Carrying the ball?
A critical discourse analysis of the Commonwealth Secretariat’s sport for development and peace agenda

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Abstract

While the perceived sudden closure of the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) in May 2017 has left many sport for development (SDP) scholars and practitioners pondering its future, the playing field is on the offensive to gain ground and fill the gaps caused by its withdrawal. With SDP being one of the core pillars within its sustainable development work, the Commonwealth Secretariat (CWS) has picked up the pace in producing and publishing a series of five high-level policy and advocacy resources in the period 2013-2017 with the aim of assisting governments and other stakeholders in strengthening their SDP policies and strategies. Departing from the perspective of a postcolonial and decolonization theoretical framework, this study has conducted a qualitative critical discourse analysis (CDA) with the purpose of identifying what discourses the CWS advances through the publication and dissemination of the five SDP policy and strategy documents, how the discourses draw from previous documents and texts, and how the discourses relate to mainstream SDP discourses. The findings suggest that the Commonwealth does not stand for change in the field of SDP, but largely perpetuates dominant SDP discourses related to i) why sport is uniquely positioned to strengthen development approaches; ii) in what areas of development SDP policies and strategies should be focused; and iii) whom such SDP initiatives should target. The study concludes with an argument that rather than carrying the ball in the current direction, the CWS could re-position itself as a leader in the field by adopting a postcolonial perspective going forward, thus passing the ball and changing the playing field altogether.

Keywords: The Commonwealth, sport for development and peace, critical discourse analysis, postcolonialism, decolonization
Abbreviations

CABOS: Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport
CBO: Community Based Organization
CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis
CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility
CWS: Commonwealth Secretariat
INGO: International Non-Governmental Organization
IOC: International Olympic Committee
IYSPE: International Year of Sport and Physical Education
LFA: Logical Framework Approach
MDG: Millennium Development Goals
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
RBM: Results-Based Management
RM&E: Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
SDG: Sustainable Development Goals
SDP: Sport for Development and Peace
SDP IWG: Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group
UN: United Nations
UNOSDP: United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace
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1. Introduction

As the term of Wilfried Lemke, the special adviser to the United Nations (UN) secretary-general on sport for development and peace, had come to an end in 2016 the sport for development and peace (SDP) sector was gathering in early 2017 in discussions about who António Guterres, the newly elected secretary-general, would appoint as his special adviser to head the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP). The gradually increasing acknowledgement of the sector since the formation of the UNOSDP in 2001 had culminated in the recent recognition of sport as an important enabler towards achieving the sustainable development goals (SDG). Stirring up much excitement among SDP practitioners and scholars alike who felt that sport was becoming an integral part of the development agenda. The continuation of the UNOSDP as the coordinating body of the sector was treated as a given, and SDP actors were focusing the bulk of their attention towards aligning efforts and evidencing impact towards the SDGs. And then, the unimaginable happened as António Guterres announced, in May 2017, that no new special adviser would be appointed, leading to the sudden closure of the UNOSDP. In its place, Guterres declared an intensified direct partnership between the UN and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which had gained observer status by the UN general assembly in 2009. The SDP community erupted in a common cry of shock, confusion, anxiety, and in some cases constrained optimism. Shortly following the announcement the International platform on Sport and Development (2017a) opened a call for articles encouraging discussion in the SDP community on the impact of the closure, and alternatives to progress, for the sector receiving a range of engagements from scholars and practitioners. Among the articles was “[a] call for action following the closure of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP)” issued jointly by the steering board of the International platform on Sport and Development (sportanddev.org, 2017b). In its statement the steering board expressed the need for leaders in the SDP sector to keep the momentum by stepping forward and mapping the direction and organization of the field and to engage in dialogue in three main areas; to (i) evaluate the sector in relation to high level representation and advocacy, (ii) prioritize action and next steps, and to (iii) ensure a dynamic and coherent high-level representation on policy

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1 The sportanddev.org steering board is comprised of the Commonwealth, Australian Aid, the Swiss Academy for Development, the German Federal Ministry on Economic Cooperation and Development, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF), Laureus, and Reach out to Asia.
level capable of building bridges between policy makers, researchers, and practitioners in the sector (*ibid.*).

In view of these recent developments, where powerful actors are advancing their positions to fill the vacuum created by the departure of the UNOSDP, I believe it is pertinent for us practitioners and researchers in SDP to assess and elaborate on the discourses carried forward in the field by those actors. This thesis serves as a constructive contribution in this respect by applying a postcolonial and decolonization framework to a qualitative critical discourse analysis of five SDP policy and strategy documents issued by the Commonwealth Secretariat in the period 2013-2017. The closure of the UNOSDP and the ensuing UN-IOC direct partnership could provide a timely threshold for assessing the past and reimagining the future of the SDP field. And in so doing, invite a wider audience to participate in the dialogue and formation of alternative ways for moving forward. Therefore, I have aimed to provide a brief background to the history of the SDP field, and the role of the Commonwealth, followed by a thorough literature review of SDP theory in the second and third sections of the thesis before laying the theoretical and methodological foundation in section four. The focus on the ensuing analysis and discussion in the final section rests wholeheartedly on elaborating on dominant discourses identified in the five documents, and placing the discussion of the results within the wider realm of the SDP field before concluding with a brief discussion for future considerations. Finally, this thesis inherently encompasses a self-reflective perspective to my own experiences as being both a former practitioner and active researcher in the field by critically examining SDP from a different point of view.

1.1. Research aim and focus

As outlined above the research problem of this study departs from the “call for action” issued by the steering board of the International platform on Sport and Development, and focuses the attention to the discourses carried forward by the Commonwealth Secretariat (CWS) through the publication and dissemination of five SDP policy and strategy documents. From a communication for development perspective, the study is relevant as it aims to uncover how the CWS participate in shaping and being shaped not only by such SDP discourses, but shaping and being shaped by the practices of actors operating in the SDP field as well. In this sense, the study acknowledges that the CWS and the five SDP policy and strategy documents do not exist in isolation but as part of constituting and being constituted by a larger reality. This being said, the scope of the study primarily rests on conducting a qualitative critical discourse analysis of the documents outlined in table 1, and where the findings are
generalized both between the documents themselves as well as to the empirical literature and theoretical frameworks presented herein. While simultaneously adopting a social constructivist and critical realist ontology to recognize the constituting role of the external reality and to actively engage with understanding how external structures and mechanisms influence the discourses embedded within the documents.

### Table 1. Documents analyzed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of publication</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Sport for Development and Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Sport for Development and Peace Youth Advocacy Toolkit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>The Commonwealth Guide to Advancing Development through Sport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Commonwealth Secretariat

1.1.1. Research questions

The primary research questions of the study are concerned with (i) exploring what discourses the CWS advances through the five SDP policy and strategy documents analyzed, (ii) examining how the identified discourses draw from both previous documents and from other texts by comparing the documents, and (iii) discussing how the identified discourses relate to mainstream discourses within the field of sport for development and peace. Furthermore, adopting a postcolonial perspective inherently implies examining the power relations between the producers and consumers in the process of knowledge production, which actors are being empowered and included or marginalized and excluded by the discourses, and how conceptualization of SDP is made and for whom it is directed (Hayhurst, 2009: pp. 211-212).

2. Background

While sport has been long acknowledged as a fundamental right through the formulation “play and recreation” in the 7th principle of the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1959); it was not until the year 2001 that the UN formally recognized, through the Secretary-General’s appointment of its first Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, that sport could serve as a means for combating several global development issues (Beutler, 2008: p. 360). Thus, the UNOSDP was established the same year in order to coordinate the efforts of the special advisor and to integrate sport in the UN development agenda. The notion of the ability of sport to contribute towards the UN development agenda became further concretized in 2003 through the passing of UN resolution 58/5 (UN, 2003). Which among other things considered “the role of sport and physical education as a means to
promote education, health, development and peace”, established the year 2005 as the “International Year of Sport and Physical Education” (IYSPE), and explicitly expressed sport as a tool to be utilized for the contribution of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These acknowledgements, following the IYSPE in 2005, set the stage for a range of actors to engage widely in this newly legitimized field of international development cooperation. One of the most notable events during that year being the Magglingen 2005 conference’s “call to action”, encouraging a range of stakeholders across ten specific fields to integrate sport in their activities to contribute to development and peace outcomes (UN, 2005). In parallel, the SDP International Working Group (SDP IWG) emerged through the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on SDP in 2004 for the purpose of formulating recommendations for the integration of sport into national and international development programs to governments and practitioners (Right to Play, 2008). Eventually publishing its widely hailed publication “Harnessing the power of Sport for Development and Peace” in 2008, providing governments and practitioners with a concrete guide as to how sport should be used for this purpose (Right to Play, 2008). Out of this publication also emerged a commonly used definition of SDP as “the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives” (Right to Play, 2008: p. 1).

