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Title	Exploring the approaches of non-Indigenous researchers to Indigenous research: a qualitative study
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Reviewer 1	Fady Hannah-Shmouni
Institution	National Institutes of Health, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Bethesda, Md.
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>Kilian et al report an interesting qualitative study of approaches of non-Indigenous researchers to Indigenous research. The authors are commended for undertaking this work. The research was conducted across different disciplines considering the views of the Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous populations. Semi structured interview approach was used that allowed for understanding of the context and negotiation of meaning. Bottom up approach for analysis allowed them to use the iterative process. They identified themes through discussions that included all authors not just some of them.</p> <p>This research was conducted at one Canadian university and their sample size was small, but the authors themselves identify the limitation of their study with regards to generalizability. It might lead other universities to conduct an audit of their own policies to identify and improve any gaps. We also agree with the authors that involving Indigenous population in more than just peripheral role can prevent burnout and yield improved outcomes.</p> <p>Our few comments are as follows:</p> <p>The authors should consider specifying the exact roles of the 8 participants i.e. how many medical students, physician-researchers and residents were there. This significantly affects how we collect data as each group has different level of experience and expertise.</p> <p>Thank you very much for this suggestion. We have included Table 1, to further describe our participant sample. We are limited by maintaining participant confidentiality. Additionally, our sample was not limited to physicians/residents/medical students but all researchers from various professions. P5 Track changes and clean version</p> <p>Also, there is no explicit description in the study that all the participants are from the non-Indigenous background and is initially left to reader's assumption. The study later reports them as being non-Indigenous during the conclusion and in interviewees own quotes. The non-Indigenous background of the participants can be one of the inclusion criteria of the study.</p> <p>Thank you very much for this perceptive catch. We have addressed this in the body of the paper. P3 Track changes and clean version</p> <p>Addressing the time frame work of the researches done by the 8 participants will also add to the credibility of the research as a researcher 30 years ago could have faced more barriers as compared to someone conducting research in recent times as a lot of institutional policies and research requirements evolve over time.</p> <p>Thank you very much for this comment. This was not data we asked about and we feel that out estimation of this would be quite inaccurate if we used earliest date of publication for example. We have included additional information about our participants in Table 1.</p>

	<p>The authors state that they adopted decolonizing methods but do not describe them in detail. There is a recent article on decolonizing approaches. The authors should consider elaborating on the decolonizing methods they adopted using this reference!https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3894850/ This article has been read and used to inform our explanations. P3-5 Track changes and clean version.</p> <p>While assessing the current approaches of indigenous research by non-indigenous researchers, the elements of congruency and incongruence to the TCPS-2 policies have been discussed in detail. The author should consider including a summary of the actual TCPS-2 policies that are significant in conducting these researches. This will be summarized as appendix A. P12 Track changes and clean version.</p> <p>It is mentioned in the article that information power can be achieved through fewer participants in settings where the sample holds more relevant information, has narrow study aim and a sample population specific. However, on reviewing the participants' interviews, the answers seem to reflect experiences that the participants had in their own careers in institutions outside University of Toronto. In fact, the subtheme of institutions being a barrier to the execution of researches by non-indigenous researchers seems to be talking about Institutes in general and defeats the purpose of the study being narrow and catering to just UofT. Hence, in larger spectrum, it probably defeats the concept of information power where the sample should be specific to a certain location. Thank you for this perceptive comment. Given that our sample is geographically local, and influenced by the 'culture' of the University of Toronto (as all participants are affiliated even if their research is not directly under UofT), this would still be considered a narrow sample. The institutional diversity secondary to the subcultures of individual institutions highlights the diversity within one institution and likely increases the generalizability of the work.</p> <p>The study was a qualitative one which while allowing for flexibility also introduces subjectivity in the research. The authors should consider adding this point in their conclusion so that the reader takes this into consideration. This has been added to our limitations. P10 track changes and clean version.</p> <p>Various biases can influence the results of such qualitative study which might be worth mentioning in limitations of the study. These include, but are not limited to, respondent bias, recall bias. This has been added to our limitations. P10 track changes and clean version.</p>
Reviewer 2	Sumeet Sodhi-Helou
Institution	Dignitas International, Toronto, Ont.
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>This is an interesting and important topic, however there are a number of limitations that need to be addressed prior to consideration of publication: The background does not accurately represent current knowledge in the field. There is no indication of a review of the current literature on the topic in Canada or internationally, aside from once comment on "logistical and ethical challenges". Our introduction aims to balance a broad introduction to the topic of ethical research, and the relationship between research and colonialism while describing the role of our research in addressing a knowledge gap. This</p>

	<p>knowledge gap was highlighted and supported by a literature review, which is cited. We feel that an expansion of the literature review is beyond the scope of this paper, given the limited word count.</p> <p>The methods and data collection paragraphs are too general, not specific to this particular study. Thank you for this comment. We have revised these sections be more specific.</p> <p>There is no indication of ethics approval in the text of the paper. This has been addressed. P4 track changes and clean version.</p> <p>Results are well written and well reported, but more information and analysis is required regarding generalizability beyond one large academic institution. Unfortunately, given the limited word count, there is very little room to broaden the analysis, as much of pre-existing the nuance was cut. Additionally, the recommendations and future directs are generalizable beyond UofT. As described anove, we feel that actionable and generalizable on a systemic level, across multiple institutions. Specifically, institutions must demonstrate and facilitate a clear knowledge of the principles of working with Indigenous communities as policies. We feel that there is room for implementation and action at the level of institutional mission statements, REBs, funding mechanisms, as detailed in the body of our manuscript. Additionally, we feel that institutions must facilitate As well, we feel that institutions can take concrete steps to support individual researchers about how to incorporate the frameworks into their work. We detail this in the body of our work, including with recommendation such as including dedicated staff members to guide the conduction of Indigenous research on institutional ethics boards. Finally, at the individual level, every researcher working with Indigenous peoples must be able to implement these principles in their research practices. This can be facilitated through our recommended interventions of research networks and training sessions among others.</p>
Reviewer 3	Rita Henderson
Institution	Departments of Family Medicine and Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alta.
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>This is a straightforward article, but the content and findings are important to be published in a public venue like CMAJ Open, as they call for institutional changes that are sorely needed in Canada, particularly supported by the TRC. One limitation that is not mentioned that would be good to add is that the perspective of community-based research partners is not explored, so this is self-reported from the non-Indigenous community based researchers alone. This does limit the findings to some extent, but a further group to engage may be an exploration and manuscript of it's own. This would be excellent material for a complimentary future study.</p> <p>There are a few misuses of the possessive apostrophe. I can remember seeing it twice in the early half of the manuscript, one on page 12. The authors are advised to pay attention to those in a final proof. Thank you for this astute catch. This has been addressed throughout.</p>

I appreciate that the ethical frameworks mentioned are not just the TCPS 2 and OCAP(TM), but also Metis and Inuit frames of reference. Perhaps more could mention also Nation-specific ethical protocols that exist.

Given the word count limitation we did not feel this was possible.

Additionally, it is difficult to address some nation specific protocols but not all.