An Investigation of Classifiers' Perceptions of Working with Athletes with a Disability

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Quality Participation Framework

Allan, Smith, Côté, Martin Ginis, Latimer-Cheung, 2017; Martin Ginis, Evans, Mortenson, & Noreau, 2017; Sport England, 2017

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Quality Participation Framework

Evans et al., 2018; https://cdpp.ca/

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Current Understandings of the Classification Experience

- Classification plays a critical role within Para sport

- Evidence supporting technical aspects of classification (e.g., establishing statistical validity of classification tests)

- Evidence to show the impact of effective coaching on quality participation experiences

- Lack of research focused on the classification **experience**, or on classifiers themselves

Sherrill, 1999; Shirazipour, Evans, Leo, Lithopoulos, Martin Ginis, & Latimer-Cheung, 2018
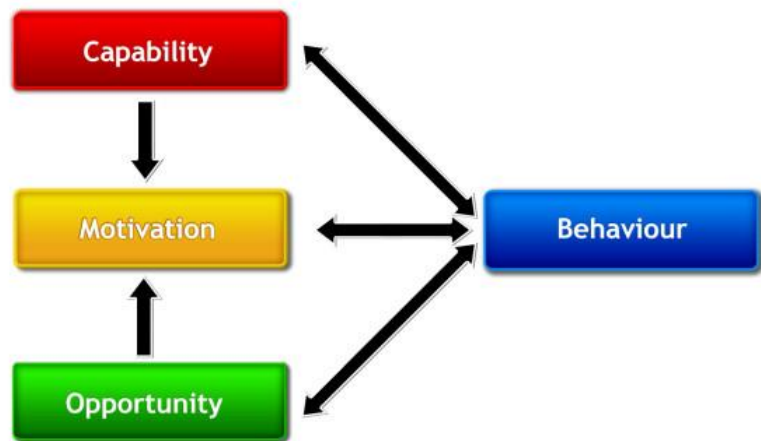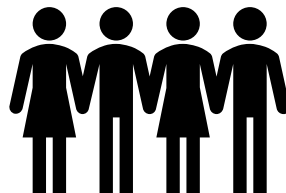
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COM-B & Learning Pathways

Formal

Non-formal

Informal

Michie, Atkins, & West, 2014; Nelson, Cushion,& Potrac, 2006

Study Objectives

To explore the demographic characteristics of classifiers

To examine classifiers' perceptions of their capability, opportunity, and motivation to work with athletes with disabilities

To investigate issues relating to learning and development pathways, thoughts and beliefs, and behaviours among classifiers
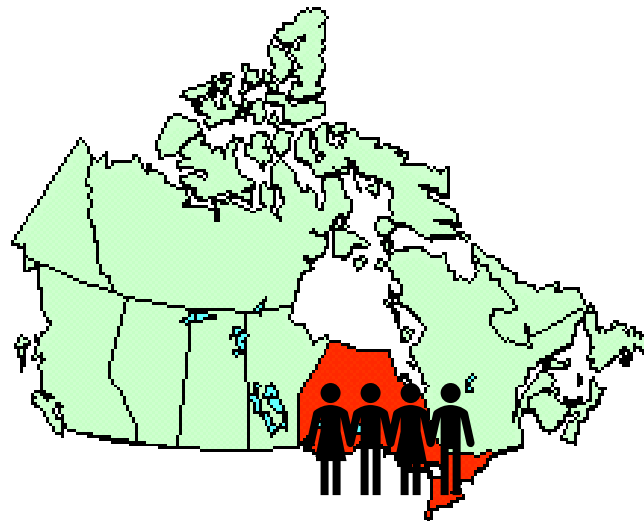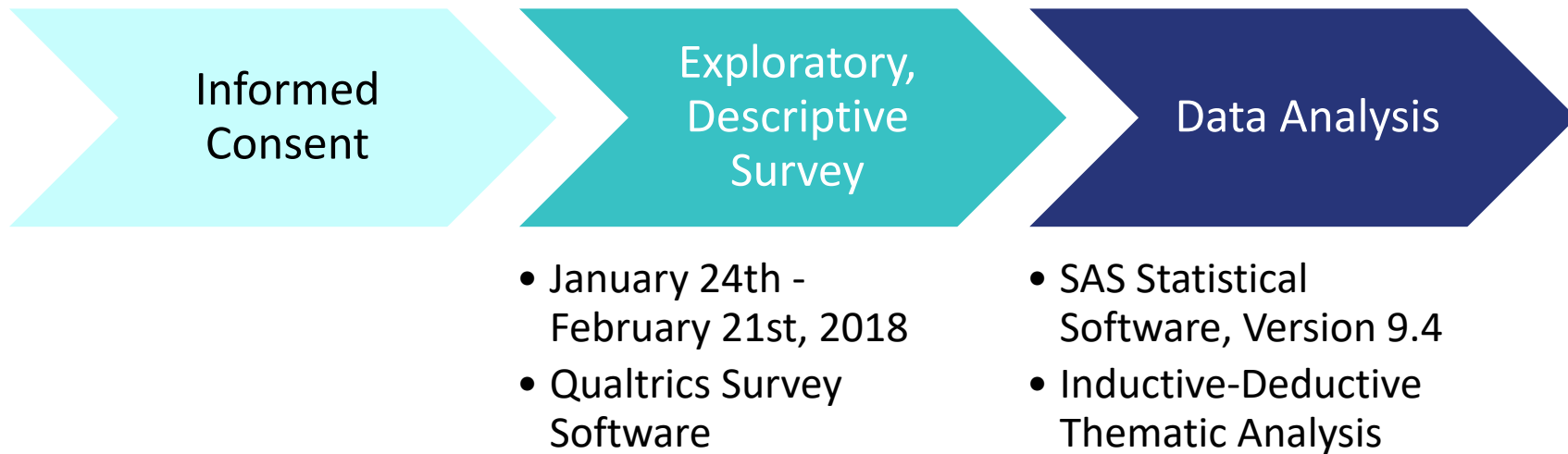
Participants