2.1. The Commonwealth and sport for development and peace

“The Commonwealth must be ambitious or it is dead. What is, or should be, the meaning of the Commonwealth? What terrain should it occupy?” – Richard Drayton (2016: p. 23)

Directing its work in three broad areas, the Commonwealth prioritizes its strategic actions for achieving results in alignment with global goals and conventions (CWS, 2017: p. 1), with SDP being explicitly emphasized within the focus area of economic, social, and sustainable development. First taking interest in the development of the SDP field, the Commonwealth established the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) in 2003. Consisting of rotating government and expert members, CABOS provides the Commonwealth Secretary-General and Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meetings with expert advice on sport policy issues specifically related to SDP (CABOS, n.d.). The work of CABOS has played a significant role in positioning the Commonwealth as a leader in the field of SDP, and its work has been included in the CWS strategic plan 2013-2017 (ibid.). Resulting in the first major SDP publication of CWS in 2013 being “The Commonwealth Guide to Advancing Development through Sport” (Lindsey & Chapman, 2017: p. 3), followed by a range of subsequent publications analyzed in this study. Being recognized as a leader in the field of
SDP, the discourses carried forward by the CWS is likely to play a significant role in shaping the landscape of the field post-UNOSDP.

3. Literature review – Sport for Development and Peace

Although practitioners have long recognized sport as a vehicle for social change and its rapid expansion during the last few decades have mobilized a wide range of stakeholders to the field, scholars have only relatively recently started to take interest in building a body of knowledge around SDP. Arguably, and while scholars within sport studies had been publishing before this, the contemporary manifestation of the academic SDP field emerges from a series of influential articles and resources published in the period 2006-2008. In one of these hallmark publications, Bruce Kidd (2008) outlined the foundations of SDP in terms of what he chose to call “a new social movement”. What signified this movement was not the use of sport for social change per se, but the massive and rapid expansion of the involvement of actors in the field, accompanied by large growth in financial and institutional support, and its tremendous ability to attract youth participants and volunteers (p. 371). As the movement expanded its horizons emphasis shifted from “sport development”, mainly driven by sport organizations targeting and developing those already involved in sport, to “sport for development” encompassing a larger view of sport as a vehicle for governments and NGOs for achieving health and education outcomes (p. 373). The same year, Roger Levermore (2008) published his first article “Sport: a new engine of development?” in a series of three articles proposing six clusters where sport contributed to development outcomes in conflict resolution, empowerment, poverty alleviation, physical and mental health, awareness raising, and community infrastructure development (pp. 185-186). However, while recognizing its potential for strengthening development in a range of dimensions, Levermore concluded his first article by asking how sport could effectively contribute to advancing international development (p. 189). Attempting to answer his own question, he set out to edit the anthology “Sport and International Development” the following year (2009) together with Aaron Beacom, which aimed to position SDP within the realm of the international development scholarly debate and literary field. In the book, researchers from a variety of academic disciplines placed sport within different contexts in order to demonstrate its ability to effectively produce development outcomes and thereby contributing to advancing international development.
This new founded interest for mainstreaming SDP into the sphere of international
development among academic scholars had first emerged from within the UN following the
appointment of the first special adviser on SDP, the creation of the UNOSDP, and several UN
general assembly resolutions. But it did not gain widespread momentum until after the
proclamation of 2005 as the international year of sport and physical education (IYSPE), and
the Magglingen call to action the same year, encouraging stakeholders widely to align efforts
towards achieving the MDGs (Beutler, 2008). However, the increased attention to sport as
part of international development brought to light a multitude of new practical, political, and
theoretical concerns for both scholars and practitioners within SDP (Darnell & Black, 2011:
p. 368). While positive outcomes in development terms could be observed in individual and
isolated cases, research also pointed to the alignment of the prevailing SDP discourse to
hegemonic relations strengthening the dominant hierarchies of economic and social
relationships. Suddenly, the SDP movement’s evangelistic notion of the inherent power of
sport to transcend enduring structures and challenges traditionally impeding development,
including aspects such as the engrained divides of race, class and gender, was met with the
argument that sport could also function as a perpetuating force of those same divides (p. 369).
Moreover, additional critical analyses among scholars of the field fostered a growing sense of
exaggeration in claims by practitioners in regards to the effectiveness of SDP initiatives, as
well as doubts about the ability of the field to grasp the inner workings and organization of
international development and aid policy (p. 370).

Partly due to those doubts about effectiveness emerged a “lack of evidence discourse” with
a growing demand from stakeholders and donors for validating the development claims of the
SDP field through more robust research, monitoring and evaluation (RM&E) systems
(Nicholls et al., 2011). One of the earliest voices calling for more robust evidence was Fred
Coalter who authored a widely used monitoring and evaluation manual specifically targeting
SDP actors in 2006. The primary intention of the manual was to assist actors utilizing sport as
a tool for development to measure the impact of their work and foster greater attention to
integration of process-led outcome approaches, increasing the ability of SDP actors to
evidence their claims (Coalter, 2006: p. 1). Notwithstanding this, Coalter (2010) also warned
of generalizing the potential of SDP, disregarding the socio-political environments in which
SDP actors operate, potentially increasing dependency on powerful donor agencies prompting
alignment to more traditional development programing (p. 310). Arguing instead that
attention should be focused on understanding what mechanisms could potentially produce
desired outcomes in specific contexts, through adopting a participatory approach to RM&E
Roger Levermore (2011) advanced this argument further in his second of a series of three articles by considering the evaluation methodologies employed by SDP actors. Following the line of Coalter, Levermore found that the dominant methodology used in SDP largely resembled that of the mainstream development community primarily utilizing the logical framework approach (LFA) in monitoring and evaluation efforts (p. 341). Warning that such top-down positivistic and quantitative approaches to development and evaluation tend to neglect the local context and culture, as well as overlooking structural issues related to for example gender and disability concerns. Thereby introducing the risk of disregarding the perspectives, and ignoring the inclusion, of local voices in the evaluation process (p. 351). In turn, Silk et al. (2010) suggested that the greater push towards evidence-based research within SDP reflect a general tendency of science and academic research to hail approaches following the neoliberal paradigm. Giving primacy to knowledge perceived as objective and rationally conceived, and thus regarded as “good”, at the expense of alternative more critical and constructivist approaches (p. 107). And in so doing, emphasizing approaches that have a tendency to work towards the perpetuation of hegemonic political agendas through inflicting rigid norms and standards that dictates what kind of knowledge is accepted as “true”, and who is capable of generating such knowledge. Simultaneously extending a dominant episteme expressed through institutional actions and discourses (p. 109), effectively counteracting the role of the academic field as a critical watchdog seeking to expose structures and processes anchored in power relations maintaining structural inequalities (p. 115).

These cautionary notions ties well to the viewpoints of both Kay (2009) and Nicholls et al. (2011) who challenged the “lack of evidence discourse” privileging a positivist approach by presenting their qualitative case studies applying a decolonizing and feminist postcolonial perspective respectively in their research. In order to expose and disrupt lasting colonial power relations, Kay argued, qualitative methodologies essentially acts as a necessary counterweight by enabling exploration of the complex processes of sport impacting the social lives of individuals in multifaceted cultural contexts, in ways that narrowly based approaches focusing on the effectiveness of individual interventions may be incapable of doing (2009: p. 1188). This, however, does not mean that empirical evidence should be minimized, or that qualitative perspectives presents the only truth, but should rather serve as a call to problematize the dominant approaches to research, monitoring and evaluation prevalent within the SDP field (Nicholls et al. 2011: p. 259). Such an inward looking reflexivity requires a critical perspective towards the relationship between the external requirements dictated to researchers in SDP and the contextual requirements determining the appropriate
approaches of their studies, signifying the duality faced by researchers required to always balance their positions between the research “product” and “object” (Kay, 2009: p. 1188). An act of balance where a heightened attentiveness to these sorts of power dynamics is of paramount importance in order to avoid self-circulating and privileging certain historically dominate discourses (Nicholls et al. 2011: p. 258). A phenomenon that the SDP field, while not being immune towards, could avoid by adopting a co-producing perspective of knowledge development involving scholars, practitioners, and local representatives on mutual terms for complementing and informing prevalent SDP discourses (p. 259-260). Potentially prompting more critical engagements from SDP scholars and advancing issues of transnational power relations to the forefront of their research agendas (Darnell & Black, 2011: p. 371). In turn, presenting a prospective playing field where universities may be uniquely positioned to mediate between local needs and funding agencies demands by assisting practitioners in building capacity to explain and reflect their work, and uncovering the complex characteristics and contextual dynamics of SDP initiatives for funders (Sanders & Keim, 2017: p. 130). While also utilizing this position to support governments in creating enabling environments for SDP actors through the enacting of appropriate policy-making and legislation (ibid.). Encouraging a multi sector partnership approach where collaboration between government, academia, the private sector, and civil society drives collective modes of implementation and evaluation that can be scaled and governed on state level, furthering public sector integration of SPD policies, plans, and programs (Sanders et al. 2017: pp. 528-529).

However, coordinating such a multifaceted collective requires a deeper understanding of the dynamics and agendas among different actors within the SDP field. In this regard, Richard Giulianotti (2011) provides a useful and widely credited framework of four distinct but interacting social policy domains in which the various actors operate from their perspectives and ideologies in the quest for advancing human development (p. 761). Within the framework governments, intergovernmental organizations, and sport federations’ function in the strategic developmentalist policy domain organized in a top-down fashion transferring knowledge and best practices through networks, steering the SDP sector towards alignment of national and international policies and targets (p. 769). In addition, mainstream NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) operating in the developmental interventionist policy domain often form partnerships with actors in the strategic developmentalist domain providing subject expertise and implementation of targeted SDP interventions (p. 765). Often enthusiastically aided by global corporations situated in the neoliberal policy domain through corporate social
responsibility (CSR) programs and private philanthropy initiatives (p. 763). Together, actors in these three domains form a powerful coalition within SDP for shaping the sector’s agenda and dominant discourse, partly offset by actors operating in the comparatively sidelined social justice policy domain encompassing radical NGOs and new social movements challenging global neoliberal policies and advocating for social justice through the extension of human rights to marginalized groups (pp. 769-770).

Within this coalition, SDP organizations in the developmental interventionist domain are often concerned with adopting a particular narrative of sport as a “global language” promoting a global citizenship perspective appealing to the relatively more powerful neoliberal and strategic developmentalist oriented actors (Tiessen, 2011: p. 572). Contrary to the social justice domain’s structural focus towards extending rights to marginalized groups, the global citizenship perspective adopts an agency focus promoting the individual’s ability to develop a global identity from where empowerment and meaning can be derived. Thus, while being essentially positive in its ambition towards achieving a more equitable world, the global citizenship perspective prevalent within SDP discourses many times work to reinforce structures fostering inequality and dependency (p. 575). In this sense, Rebecca Tiessen builds her study on a postcolonial critique of SDP developmental interventionist organizations narrative of global citizenship potentially reinforcing the stereotypical “Others” as passive, dependent, and in need of learning a universal language for actively participating in the global neoliberal agenda (2011: pp. 583-584).

Lindsey Hayhurst (2009) extends this postcolonial critique further arguably from a strategic developmentalist perspective in her discourse analysis of six leading SDP policy documents issued by the UN and the SDP IWG in the period 2003-2008. Resembling to some extent the aim of this study, albeit from a different theoretical stance constructing a framework combining postcolonial theory and actor-oriented sociology. Despite being conducted before the social policy framework was published by Giulianotti, Hayhurst’s study highlighted the scarcity of discussion on “policy models” within the SDP field, and stressed a lack of understanding of how such models influence and impact SDP actors generally, and NGOs specifically (p. 206). By approaching the targeted policy documents in this way, her aim was twofold in critically examining and understanding hidden perspectives within the texts firstly, and in analyzing secondly how SDP discourse articulated in the documents is reproduced (p. 205). While acknowledging and addressing potential shortcomings in applying a qualitative postcolonial and actor-oriented sociology framework in studying SDP policies, primarily related to reliability, validity, and bias. The approach was deemed beneficial for both
identifying productive power dynamics of numerous SDP discourses and illustrating how these overlap in reinforcing the legitimacy of dominate SDP policies (p. 212). Presenting three theses for exemplifying how SDP policies mediate the documents arguing that i) SDP policies are ambiguous and embedded in political rationalities that perpetuate its discourses further (p. 213); ii) SDP interventions gives primacy to the political agendas of donors, UN agencies, and NGOs over the needs of local stakeholders and beneficiaries (p. 215); and iii) a devotion of SDP policies to neoliberal discourses of international development resulting in non-state actors increasingly controlling key decision-making within the field (p. 219). Thus leaving scholars adopting a postcolonial perspective with critical questions of power relations related to whom the producers of knowledge within the SDP policy agenda are, and for whom their voices are directed (p. 223).

4. Theoretical and methodological framework

4.1. Postcolonialism, development, and sport for development and peace

The history of European imperialism and colonization stretches back to the emergence of the mercantile period in sixteenth century inspiring new expansion in search of revenue. As trade stretched across the globe the European states formed settlements along the routes transforming into colonies as a base for raw materials extraction, markets, and slave trade in the seventeenth century. This process supported the rapid industrialization of the colonizing European states based on capitalist imperialism reaching its height in the nineteenth century. With its gradual dismantling occurring in two phases during the twentieth century with decolonization and independence processes (McEwan, 2009: pp. 83-84). However, this extended period of colonial rule and the imposition of social control had transformed the colonized regions and its peoples deeply. Central to this process was the European notion of native peoples as backward (p. 84), and thus in need of development and modernization as a way to both perpetuate and legitimize colonial rule from where a multitude of new practices, objects of knowledge, and discourses emerged (p. 86). Establishing lasting power inequalities between the colonizers and colonized continuing after independence (p. 88). These lasting power relations determined among other things the dominant thinking related to development theories, strategies, and ideologies laying the foundation for understanding the world and imagining progress from modernization theories dominant in 1950s and 1960s to neoliberal paradigms leading development discourses today (pp. 92-93). However, several alternative
strings of development thinking emerged as a reaction to the perceived failures of grand and universal paradigms like modernization and neoliberalism, levying accusations of these strands of development as being neocolonial in character, sustaining the continued domination of the former colonizers (p. 102).

An essential criticism to these sorts of Universalist claims of development knowledge emerged from post-development representations of people, identities, places and subjectivities as central aspects rather than uniformity (McEwan, 2009: pp. 103-104). However, while post-development reject development perceived as a form of power to transform and rule through a set of knowledge, techniques and discourses entirely, postcolonial approaches recognize that there is a need to change dominant discourses from within (pp. 105-106). In this regard, postcolonial theories significantly pose challenges to these Universalist claims by simultaneously acknowledging that the neocolonial aspect of development is not exclusively intentional. But largely consequential as it may perpetuate colonialist power relations and Eurocentric development discourses (pp. 108-110). Although these issues are to some extent acknowledged from within the field of development, postcolonial theories are viewed as overly focused on representations through text and imagery and thereby neglecting material realities of marginalized people (p.112). Notwithstanding this, critical scrutiny of development theory and practice from postcolonial perspectives paint a picture of development texts and discourses as inherently rooted in dominant Eurocentric worldviews (McEwan, 2009: p. 120), employing language and rhetorical representations often misrepresenting people and places in development contexts (p. 121). Postcolonial theories seek to problematize these discourses in order to understand and point out how such, often binary, differentiation impact opportunities of development (p. 123). Furthermore, development texts are often strategic in their promotion and exclusion of policies, technologies, and interventions inferring power relations and domination of certain forms of knowledge in such processes (p. 146). Postcolonial approaches explore these mechanisms of power producing and consuming such texts, as well as the links between the institutional expressions and practices of development (ibid.).

Although development studies have long engaged in problematizing power relations in development contexts, concerns from postcolonial perspectives are related to a partial neglect of those being researched, as well as development practice not being significantly transformed by extensive discussions on prevalent methodological issues (McEwan, 2009: p. 263). Critical reflection towards how our research is being conducted, conceptualized, and explored is central for unlocking new spaces for mutual discussion in order to address such problems. A
greater understanding is needed of how our subjective positions affect what questions are being asked, how findings are being analyzed and represented in light of our preconceptions, and reflection towards the role of our own commitments affecting who gains from the research and in what ways (p. 264). This requires a greater attention to complex contextual, spatial, and historical specificities as perceived by those inhabiting such places through dialogue, collaboration and involvement fostering a willingness to challenge existing power structures (ibid.).

SDP is by no means excluded from these processes as many programs are situated in a context marked by colonization, be it directly or indirectly. The very act of mobilizing sport to address development issues in such contexts can be viewed as acts for overcoming political and social inequalities that are rooted in processes of colonialism (Darnell & Hayhurst, 2013: p. 34). Applying a postcolonial approach to SDP is thus useful for both acknowledging the colonial past still present in the contexts in which SDP programs operate, as well as for addressing traditional binaries of gender, class, and race in the processes of knowledge production (p. 36). Furthermore, Darnell and Hayhurst (2013: p. 39) provide an interesting example of how sport itself many times can be directly regarded as a legacy of colonialism emphasizing the immense popularity of soccer in both Africa and SDP discourse. The popularity of soccer in Africa is to some extent paradoxical as its emergence can be located within the same political and social environment of colonialism that served the processes of European exploitation and impoverishment of the continent. From this perspective, the inherent belief in the ability of sport to overcome issues of development and peace can be problematic if SDP programs and policies fail to adequately address such connections to the colonial past. Contributing instead to the colonization of knowledge in alignment with the dominant discourses of neoliberalism, instead of exposing and critiquing such practices (pp. 41-42).

In their strife for operationalizing postcolonial theories and methods in SDP, Darnell and Hayhurst acknowledges the critique related to the neglect of postcolonial theories to the material realities of marginalized people but also argue that such material realities can be overlooked and misunderstood if colonial histories are neglected (2013: p. 42). In this sense, SDP programs and interventions applying a postcolonial approach could utilize the popularity of sport for addressing the relation between historical aspects and contemporary material realities, and mobilize support for communities’ striving for self-determination (pp. 43-44). Connecting aspects of representation and knowledge to the material realities experienced by marginalized people is critical for deconstructing representations of “truths” within SDP that,
as has been noted before, often privileges positivist notions of evidence-based monitoring and evaluation. Having a tendency of perpetuating and sustaining dominant discourses, representations, and knowledge production forming, to some extent, a sense of re-colonization through the imposition of hegemonic aid and development systems (p. 46). Systems that we as northern based researchers and practitioners, finally, by definition are being part of and need to acknowledge in our approaches. Adopting a postcolonial approach implies going beyond questioning our own positions in relation to the subaltern and ethically reflecting upon how their voices can be acknowledged in our writings and processes of knowledge production in ways that are meaningful from their perspectives (pp. 48-49).

4.1.1. Decolonizing sport for development and peace

However, in order to do so, Darnell and Hayhurst (2011) argues, SDP research and practice needs to move towards decolonizing sport and assuming perspectives of self-reflection in encouragement of self-determination, while simultaneously recognizing participation as a means to challenge prevailing discourses of development (p. 187). In this way, decolonization starts as a form of resistance to the recolonizing tendencies of development, and shifts the focus to the perspective of the receivers of SDP programs and policies for understanding how they are able to engage with the solutions proposed to them (p. 186). Accordingly, simply acknowledging indigenous traditions and knowledge does not suffice in the context of a decolonization framework. Rather, inclusion and support for local identities and cultures needs to be given priority in the development process (p. 187). In the context of SDP research, Darnell and Hayhurst (2011) illustrate this notion further by highlighting three areas where colonial practices are prevalent within the field by; (i) acting in stewardship towards development instead of promoting self-determination for subaltern groups; (ii) being influenced by politics of social control disguised as a potent tool for achieving neoliberal development goals primarily related to individual agency, social-political-economic freedom, and social integration of disadvantaged youth; and (iii) the role of sport in sustaining and producing social relations of power and knowledge transferred to, and perpetuated by, local agents and youth engaged in development practices (pp. 188-190). Once more prompting and reminding us of the question of what goals SDP really promote, and whom it serves.

4.2. Critical discourse analysis

Adopting a critical discourse analysis (CDA) methodology was deemed suitable for the purpose of this study as the aim herein does not solely rest in performing a textual analysis of the five SDP policy and strategy documents issued by the Commonwealth Secretariat (CWS).
But also considering the five documents in relation to each other, as well as placing them in the context of SDP discourse and viewing them from a postcolonial and decolonization perspective. This implies wholly internalizing the dual notion of CDA as a “social practice [that] both constitutes the social world and is constituted by other social practices” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: p. 61), acknowledging that the specific documents does not exist in isolation. They are part of the social world, and thus they are both shaped by it, and part in shaping it. In this respect, CDA focuses the research on both those practices constructing representations of the social world and power relations, as well as investigating how those practices serves the interests of various social groups (p. 63).

More specifically, this study applies Fairclough’s framework for CDA as presented in Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) by conducting the analysis from the three dimensions of i) the texts themselves and their linguistic features, ii) the discursive practices related to the processes of production and consumption of the texts, and iii) the general social practices influencing the texts (p. 68). This approach is beneficial for the study as it acknowledges both that texts alone cannot be analyzed in isolation from other texts and disassociated from the social contexts, as well as considering how the texts draw on existing discourses in the production process, and how discourses are applied in the process of creating meaning when they are consumed (pp. 68-69). Furthermore, the dimension of social practice embedded in the framework depends on the addition of both social and cultural theoretical frameworks (p. 69), which is why this study draws extensively on SDP literature, and postcolonial and decolonization theory as the basis of the social and cultural theory.

In applying Fairclough’s framework for CDA, this study regards the five SDP policy and strategy documents of the CWS as separate communicative events interacting with different orders of discourse in both a constituted or constituting manner (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: pp. 71-72). This is important for the stated research questions as it provides the study with a method for exploring what discourses are being advanced by the CWS in the relevant period examined. For specific relevance to this study is Fairclough’s notion of orders of discourse in relation to particular fields and institutions on the one hand, and simultaneously across fields and institutional boundaries on the other hand (p. 73). For example, Giulianotti’s (2011) perspective of SDP actors situated in different policy domains provides an interesting aspect in this regard as different orders of discourse may operate within, and emerge from, the respective domains. Inherent in this context is also the aspect of power relations governing the field (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 73). Furthermore, the concepts of intertextuality and interdiscursivity embedded in the framework (pp. 74-75) is relevant in relation to the part of
the research question examining how the documents relate to each other and draws from other texts, and how this process changes the discourses over time. Finally, considering how the different discourses in the documents interact in relation to mainstream SDP discourses is important for the third part of the research question in order to examine the social practices of the documents, and for analyzing and discussing whether the discourses are being reproduced or changed (ibid.).

4.2.1. Ontological and epistemological considerations
Although the philosophical assumptions inherent in this study are to a great extent determined by the theoretical and methodological choices made, they nevertheless deserve explicit consideration as they form an important part for understanding the argumentation in the analytical part of the study. According to Csilla Weninger “[m]ost CDA research operates within a moderate version of social constructivism that acknowledges the enabling and constraining effects of existing structural arrangements” (2008: p. 146), reflecting the dual notion of CDA as a social practice being both constituting and constituted. Moreover, a postcolonial and decolonization framework explicitly acknowledges the constraining effects of such existing structural arrangements, and simultaneously expresses a form of action of resistance towards them. Strongly emphasizing the epistemological role of local identities and cultures in the process of constructing relevant knowledge in relation to development processes. However, as have been previously stated, simply acknowledging such structural arrangements does not suffice in the context of decolonization. Rather, a thorough consideration of how such structures and mechanisms influence social practices is needed. In this regard, the study also draws on the ontology of critical realism for understanding how social practices are generated by, and mediated through, such underlying structures and mechanisms (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 70). This approach allows the analysis to not only acknowledge that the documents are subject to an external environment consisting of existing structural arrangements, but to recognize the constituting role of those arrangements and actively engage with understanding how those structures and mechanisms influence the discourses embedded within the documents.

4.3. Research design and methodological principles
In applying Fairclough’s framework for CDA this qualitative study draws mostly from the research design proposed within this framework, as outlined in Jørgensen and Phillips (2002). This approach involves designing and tailoring the research to a number of steps including, for this particular study, i) choosing the research problem, ii) formulating the research
questions, iii) selecting the relevant material to analyze, iv) conducting the analysis in accordance with the three dimensional framework outlined above, and v) convey and critically discuss the results of the study.

Firstly, as outlined in the introduction of this study, the choice of the research problem departs from the “call for action” issued by the steering board of the International platform on Sport and Development, and draws attention to the discourses and social practices carried forward by one of its members – the Commonwealth Secretariat (CWS). In this sense, the study takes a position of *explanatory critique* towards the discourses and social practices of the CWS (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: p. 77). Secondly, the primary tool for engaging in such explanatory critique is the formulation of relevant research questions that intertwines the dialectical bond between discursive practices and social practices drawing on relevant theoretical fields (p. 78), which for this study consists of theories located both within the SDP field, as well as in postcolonial and decolonization frameworks. Thirdly, the choice of the empirical material for this study consists of the five SDP policy and strategy documents published openly and freely accessible on the CWS website at the outset of this study. Thus, the relevant material was primarily chosen on the aspects of accessibility and the relevance for the institution of interest (p. 78). However, well into the course of the analysis the CWS published four additional resources under the same section on its website, which for practical constraints could not be included in the scope of this study and would need to be analyzed separately in future studies. Data collection was conducted through multiple readings, starting with the first published document and moving on to consecutive documents in chronological order to identify commonalities and contradictions. Furthermore, departing from a critical realist perspective implies recognizing a multilayered approach for the interpretation of the collected material (Easton, 2010: p. 124). Hence, and fourthly, the analysis of the relevant material was done by utilizing the three dimensions of analyzing text, discursive practices, and social practices embedded in the CDA framework (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: p. 81), divided into three subsections in accordance with the stated research questions for enhancing the readability of the study. This process of explaining the collected empirical data was conducted in an iterative manner by frequently revisiting the documents, attempting to reach epistemological closure (Easton, 2010: p. 124). Finally, as the inherent position of the study is to engage in explanatory critique in regards to the stated research problem (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: p. 88), the results of the analysis are discussed in the spirit of postcolonial and decolonization theories as both a call for changing dominant discourses from within
(McEwan, 2009: pp. 105-106), and as a form of action of resistance towards them (Darnell & Hayhurst, 2011: pp. 186-187).

4.3.1. Limitations

A common critique of qualitative studies is directed towards questioning methodological rigor related mainly to the generalizability and validity of findings, as well as the possible reliability issues and subjectivity of the researcher in regards to both data selection and interpretation (Weninger, 2008: p. 148). As the introduction of this study outlines the research aim does not claim to generalize the findings outside of the documents being analyzed. Instead, generalization occurs within the scope of the study as findings can be generalized between the documents themselves (Creswell, 2009: p. 178). This is explicitly stated in the second part of the research question investigating the discourses embedded in the documents in relation to each other. Furthermore, generalization occurs in the context of the broader theoretical framework outlined in the study. This is also important when it comes to the validity of the findings as the research design of the study primarily relies on providing a thorough description of the field of SDP in order to enable the relatively uninitiated reader to judge the transferability of the claims (Creswell, 2007: p. 209).

Departing from Csilla Weninger’s suggestion that “[i]n every text, there is a multitude of potentially relevant discourse structures that could be examined so that a full analysis of any piece of discourse is impossible” (2008: p. 148), this study recognizes that the analysis of the empirical material is selective. However, the basis of selection of the empirical data for analysis was guided both by the empirical studies presented in the literature review, and the theoretical and methodological framework, which in this sense reinforces the reliability of the findings (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: p. 80). In addition, the inherent position drawn from adopting a postcolonial and decolonization theoretical framework and CDA method exposes the subjective bias of the study emphasizing the perspective of the marginalized agents on the receiving end of SDP policies and programs. While this last notion exposes limitations present in the study as my own positionality as researcher is located outside of that perspective, being reflective in regards to how the productive power relations embedded within the documents operate to produce or reproduce SDP discourse and knowledge constitute the main aim of this study. In this way, I adopt a critical perspective while not claiming to position myself from the perspective the marginalized agents (Hayhurst, 2009: p. 212).
5. Analysis and discussion

Following the outlined research aim and design, the first part of the analysis focuses on identifying common discourses prevalent throughout the five documents mainly through the application of textual analysis. The analysis of the discursive practices of the documents in part two focuses on comparing the documents to identify how the identified discourses draw from both previous documents and from other texts. Finally, the third part of the analysis focuses on identifying the social practices prevalent in the identified discourses in relation to mainstream SDP discourses. The discussion of the empirical material in relation to the SDP literature and theoretical framework is embedded within the analysis. For pedagogical purposes, the documents are referenced according to the year of publication as outlined in table 2 throughout the analysis and discussion section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Main authors/(Editors)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals</td>
<td>Iain Lindsey &amp; Tony Chapman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015b</td>
<td>Sport for Development and Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</td>
<td>Oliver Dudfield &amp; Malcolm Dingwall-Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015a</td>
<td>Sport for Development and Peace Youth Advocacy Toolkit</td>
<td>Emma Colucci &amp; Assmah Helal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014*</td>
<td>Strengthening Sport for Development and Peace: National Policies and Strategies</td>
<td>Oliver Dudfield (Ed.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>The Commonwealth Guide to Advancing Development through Sport</td>
<td>Tess Kay &amp; Oliver Dudfield</td>
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*In the case of the document published in 2014, authors of chapters will be referenced since this is an anthology.*

5.1. Discourses advanced by the Commonwealth Secretariat

Three broad dimensions of discourses emerged during the analysis related to why sport is a potent tool for advancing development approaches, in what areas of development sport-based policies and strategies should be focused, and whom it should target. Each dimension will be elaborated separately in this section.

5.1.1. Unique attributes of sport for strengthening development

Although frequently reiterating that sport is not a “panacea” for development, the CWS consistently expresses a set of unique attributes of sport as a tool for strengthening existing development approaches (2013, p. 5). The presence of these unique attributes are embedded within the texts throughout the documents but are conveniently classified into five distinct categories in 2015a (p. 12) as; i) having universal popularity suggesting that sport has the ability to attract people from around the world, transcending barriers related to nationalities,
cultures, socio-economic and political backgrounds, and even language; ii) having the ability to connect people and communities through the combination of sport constituting a common interest as well as being an inherently social process; iii) being a communications tool capitalizing on its far-reaching communications platform generated through its universal popularity; iv) being of cross-cutting nature having utility in a wide range of development challenges; and v) having the potential to empower, motivate and inspire people by emphasizing their abilities rather than disabilities, focusing on what people can achieve rather than what they cannot achieve. However, differences can be observed between, and occasionally even within, the documents in how these attributes are presented and elaborated on from the perspective of variation in the linguistic features related to modalities (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: pp. 83-84). For example, the explicit expression in 2015a (p. 12) that “[p]eople around the world are attracted to sport, and this popularity can transcend national, cultural, socio-economic, political and even linguistic boundaries” signifies a certain level of truth through which the text commits itself to a high degree of certainty. Whereas the statement “[a]t local level, sport is often used because community, school and health professionals, and volunteers find it is an effective way of working with their target groups” (2013: p. 5) instead indicates a lower degree of certainty by relating the claim to contextual factors. Furthermore, the use of the word “often” in the second statement can be interpreted as a form of hedging where the claim is moderated to express a lower level of correspondence (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 84). This type of hedging is most prominent in 2014 (Dudfield, 2014: p. 7) where the author caution about adopting a Universalist position towards sport, suggesting that such overly simplified notions of the ability of sport to tackle complex development problems can be problematic, and even counterproductive:

“While in many contexts sport-linked approaches have made a positive contribution to development, this is far from universal. There have been instances both within and beyond the Commonwealth where sport has been poorly planned, overly aligned to extremist nationalist, political or economic motives […] such that a negative impact on human and social development could be argued.” – Oliver Dudfield (2014: p. 7)

Another aspect of modality is that of permission whereby a text positions itself in such a way that it expresses authority in its claim and simultaneously provide permission for agents to act in accordance with the claim (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 84). Examples in this regard can be found throughout the documents in statements such as “Commonwealth Heads of Government and ministers have consistently recognised the potential for sport to be employed as a catalyst for human and social development and to promote respect and
understanding” (2015b: p. 15), and “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, recognises: ‘… the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect’” (2015b: p. 15). Whereby the use of both subjective forms of modalities in the former case referring to Commonwealth stakeholders, and objective forms of modalities in the latter case referring to the United Nations General Assembly reinforces the notion of different levels of authority in the statements (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 84). Following McEwan’s (2009: p. 146) notion of development texts inherently being strategically oriented in relation to policy and strategy promotion, the CWS utilizes powerful advocates to produce institutional expressions with the aim to generate concrete development practices. Such displays of power relations in the production of the texts provide insights from a postcolonial perspective as to which the intended audiences and target groups of the communicative events primarily are, and from what policy domain the CWS departs from. In this sense, departing from the policy domain of strategic developmentalism (Giulianotti, 2011: p. 769), the CWS primarily targets both actors situated in the same domain such as national governments to adopt and reproduce its discourses, as well as actors in the developmental interventionist domain such as NGOs to act in accordance with those discourses. Although relevant from the linguistic modality of permission, these aspects will be further elaborated in section 5.2 below in relation to the analysis of the discursive practices of the documents.

5.1.2. The focus areas of SDP

Apart from advancing the discourse that SDP is a valuable tool for strengthening development and peace approaches, the CWS consistently lays out a set of five broad development areas throughout the documents where SDP policies and strategies should be focused. The focus include, primarily, SDP policies and strategies in the areas of health, education, gender equality, equality and inclusion, and peace and stability. Although these stated focus areas remain rather stable across the documents, differences are observed both in terms of the relative emphasis of each area, as well as the manner in which sport can contribute to advancing development in the respective areas.

Of particular interest when viewed from a postcolonial lens is the focus area of equality and inclusion, where the contribution of sport is described in a relatively broad perspective in 2013 as “[s]port programmes can engage and provide inclusive environments for those who are not supported by other structures or institutions” (p. 48), and “[s]port has also been used effectively to reinforce the values and practices of equality and inclusion by supporting
groups that are vulnerable to discrimination and violation” (p. 49). In both instances, the linguistic feature of transitivity is of interest in order to analyze where emphasis is directed (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 83). In this example, emphasis is primarily directed towards the object (sport) rather than the subject (agents) where “sport programmes” and “sport” can achieve an effect for someone instead of agents utilizing sport to achieve an effect for them, and thereby disregarding the agents that caused the event to occur. This notion is further reinforced in 2015a, stating that sports can directly and indirectly contribute to inclusion by “working with excluded and vulnerable groups who do not engage with other institutions – e.g. those who do not attend school” (p. 17). In this sense, sport is perceived as the active ingredient of development processes, while the target groups of such interventions are described as passive agents being dependent on sport for equality and inclusion. However, 2015b complements this broad and crosscutting perspective of equality and inclusion with a narrower view by explicitly integrating it to the focus area of education in the context of contribution towards improved educational outcomes:

“Relationships between learners and teachers/facilitators can be enhanced based on the different teaching and instruction that takes place in sport and quality physical education programmes. These relationships build trust and the ability of teachers and facilitators to engage and mentor learners in a different way than in classroom settings. This can be particularly useful to engage or support excluded learners.” – Oliver Dudfield & Malcolm Dingwall-Smith (2015: p. 34)

Describing the process in which sport can contribute to improved educational outcomes through inclusion in this manner highlights the utilization of sport in the process of building trust between the agents, in this case between the teachers and learners. And in so doing, actively emphasizes the agents (subject) rather than sport (object) in this process. Thus reversing the passive dependency position of the agents to an empowerment and agency focused position. Furthermore, the type of sport used in the context of equality and inclusion also signifies a process whereby sport as an object is tailored to the context and perspective of the relevant agents, as stated in 2017 “[i]n particular contexts, indigenous games can also be valuably implemented as part of the educational curricula” (p. 68). In 2015b, the CWS even go as far as suggesting that:

“The notion of sport as socially productive and transformative cultural form has strong historical antecedents in European and western cultures, this dynamic can impact the efficacy of sport as a development tool and how sport-based approaches are perceived in many communities, in particular in developing contexts. In contrast, indigenous and traditional games offer a tool embedded in local contexts and cultures.” – Oliver Dudfield & Malcolm Dingwall-Smith (2015: p. 88)
The specific reference of sport as rooted in European and western culture being potentially problematic is particularly interesting from a postcolonial perspective. By explicitly stating so, the CWS displays a conscious position towards the historical perspectives of sport. However, as McEwan (2009: pp. 121-123) discusses, the stereotypical metaphor “in particular in development contexts” expressed in the above quote can misrepresent people from such contexts. Thus, while being conscious of sports colonial past the CWS may be unconscious of how its representation of people in developing contexts and their development opportunities may be impacted. Furthermore, referring to indigenous and traditional games as a potent complement to sport as a tool to advance development outcomes in the focus areas can also be viewed as differentiating the two as separate entities. Implied that in developing contexts where sport is not effective in achieving the desired development outcomes, indigenous and traditional games can serve as an alternative and more effective method, while still emphasizing the importance of the advancement of predetermined development objectives in those contexts. Reinforcing the notion that the perpetuation of dominant development discourses and Eurocentric power relations may be consequential through the actions of powerful institutions, rather than intended (McEwan, 2009: pp. 108-110).

Finally, the focus area of peace and stability primarily departs from the notion that for sport-based approaches to be effective in peace-building and conflict prevention efforts “they must be coordinated and integrated into broader processes” (2013: p. 56). Signifying a form of hedging as the ability of sport to effectively contribute to peace and stability is conditioned upon broader conflict prevention strategies (p. 57). This notion is clearly prevalent in successive documents where the inherent attributes of sport such as the ability to connect people and communities, as well as being a communications tool can assist in both fostering dialogue between conflict parties and promote values such as tolerance and respect as preventative measures (2015b: pp. 72-74).

5.1.3. The target groups of SDP
Perhaps the most consistent discourse advanced by the CWS throughout the documents is the focus on youth as the primary target group for SDP policies, strategies, and programs. Apart from 2015a being completely dedicated to youth as an advocacy toolkit for SDP, youth in relation to SDP receive explicit attention through separate chapters in 2013, 2014, independent sections in 2015b, and extensively embedded in 2017. The focus on youth becomes apparent in 2013 where the CWS states that:
“Sport is an especially valuable tool for working with young people across the Commonwealth because of the particularly strong association between sport and youth. [...] This popularity makes sport a valuable tool for advocacy and engagement that can be used to support a number of aspects of work for development and peace.” – Tess Kay & Oliver Dudfield (2013: p. 19)

Once more, applying the modality of truth to the above quote signifies a strong commitment of the authors to the statement that sport “is” a valuable tool due to the “particularly strong” connection between youth and sport. Furthermore, from the perspective of transitivity sport (object) is connected to the events of advocacy and engagement of youth (subject) for the processes of development and peace. This last notion becomes particularly apparent in the introduction of 2015a stating that “[t]he purpose of this toolkit is to provide young people with the skills and tools to become advocates of SDP, and enhance their ability to create awareness and influence decision-making” (p. 7). Moreover, 2015b confirms this statement by adding, “youth leaders can be among the most ardent advocates for the value of sport-based approaches in development” (p. 89). In this sense, youth is viewed not only as receivers of SDP policies, strategies, and programs but also as agents and drivers of such development and peace processes. Interestingly, however, this popularity of sport does not appear to be universal as “[n]ot all youth are attracted to sport, but its appeal is sufficiently wide to make sport an obvious tool for working with young people” (2013: p. 19). Apart from signifying a form of hedging, this sentence can also be interpreted as excluding a particular subset of youth from SDP processes, potentially being counterproductive to the focus area of equality and inclusion. In this sense, “sport” is described as a dichotomy to which youth are attracted or not rather than being universally appealing “because it can be moulded to become what each individual and community needs” (2013: p. 16). In addition, sport is not exclusively viewed as generating positive outcomes for children and youth as “[t]here is an absence of empirical data on violence against children in sport, including the experience of young people in Africa” (Twyford, 2014: p. 31), and that there is a need for “[s]afeguarding children and young people in sport for development and peace programmes” (Twyford, 2014: p. 30). Thus, questions arising from a postcolonial perspective include identifying who the subsets of the youth population not attracted to, and hence excluded from, sport are. As well as being critical towards the absence of research regarding young people in Africa in relation to power relations including violence against participants of SDP programs (McEwan, 2009: p. 264).

Except for youth being the main target group of SDP policies, strategies, and programs other frequently mentioned groups include women and girls in relation to the focus area of
gender equality, and people with disability in relation to the focus area of equality and inclusion. However, while prevalent in both cases, the focus on women and girls to a large extent rests on *empowerment* and *agency* of themselves, whereas the emphasis on people with disability is to a greater extent directed on changing the *perceptions* and *attitudes* of agents defined as able, i.e. not being disabled. Thus exposing the power relations embedded within SDP discourses where gender equality to a larger extent is to be achieved through the empowerment of, assuming, the powerless women and girls rather than changing the behavior of men and boys. And vice versa in the case of people with disabilities where inclusion of the relatively powerless to a larger extent is dependent on changing the perceptions and behavior of relatively more powerful and abled people. This notion can be exemplified by comparison of the following two quotes from 2013 regarding women and girls;

“There is a particularly well-established tradition of using sport to address issues of empowerment for girls and women. […] Sport programmes of this type often aim to raise girls’ and women’s confidence and self-esteem through the opportunities that sport provides” – Tess Kay & Oliver Dudfield (2013: p. 40)

and regarding people with disability;

“Sport can be especially powerful in challenging stereotypes of people with disabilities by placing them in a position where their skills are highlighted.” – Tess Kay & Oliver Dudfield (2013: p. 51)

5.2. The discursive practices of the documents
Of particular interest to this part of the analysis is to investigate whether the identified discourses primarily reproduce or change existing discourses, that is whether the discourses are either constituting or constituted. Thus, the methodological approach to this part of the analysis draws on the discursive practices dimension of CDA primarily related to the concepts of *intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity* (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: pp. 73-74). From this perspective, texts exhibiting a relatively high level of intertextuality and low level of interdiscursivity signify a low level of change (pp. 82-83), thereby reproducing existing discourses and being constituted. Whereas the opposite relation, a relatively high level of interdiscursivity and low level of intertextuality instead signify a higher degree of change (*ibid.*), and thus to a larger extent constitute and change discourses.

Being one of the first major publications of the CWS on SDP, the discourses emerging from 2013 are to a large extent constituting for the subsequent documents in the analysis. However
being the first text also implies, in this case, to a large extent being subject to influence and constitution by other texts and discourses. This is interesting from the perspective of this study as further investigation in this matter can reveal whether by publishing 2013 the CWS either reproduced or changed existing structures and discourses. From the point of view of intertextuality between the documents, 2013 advances six distinct principles divided into two categories that encompass the identified discourses outlined above, and which govern how sport should be used to advance development and peace within the Commonwealth (2013: pp. 13-17). Thus adding an additional dimension to the previously identified discourses relating more to why sport is an appropriate tool for strengthening development approaches, in what areas sport should be focused, and whom it should target. The six principles furthered by the CWS in 2013 are summarized in Table 3 below, and are mentioned or reproduced in all the subsequently published documents (e.g. in Dudfield, 2014: pp. 5-6; 2015a: p. 11; 2015b: p. 86; and 2017: p. 9). In this manner, the six principles form an order of discourse that constitutes the identified discourses as they set out the boundaries in which these can operate (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 72).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 1: Principles to strengthen sport-based approaches and connect them to established policy domains within Commonwealth development work</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Sport for Development and Peace must be explicitly linked to the Commonwealth’s shared values and commitment to promoting development, democracy and diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Sport for Development and Peace should leverage sustainable, quality and on-going sport activity and be intentionally planned to realize specific development goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Sport for Development and Peace is most effective when integrated with the development sector in support of regional, national and local development priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 2: Principles to maximize positive outcomes and minimize negative consequences</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>Fully accessible programs ensuring leaders and participants are safeguarded at all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Decentralized programs that involve intended beneficiaries and their communities in the planning process and take local needs and assets into consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>Programs designed on the basis of evidence-based models, and conducted with systematic measurement of progress and appropriate monitoring and evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kay & Dudfield, 2013: pp. 13-17

This can be exemplified by reinvestigating the following quote, presented under 5.1.1 above when discussing the discourse of sport inherently possessing a set of unique attributes for strengthening development approaches, under the light of principle #2:

“While in many contexts sport-linked approaches have made a positive contribution to development, this is far from universal. There have been instances both within and beyond the Commonwealth where sport has been poorly planned […] such that a negative impact on human and social development could be argued.” – Oliver Dudfield (2014: p. 7)
Planning, as it seems, is a key component in achieving development outcomes through sport as principle #2 states. However, from a postcolonial perspective, the question of which agents should be involved in the planning immediately arises. Further examination of this question requires a closer consideration of principle #5, stating that SDP programs should be decentralized and involve the local communities in the planning process. In describing the intent of principle #5, the CWS (2013: p. 15) acknowledge that modern development focuses on supporting local communities and rejecting “expert-learner” relationships. While also recognizing that the “global appeal and status of sport can encourage ‘top-down’ leadership and can result in a ‘one size fits all’ approach” (2013: pp. 15-16). To overcome this pitfall, the CWS argues (2013: p. 16), sport programs needs to be embedded in the local context – something that sport is uniquely positioned to do as:

“Sport has universal appeal because it can be moulded to become what each individual and community needs. Sport can best serve development by offering itself for local adaptation.” – Tess Kay & Oliver Dudfield (2013: p. 16)

Arguably, connecting the principle of planning sport-based programs in alignment with centrally decided goals and targets with the principle of decentralized sport interventions in accordance with local needs presents a potential contradiction independent of the assumed universal appeal of sport. Such elements of power can be observed between the principles as the orders of discourse relate to institutions operating in various fields (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 73). Thus, being primarily a political institution, the CWS strives to attain the goal of development through sport from the perspective of the global political field, which may be in conflict with the perspective of individual actors operating locally to attain the same goal. Such an element of power can be represented by the following quote from 2015b where the CWS places strong emphasis on principles #2, #3, and #6 in its statement, also utilizing the linguistic feature of permission by including the authority of CABOS in the field of SDP:

“The Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Advisory Board of Sport have been steadfast that for sport to make a positive contribution to national agendas, interventions must be well planned, effectively implemented and robustly monitored and evaluated.” – Oliver Dudfield & Malcolm Dingwall-Smith (2015: p. 86)

In this sense, although the six principles form an order of discourse, the principles may not be of equal weight in practice as some aspects of the order of discourse have stronger impact than others as they are rooted in certain ideologies and hegemonic discourses prevalent in the specific field (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: pp. 75-76). Applying Giulianotti’s (2011: p. 769)
framework of policy domains to this point strengthens the suggestion made previously that the discursive practice of the CWS emerges from the strategic developmentalist perspective inherently organized in a top-down fashion in steering the SDP sector towards alignment of national and international policies and targets. Furthermore, departing from the suggestion that the CWS operates from the policy domain of strategic developmentalism, the discursive practice of interdiscursivity can also be connected to the identified discourses related to the focus areas and target groups of SDP, in order to examine what other discourses the documents draw from (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: pp. 73-74). In both cases, the identified discourses depart to a large extent from the contribution towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and alignment to other global frameworks as stated in 2013:

“In the area of human development, where the Commonwealth aims contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to longer-term development objectives, key priorities are:

- Progress towards specific education and health related targets, including the MDGs.
- Integration of gender equality and human rights in global frameworks and initiatives.
- Effective socio-economic inclusion of youth, women and other marginalised groups.”

– Tess Kay & Oliver Dudfield (2013: p. 12)

Upon the conclusion of the MDGs in 2015, the focus was subsequently altered in 2015b (p. 3) and 2017 (p. x) to instead draw on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in relation to the focus areas of SDP. This reinforces the position of the CWS as strategic developmentalist on the one hand, reproducing the discourses of internationally ratified policies and conventions such as for example the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2013: p. 48), as well as agreed targets towards its own member states governments. While, on the other hand, being subject to hegemonic discourses emerging from relatively more powerful institutions (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 76). Indicating that power relations within policy domains can play a significant role in what discourses emerge and are reproduced.

Apart from the focus areas of SDP, the notion of power relations within policy domains can also be observed in relation to the ability of sport to contribute to development approaches by reproducing the discourses laid out by the SDP IWG in its “2008 landmark report” contributing “unprecedented analysis” in this regard (CWS, 2013: p. 5). Furthermore, power
relations between actors situated in different policy domains are also prevalent within the documents creating both bounded and enabling environments providing some insight into Hayhurst’s (2009: p. 206) question on how such policy models in SDP influence and impact various actors within the field. For example, the notion of Giulianotti (2011: p. 765) that actors in the strategic developmentalist policy domain form partnerships with NGOs and CBOs in the developmental interventionist policy domain to strengthen their claims is highly prevalent in the documents analyzed. This is frequently done by including case studies from a range of actors effectively implementing SDP policies in accordance with the policy and strategic priorities outlined in the CWS documents (e.g. in 2013: pp. 30-32; McCracken & Colucci 2014: pp. 63-73; and 2015a: pp. 50-53). In addition, 2015b (pp. 95-97) presents a list of experts and agencies contributing and providing input to the CWS consisting of a range of actors such as government agencies, INGOs, NGOs, sports federations, academic institutions, and private corporations. Forming a mix of actors from different policy domains with different agendas participating in the knowledge production and consumption processes of the documents. However, in accordance with Giulianotti’s (2011) model, actors operating in the social justice domain are frequently underrepresented or excluded from such processes. While 2013 (p. 66) lists “[d]isability rights advocacy groups” and “[g]ender groups” as potential stakeholder groups from the social justice domain. Actors situated in the strategic developmentalist, neoliberal, and developmental interventionist policy domains dominate through representation of a range of stakeholder groups including various ministries, sports federations and associations, sport clubs, youth and health sectors, and development agencies (ibid.). A power distribution that is also intertextually reproduced in the expert panel and list of agencies involved in the CWS consultation process regarding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015b (pp. 95-97). Signifying the lack of representation of the perspectives of marginalized groups in such knowledge production and consumption processes. Potentially reproducing prevalent discourses within the SDP field, instead of deconstructing and problematizing them, a discussion to which the study turns next.

5.3. The discourses in relation to mainstream SDP discourses

This final section of the analysis will discuss the social practices of the identified discourses and discursive practices primarily in the realm of mainstream SDP discourses as laid out in the literature review and theoretical framework of this study, with the perspective of postcolonial and decolonization theories. Central issues for analysis include examining whether the discursive practices contribute to reproducing or changing dominant SDP
discourses, as well as how the discursive practices work to either strengthen or challenge power relations within the SDP field (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: p. 87).

Beginning with the unique attributes of sport for strengthening development approaches the discourse advanced by the CWS in this respect to a large extent resembles the discourses prevalent within the SDP field. Although the general perception of the ability of sport to contribute to development outcomes is predominantly positive, reservations exist in regards to both the scope and approach of sport policies and programs. Frequently expressing that sport is not a “panacea” for development, the CWS outlines a set of conditions required for sport to strengthen development through the six principles presented in table 3. For sport to be effective it must be aligned to overarching development priorities, effectively planned and designed to achieve development objectives in line with these priorities, simultaneously based on evidence-based models and being inclusive and sensitive to local needs and contexts, while being strictly monitored and evaluated for continuous progress. This desire to align sport to development priorities reproduces the general discourse of SDP as outlined in Levermore and Beacom (2009), and to the MDGs specifically as advocated by Beutler (2008). Furthermore, the self-reflective notion embedded in the CWS’s discourse towards the potential negative impacts of sport also reflects the suggestions advanced by Darnell and Black (2011) that sport can be counterproductive in terms of bridging racial, class, and gender divides and instead reinforce such structures. As outlined above, the principal CWS response to this conundrum appears to be that sport interventions “must be well planned, effectively implemented and robustly monitored and evaluated” (2015b: p. 86). Aligning well with the “lack of evidence discourse” prevalent in the SDP field, emphasizing the need for robust evidence to support the development claims of sport (Nicholls et al., 2011).

From a postcolonial and decolonization perspective, however, examining the process of implementation and knowledge production is of high importance. This implies, as Darnell and Hayhurst (2011) suggest, being self-reflective towards the colonial practice of SDP as being disguised as a potent tool for achieving development goals influenced by neoliberal politics of social control. In that sense, the focal point of interest is not whether or not local people are included in the process of planning sport-based interventions for the achievement of predetermined goals. But whether sport can be utilized in support of self-determination of local communities (ibid.). In this regard, a conflict of the principles advanced by the CWS can be argued where several of the principles, most notably principles #2, #3, and #6, collectively work to undermine principle #5 advocating for inclusion of local people in the development process by imposing a set of boundaries in which such planning and inclusion can occur. As
Darnell and Hayhurst (2013: p. 46) argues, this practice of top-down development systems of governance not only exposes prevalent power relations embedded within the SDP field, but also works as a re-colonizing force by perpetuating dominant discourses and knowledge production. Thus, suggesting that “[s]port has universal appeal because it can be moulded to become what each individual and community needs” as the CWS suggest (2013: p. 16), does not suffice in the context of a decolonization framework. But instead reproduces the dominant discourse of SDP of having universal popularity. Furthermore, the position of the CWS in relation to indigenous and traditional games is primarily related to the effectiveness of locally and culturally embedded tools to achieve a predetermined development outcome. Providing an example of how CWS may view using sport for acting as a steward of development to be the more important feature of principle #1, rather than promoting the self-determination of subaltern groups through sports “ability to engage diverse groups” and “foster social interaction within and between them” (2013: p. 14).

The focus areas of SDP provides another example of what Darnell and Hayhurst (2011: pp. 188-190) perceive as colonial practices of sport being disguised as a potent tool for achieving development priorities, in this case primarily related to the areas of health, education, gender equality, equality and inclusion, and peace and stability. As stated in greater length above the CWS aims to contribute to the MDGs in key areas such as health and education, as well as in gender equality and socio-economic inclusion of marginalized people (2013: p. 12). The notion of the ability of sport to achieve development outcomes within these areas is well rooted within the SDP discourse as laid out in general terms by Levermore (2008), and more specifically by Beutler (2008) in relation to the MDGs. And when challenged with increasing doubts of the effectiveness and impact of SDP policies and programs, the field moved in great length towards evidencing its claims. Fostering a research, monitoring and evaluation (RM&E) practice to a large extent based on contemporary international development standards of results-based management (RBM) and the logical framework approach (LFA) (Levermore, 2011: p. 341). The CWS has internalized this approach by the sixth principle stating that SDP programs should be “designed on the basis of evidence-based models, and conducted with systematic measurement of progress and appropriate monitoring and evaluation” (2013: p. 16). However, as Levermore (2011: p. 351) also warned such positivistic approaches frequently neglect the local context and structural issues, disregarding local perspective and voices. From a postcolonial and decolonization perspective, these concerns are of central importance as attention to the interplay of contextual and historical specificities as perceived by local people requires extended dialogue and collaboration in such
a way that existing structures are challenged and methodological practices altered (McEwan, 2009: pp. 263-264). Furthermore, as McEwan (2009: p. 263) also suggests, such methodological discussions have been introduced to the SDP field represented in this study by the works of several SDP scholars. For example, apart from Levermore, Silk et al. (2010: p. 107) also cautioned that pushing the agenda of evidence-based RM&E promotes “truth” as emerging from objective and rational approaches, on the expense on alternative constructivist and critical approaches. Furthermore, both Kay (2009) and Nicholls et al. (2011) subscribes to this notion and argues for a greater focus on qualitative approaches in order to uncover such complex processes of how sport interventions impact individuals in multifaceted cultural and structural contexts, and problematize the dominant approaches to research, monitoring and evaluation prevalent within the SDP field. From this perspective, postcolonial approaches are useful for both addressing prevailing structural issues related to knowledge production, as well as for acknowledging contextual and historical residuals present in the areas where SDP programs are implemented (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2013: p. 36).

This begs the question of whether these discussions are reflected in the discourses advanced by CWS. In this sense, the explicit formulation of the need for “[d]ecentralised programmes that involve intended beneficiaries and their communities in the planning process and take local needs and assets into consideration” (2013: p. 15) expressed in principle #5 can be regarded as an attempt to shift the power structures in the process of knowledge production to some extent. Moreover, including a chapter written by Simon Darnell in 2014 the CWS introduced a postcolonial critique of SDP as a means for strengthening the field by recognizing and moving away from traditional top-down governance to more sustainable and locally driven forms of development in SDP (Darnell, 2014: p. 28). As well as considering sport less as a tool for achieving development outcomes in the prioritized focus areas, instead viewing it as a form where development processes can emerge locally (ibid.). This apparent dichotomy between robust RM&E and local ownership is further expressed as crosscutting considerations in 2015b. On the one hand, Commonwealth wide consensus is expressed towards the importance of well-developed theories of change as a basis for showing how sport can contribute to development outcomes in its prioritized focus areas (2015b: pp. 85-85). While simultaneously, on the other hand, stating that:

“[W]ithin the SDP field there are still many top-down, homogenous approaches that are not locally owned and do not prioritise contextual relativity, rendering them at odds with the culture and context in which they operate. This can be a particular challenge, because many SDP initiatives are embedded within international co-operation partnerships.” – Oliver Dudfield & Malcolm Dingwall-Smith (2015: p. 87)
Further emphasizing the point made above regarding power relations existing between the principles stemming to a large extent from structures and mechanisms within the field of international development prevalent on a larger scale, which also dictates the terms of the SDP field. Nevertheless, such self-reflexivity expressed by the CWS demonstrates sensitivity towards both the ongoing discussion occurring within the SDP field as well as towards postcolonial critiques of international development.

Finally, discourses advanced by the CWS regarding the target groups of SDP should be examined in relation to Darnell and Hayhurst’s (2011) third area of colonial practices within the field. Emphasizing the social relations of power and the role of sport in production and transfer of knowledge to local agents, primarily youth, perpetuating dominant development practices in their communities (pp. 188-190). Reiterating the quote utilized in section 5.1.3 exemplifying the focus on youth provides a good point of departure for this discussion:

“Sport is an especially valuable tool for working with young people across the Commonwealth because of the particularly strong association between sport and youth. […] This popularity makes sport a valuable tool for advocacy and engagement that can be used to support a number of aspects of work for development and peace.” – Tess Kay & Oliver Dudfield (2013: p. 19)

As mentioned by Darnell and Hayhurst, the focus on youth is well established in the field of SDP and this focus is clearly mirrored in the discourses of the CWS. Apart from the above statement, the document 2015a is entirely dedicated as a toolkit for youth advocacy of SDP. Explicitly stating its purpose being “to provide young people with the skills and tools to become advocates of SDP, and enhance their ability to create awareness and influence decision-making” (2015a: p. 7). This notion ties well with the perspective of global citizenship being promoted by powerful strategic developmentalist and neoliberal oriented actors as discussed by Tiessen (2011: p. 572). From this perspective, the CWS emphasizes the individual perspective related to both empowerment through capacity building by developing skills and tools to become advocates, to speak the language that is, of SDP as well as through agency by enhancing the ability to create change in their communities. From a postcolonial perspective, however, this can also be viewed as representing youth as passive “Others” in need of the language of SDP for affecting change in their environments (Tiessen, 2011: pp. 582-583). Thus perpetuating dominant SDP discourses by adopting youth as advocates, potentially reinforcing structures and mechanisms of unequal power relations and dependency (p. 575). Adopting a postcolonial approach instead could utilize the popularity of sport to foster an environment in support of self-determination (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011:}
pp. 43-44), emphasizing the ability of youth to determine their development and future. To some extent, the CWS acknowledge this in 2015b by stating that the engagement of youth in SDP programs should:

“[R]ecognise the importance of young people ‘defining their own development goals and objectives’ and being afforded the ‘intellectual, physical and socio-political space to participate in development and social transformation’.” – Oliver Dudfield & Malcolm Dingwall-Smith (2015: p. 89)

Providing yet another example of self-reflexivity by the CWS towards postcolonial critiques of international development related to issues of self-determination, and sensitivity to ongoing debates within the field of SDP on how sport can support such processes.

6. Conclusion

Although being widely recognized and expanding rapidly, the field of sport for development and peace (SDP) is still a relatively young branch within the larger realm of international development. This is what makes studying the dynamics of the field so interesting as it is constantly being shaped by the collective actions of a range of actors operating in different policy domains. The communicative events of these actors plays a significant role in this process of shaping the field, both constituting and being constituted by the discourses emerging from the various policy domains of SDP. However, being a young field also implies being sensitive to shocks from both the internal and external environments. In May 2017 the field experienced such a shock as the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, announced the closure of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), presenting an intensified partnership between the UN and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in its place. Effectively leaving the SDP field at a junction. Which road the field will take from here is still too early to predict. However, while the UNOSDP and the SDP IWG was respected widely, departing from the sphere of international development, the IOC has its roots from within the sports federations sphere traditionally concerned with the advancement of sport governance and infrastructure. Leaving the field with concerns of a potential shift of SDP from focusing on “development through sport”, back to an ideology of “development of sport”.

This study has conducted a qualitative critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the discourses carried forward by the Commonwealth Secretariat (CWS) through the analysis of five key policy and strategy documents published in the period 2013-2017. Departing from the
perspective of a postcolonial and decolonization theoretical framework, the purpose of the study has been to identify what discourses the CWS advances through the publication and dissemination of the five SDP policy and strategy documents, how the discourses draw from previous documents and texts, and how the discourses relate to mainstream SDP discourses. The findings suggest that the Commonwealth does not stand for change in the field of SDP, but largely perpetuates dominant SDP discourses related to i) why sport is uniquely positioned to strengthen development approaches; ii) in what areas of development SDP policies and strategies should be focused; and iii) whom such SDP initiatives should target. These discourses remain relatively steady across the documents throughout the period examined, moving in accordance with the development of discourses within both the SDP field and international development. Furthermore, the identified discourses are all contingent on six distinct principles advanced by the CWS dictating how sport should be used to advance development and peace within the Commonwealth. Thus forming an order of discourse that constitutes the boundaries in which all other discourses operate. Combining the methodology of critical discourse analysis with a postcolonial and decolonization theoretical framework has proven useful for exposing how power relations function both within and between various policy domains, and how this process works to both reproduce discourses and direct practices of actors operating in the field of SDP. Strengthening the notion of McEwan (2009: p. 146) of development texts being strategic in their promotion of specific forms of knowledge and practices. Adopting a postcolonial perspective challenges such perpetuating practices, whether intentional or consequential, by asking significant questions regarding the power relations embedded in such knowledge production, and how actors are empowered or marginalized by such practices (Hayhurst, 2009: pp. 211-212).

Whether or not the CWS will maintain its current position in the SDP field remains a question for future studies, taking into consideration both a range of newly published policy and strategy documents and a changing SDP governance landscape. However, regardless of the future direction of the CWS, it is faced with the monumental task of remaining relevant in an era of decolonization, marked by its colonial past (Dreyton, 2016: p. 21). In this ambitious quest for positioning itself as a leader in the field of SDP, adopting a postcolonial perspective and advocating for utilizing sport as a means for supporting peoples and communities self-determination and ownership of their own development could potentially be a winning strategy. Hence, passing the ball to the communities instead of carrying it further away from them.
References


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