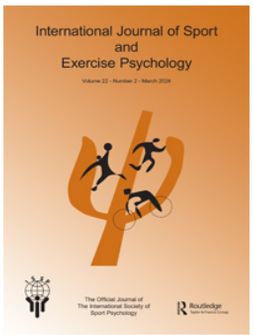

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ISSP position stand on cultural praxis in sport psychology: reaffirming our commitments to the ethics of difference, cultural inclusion, and social justice

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ISSP position stand on cultural praxis in sport psychology: reaffirming our commitments to the ethics of difference, cultural inclusion, and social justice

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ABSTRACT

The international sport psychology community is intricately interconnected with the broader geopolitical landscape. Therefore, our community can be a powerful agent, transforming political polarisation in sports into respectful conversations of differing opinions, valuing diversity, and promoting cultural safety, inclusivity, and ethical practices. The International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP) has been at the forefront in providing a comprehensive scientific review of pressing topics facing our communities, sharing the best scientific and applied practices, and inspiring sport psychology professionals to envision a more equitable future. The current heated debates about self-identity and gender expression, protecting women athletes' rights and opportunities, performance and mental health, and athlete activism, compel us to reaffirm our commitment to cultural praxis in sport psychology. This position stand demonstrates how cultural praxis can become a catalyst for genuine change, paving the way to a more culturally responsive, just, and inclusive future in sport psychology.

KEYWORDS

Cultural praxis; cultural safety; intersectionality; generations; scientist practitioners

As we write this position stand, geopolitical struggles and political polarisation within our communities have been increasing. Sport is not isolated from the broader social landscape and is often used as a platform for political activism and protests. The political tensions within and between nation-states, not to mention military conflicts in different parts of the world, have spurred controversies over the participation of certain athletes in international sporting events and the display of national symbols. Heightened conflicts exacerbate inequalities in sports, particularly access to resources, training facilitates, and career

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opportunities, and impact on athletes' safety, well-being, and performance. As sport psychology professionals[1] (SPPs) are often called upon to address and mitigate issues of polarisation in sporting teams (see Lidor & Blumenstein, 2011), it is crucial for our international community to unite in promoting cultural safety, inclusivity, and ethical practices at all levels of sport participation.

In this contribution, we extend the 2013 statement of the International Society of Sport Psychology on Culturally Competent Research and Practice in Sport and Exercise psychology (Ryba et al., 2013). In that 2013 Position Stand, the authors proposed recommendations for culturally competent research and practice based on the foundational scholarship to provide a roadmap for future sport psychology work. Building on subsequent scholarship and the expansion of cultural sport psychology (CSP; Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009), we align with renewed calls to destabilise the hegemonic white, economically privileged, heteronormative, and masculinist foundations of Eurocentric paradigms across the fields of psychology, sport, and health sciences (e.g., Gill, 2023; Krane & Waldron, 2021; Richardson et al., 2023). The Eurocentric bias is deeply ingrained in dominant theories and practices of sport psychology as repeatedly highlighted (e.g., Lee et al., 2023; Parham, 2011; Sarkar et al., 2015). Thus, it is important to persistently challenge the assumption that Eurocentric paradigms are universally applicable. Disregarding the underlying cultural, social, and historical forces perpetuates the normalisation of Western-centric perspectives and practices (Fox et al., 2009), and reinforces the unequal power to legitimise what counts as knowledge within global sport psychology discourse.

Ryba and Wright (2005) proposed cultural praxis as a future trajectory for applied sport psychology. Cultural praxis is grounded in cultural studies as praxis and critical pedagogy, drawing on the work of Stuart Hall (1997), bell hooks (1994), Paolo Freire (1970), Judith Butler (1997), and Michael Foucault (1980), and challenges SPPs to move beyond the privileged space of Euro-American whiteness to a new way of thinking about athletes, coaches, and sport professionals. All are constituted by multiple discourses, including race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, disability, age, and the national sport system; these diverse voices and lived experiences must be included in the ethical production and application of radically contextualised, culturally relevant knowledge. To bridge the gap between theory and practice, Ryba and Wright advocated the inclusion of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, particularly participatory and activist qualitative approaches. They also argued for linking and strengthening the components of cultural praxis with "a progressive politics that focuses on social difference, equity, and justice" (p. 201). SPPs should not only analyse and understand the cultural influences that shape sport practices and experiences, but also work to engage with, transform, and challenge them when necessary. When Schinke and colleagues introduced CSP during the same time frame (Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009; Schinke et al., 2005), cultural praxis emerged as a critical form of CSP scholarship that integrates theory, lived culture, and social action/activism in professional settings (Ryba & Schinke, 2009a, pp. 266–267; see also Blodgett et al., 2015; Kavoura et al., 2012; Schinke et al., 2016). These authors argued that with a more comprehensive understanding of athletes' experiences and a culturally sensitive approach, SPPs could be more effective in supporting athletes' well-being and performance.