- 12 Classifiers
- Over the age of 18
- Currently or formerly classified within the Province of Ontario

Study Design

Informed Consent

Exploratory, Descriptive Survey

- January 24th - February 21st, 2018
- Qualtrics Survey Software

Data Analysis

- SAS Statistical Software, Version 9.4
- Inductive-Deductive Thematic Analysis

Braun, Clarke, & Weate, 2016; Michie et al., 2011; Nelson et al., 2006

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Measures

Demographic Questionnaire

COM-B and Coach Motivation Questionnaire

Sources of Knowledge

Open Ended Questions
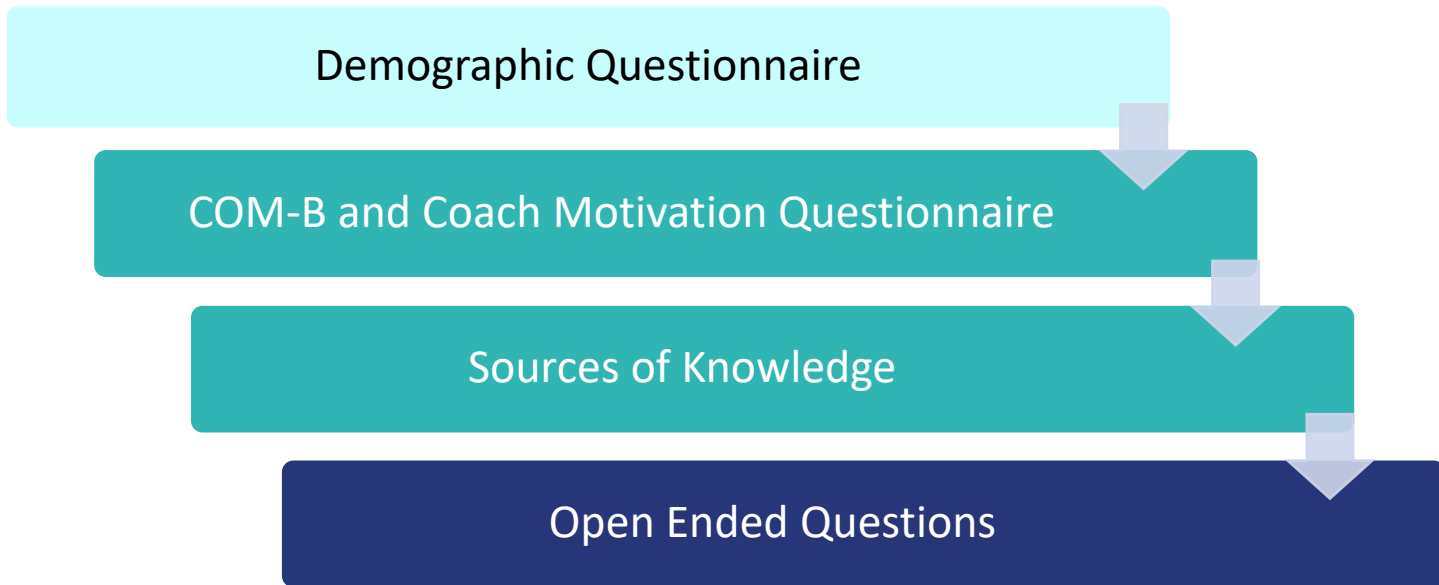
Deci & Ryan, 2000; McLean, Mallett, & Newcombe, 2012; Nelson et al., 2006; Erickson, Bruner, MacDonald, & Côté, 2008; Erickson, Côté, & Fraser-Thomas, 2007

