disabled people
- Whether you have considered how key elements of your existing coach education practices can apply to including disabled people. For example communication has been raised as a key topic of education in our discussions.
- What are your thoughts about balancing the physical playing of the game but the psychological, social elements that are equally as important for the coach to consider when including disabled people?
- What are your thoughts on having disabled coach developers supporting your coach education opportunities? They say that people learn more from someone who has a lived experience might support greater education opportunities for inclusive coaching.

What are the biggest challenges for you as a coach developer in providing opportunities for coaches to better include disabled people in mainstream sport?
- Can you tell me a bit about the opportunities you see within your sport to develop your coach education practices to be more inclusive of disabled people?
- What support would be required for your organisation to implement changes to your coach education opportunities?
- How can this be improved – what are the opportunities you see to embed content?

Appendix 4 – Ethics Approval

The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105 Gate 1, Knighton Road
Hamilton, New Zealand

Human Research Ethics Committee
Roger Moltzen
Telephone: +64021658119
Email:humanethics@waikato.ac.nz

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

30 August 2021

Katherine Owen
Te Huataki Waiora School of
HealthDHECS
By email: katiezowen@gmail.com

Dear Katherine

HREC(Health)2021#64: Enhancing inclusion: Recommendations for the development ofquality disability and inclusion coach education programmes

Thank you for your responses to the Committee feedback.

We are now pleased to provide formal approval for your project.

Please contact the Committee by email (humanethics@waikato.ac.nz) if you wish to make changes to your project as it unfolds, quoting your application number with your future correspondence. Any minor changes or additions to the approved research activities can behandled outside the monthly application cycle.

We wish you all the best with your

research.Regards,

_____
Emeritus Professor Roger Moltzen
MNZMChairperson
University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee