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Methodological Challenges for Cross-cultural Research in Sport Psychology: A Review

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Abstract

This review investigates methodological challenges in conducting cross-cultural studies in sport psychology. Over the last few decades, there has been an increase in the number of studies to incorporate culture and cultural identities in research and interventions in this field. As sport grows more transnational and multicultural, the need to explore better research methods and the challenges in conducting these cross-cultural sport psychology studies emerges. For this review, we examined studies that were published between January 1985 and July 2021, written in English, and focused on cross-cultural studies in the field of sport psychology. The literature search was conducted in EBSCO (e.g., MEDLINE, APA PsycArticles, Academic Search Ultimate, and ERIC), Sciencedirect, Researchgate, Springer link and Wiley Online library databases. A total of 18 articles matched the inclusion criteria and were selected. The study observed that quantitative approach was the most often used methodology in the studies due to popularity and easy administration. Qualitative and mixed (quantitative and qualitative) approaches are now gradually being used by researchers to overcome the cultural insensitivity in the quantitative research, although these studies are scarce and need to be highlighted more. We discussed research designs formulated by researchers in their quantitative and qualitative studies and methodological challenges they encountered, such as sample representativeness, small and unequal sample sizes, gender inequality, and comparing different kinds of sports across countries. Therefore, this review addressed the gap in the literature and paved the way for future research studies.

Keywords: Cross-cultural study, sports psychology, cross-cultural differences, quantitative approach, qualitative approach