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Classifier Backgrounds

Characteristic	*N*	%
Total Participants	12	100
Age		
25-34	1	8.33
35-44	2	16.67
45-54	5	41.67
55-64	3	25.00
65+	1	8.33

Classifier Backgrounds

Characteristic		N	%
Total Participants		12	100
Gender			
	Male	1	8.33
	Female	11	91.67
Education			
	College	0	0.00
	University	6	50.00
	Post-Graduate	6	50.00

Classifier Backgrounds

Characteristic		*N*	%
Total Participants		12	100
Experience in Years			
	< 1	1	8.33
	1-3	1	8.33
	4-6	2	16.67
	7-9	3	25.00
	>10	5	41.67

Classifier Backgrounds

Level of Classifier		*N*	%
	Provincial	8	66.67
	National	8	66.67
	International	7	58.33

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Classifier Backgrounds

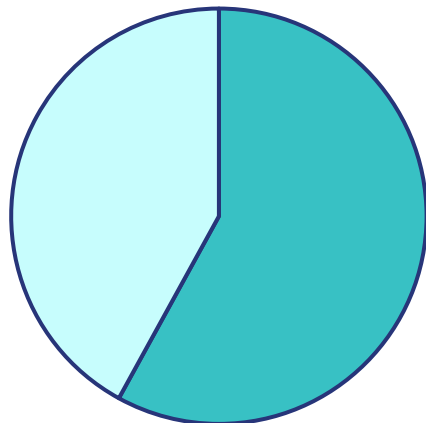| Sport	N	%	Sport	N	%
Athletics	8	66.7	Powerlifting	1	8.33
Archery	1	8.33	Rowing	1	8.33
Boccia	5	41.7	Swimming	2	16.7
Canoe/Kayak	1	8.33	Wheelchair Basketball	2	16.7
Cycling	1	8.33	Wheelchair Curling	1	8.33
Equestrian	1	8.33	Wheelchair Rugby	3	25.00
Football 5/7-a-side	2	16.7	Wheelchair Tennis	1	8.33

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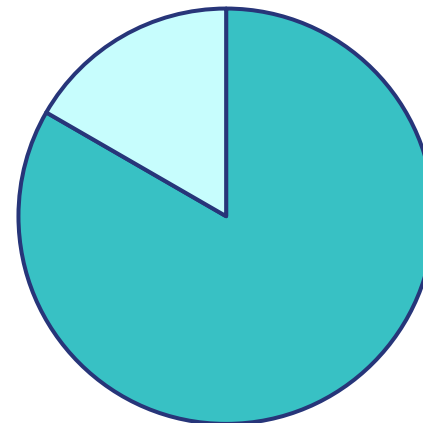
Classifier Backgrounds

58.3% of classifiers reported having a friend or family member with a physical disability.

83% of classifiers reported working with individuals with physical disabilities in other contexts.

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COM-B and Coach Motivation

COM-B	Mean	SD
Capability	6.67	0.42
Opportunity	6.16	0.73
Motivation	6.60	0.54

Coach Motivation	Mean	SD
Intrinsic	6.15	0.78
Integrated	3.97	1.55
Identified	4.50	1.45
Introjected	3.50	1.33
External	2.75	1.70
Amotivation	2.17	1.78

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Learning Pathways

Training	Mean	SD
International Sport Body	6.27	1.10
National Sport Body	5.82	1.25
Medical	5.91	1.58
Other	5.90	1.85
Learning by doing	6.27	1.27
Classifier Materials (e.g., resources)	6.18	1.25
Observing other classifiers (e.g., watching others classify live)	5.91	1.58
Interacting with other classifiers (e.g., seek advice from other classifiers, mentorship)	6.09	1.58
Individuals Planning (e.g., time spent alone reflecting/ developing strategies)	5.55	1.69

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Open Ended Questions

"I find it **mentally stimulating**. I very much **enjoy** interacting with the athletes, coaches and other classifiers. **I feel good** about giving my time and effort... I find it **rewarding** and I enjoy the sense of accomplishment."

"The most **challenging** aspect is **decision making between the classification team on a borderline athlete**. Providing a class to an athlete who is disappointed about the outcome is very challenging."

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Outcomes and Implications

Developed further understanding of classifiers' backgrounds

Identified classifiers' perceptions of their capabilities, opportunities, and motivation to classify athletes with disabilities

Identified intrinsic motivation as a key area of motivation among classifiers

Gained insight into the learning and development pathways of classifiers

Provides evidence for the use of the COM-B model when developing interventions specific to classifiers

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