Relevance. Cricket is the second most popular sport in the world (Jhanwar, 2018; Willingham, 2019) and is governed by the International Cricket Council (ICC). Despite cricket's origination in England, it remains one of the most celebrated sporting activities in South Asia (i.e., India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh), Caribbean (i.e., West Indies), Oceania (New Zealand and Australia), and Africa (South Africa, Kenya, and Zimbabwe). The unique cricket-related interaction between the East and West has led to numerous accusations against the ICC being racially biased towards non-white countries (Philpott, 2018). However, there remains a paucity of sport management scholarship about how the ICC has been able to tackle countless accusations and being able to remain as a sole international cricket governing body.

Literature Review. Historically, the British Empire used cricket as a means to gain soft power in its former colonies (Hill & Beadle, 2014). Furthermore, some scholars highlighted that cricket was used as a tool for white supremacy (Philpott, 2018). While according to Majumdar (2007), the colonized countries have used cricket as a platform to challenge colonial supremacy. This inherent competition in cricket between the former colonial masters and the colonized has led to numerous allegations against the ICC, which was founded in 1909 by England, Australia, and South Africa. However, the ICC has made many anti-racist decisions, like banning South Africa from international cricket in the 1970s because of its government’s policy of apartheid (Timcke, 2013). Therefore, exploring how historically broader belief systems have shaped the ICC policies and responses to racial allegations has numerous theoretical and managerial takeaways for sport management scholars.

Purpose. Hence, the purpose of this ongoing study is to explore how the ICC has been able to tackle inherent racism lying in the ethos of cricket (Greenfield & Osborn, 1997) and remain as a sole governing body for more than a hundred years through the institutional theory lens (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002; Zucker, 1987).

Methodology. We are using a historical single case study methodology to understand the phenomenon (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2009; Ventresca & Mohr, 2002). Data are collected from multiple sources (e.g., ICC website, ICC press releases, newspaper articles, historical archives, and media interviews of the ICC officials). Further, data will be analyzed via Langley’s (1999) multiple data point analysis approach using abductive reasoning (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). We sought to understand 25 critical events of racial allegations faced by the ICC (i.e., per the media coverage) and the ICC response to those events in the last 110 years.

Contribution. This ongoing case study provides scholars with an understanding of how external forces can clash with the organization’s ethos through the institutional theory lens (Dacin et al., 2002), which affects sport organization’s policymaking and governance. In addition, this study contributes to the post-colonization discourse regarding sports. Lastly, this study provides a scholarship about a prominent sporting organization, which has mostly been overlooked by sport management scholars.