Despite increasing recognition that cultural context influences sporting experiences, performance, mental health, and well-being, cultural praxis has not been fully understood, nor embraced by researchers and applied professionals in sport. Hagan Jr. et al. (2019) situated their knowledge claims in the Sub-Saharan cultural context, and advocated for cultural praxis stemming from reflexive sensibilities that centre local intellectual traditions. Building on the scholarship of Ryba and Wright (2005, 2010), they advocated studying the culturally unique subjectivities of athletes from Indigenous societies while critically engendering cultural practices in applied work with African athletes (see also Ikulayo & Semidara, 2011). Krane and Waldron (2021) criticised the disciplinary discourse for hindering LGBTQIA + inclusive practices in sport psychology. They posited that cultural praxis has been neglected and called for integrating CSP and cultural praxis into the training and certification requirements of SPPs in the USA. Similarly, Chroni and Kavoura (2020) asserted that formal training of professionals in the components of cultural competence – i.e., cultural awareness and reflexivity, culturally competent communication, and culturally competent interventions – tends to be disjointed and incomplete without supervised practical opportunities to synthesise them into cultural praxis. Finally, several scholars (e.g., Lee et al., 2023; McDougall et al., 2020; Ryba et al., 2020) have criticised CSP for losing its critical edge, suggesting the lack of diverse voices within the CSP community may lead to stagnation and alienation of SPPs from outside the white Anglo-American privileged space in the field. They called for SPPs to engage in critical reflexivity.

This ISSP Position Stand focuses on mapping a cultural praxis heuristic that combines heuristic thinking with the practical application of culturally informed knowledge through cultural praxis. We emphasise integrating pressing concerns about cultural diversity, intersectional inclusion, and social justice in sport into culturally competent and ethical sport psychology practice. We advocate that sport psychology professionals must engage in this process to fulfil the ISSP ethical mandate in its Code of Ethics with the principle of *social justice and responsibility* and the standard of *multicultural and diversity awareness of professional practice* (see Quartiroli, A., Harris, et al., 2021). In the following sections, we first navigate a trajectory for cultural praxis, highlighting its transformative potential in how we produce knowledge and engage in applied practice. Next, we create a space for methodological engagements with cultural praxis as both concept and practice in applied settings. One of our authors, Robert Schinke, shares a real-life case emphasising the fluidity and potential benefits of this approach. Afterward, we explore how shifts to CSP and cultural praxis have been pivotal in promoting cultural competence among SPPs. Finally, we review the challenges and ethical considerations associated with implementing cultural praxis while providing recommendations to advance this important area of science-to-practice, from concepts and theory, through empirical science, to culturally relevant interventions (see Schinke et al., 2023).

The transformative future-forming potential of a cultural praxis heuristic

As a relatively new body of scholarship, cultural praxis in sport psychology requires intellectual stimulation and practical nurturing for its development. Early CSP work (see Ryba et al., 2010; Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009) stimulated a cultural praxis of athletes' careers paradigm (Stambulova & Ryba, 2013), culturally reflexive qualitative research (e.g., Champ et al., 2020; Darpatova-Hruzewicz, 2022; McGannon & Smith, 2015), and

context-driven practice (Schinke & Stambulova, 2017). Efforts have been directed towards bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and the lived culture of practice through research. However, issues of sociocultural difference often take the form of an "add-on", comparing the cultural "other" to the invisible norm ingrained in psychological theories, research methods, and interventions commonly used in sport settings (Gill, 1994; Ryba & Wright, 2010). The intellectual challenge for cultural praxis practitioners is not only acknowledging cultural diversity, but critically investigating how conventional sport psychology may perpetuate cultural imperialism or ethnocentrism (Mashreghi, 2020; Roychowdhury et al., 2021; Ryba, 2009). For instance, individualistic notions of "autonomy" or "mental toughness" may not resonate with athletes from more collectivist cultural orientations, where interconnectedness and interbeing are a way of life (Si et al., 2011). Furthermore, Eurocentric methodologies and methods have been criticised for colonising non-Western indigenous subjectivities and appropriating their knowledges and ways of being (see Ryba & Schinke, 2009b; see also Roychowdhury et al., 2021). Thus, a culturally nuanced understanding is imperative in the development of credible and applicable knowledge claims in the scientific and applied practice of sport psychology.

Moreover, the conceptual fallacy of implicitly locating the normative athlete as white, male, heterosexual, able-bodied, and often economically privileged, has been problematised by critical scholars in sport psychology and related fields, who highlight that non-intersectional inclusion efforts tend to privilege those least marginalised, leaving many members of the group excluded (Ahmed, 2012; Gill, 2001; Spaaij et al., 2020). Recognising the multiplicity of interconnected identities and systems of oppression, Crenshaw (1989) argued that intersectional analysis should be incorporated into feminist knowledge production. Similarly, because athlete subjectivity is fluid, an intersectional perspective allows for a more nuanced psychological analysis and critique of power relations, recognising how different axes of identity such as race, gender, sexuality, and social class intersect to create unique lived experiences (Schinke & McGannon, 2015; Smith et al., 2019). Engaging intersectionality is in the vein of cultural praxis, and the work of Schinke et al. (2012), Carter (2019), Chroni and Kavoura (2022), and Quartiroli, Fogaça, et al. (2023) has anchored it in cultural sensitivity and cultural safety.

After decades of debate about culture, language, and meaning in shaping athlete's identities and experiences in sport, we are now living with diversity in a world where social and cultural traditions of the past are being globally disrupted. As Rosa (2015) argued, the acceleration of social change is particularly evident in the transformation of attitudes, values, lifestyles, family ties, relationships, politics, religion, norms, social languages, habits, and everyday practices. The speed of these dramatic changes is increased by transnational interconnectivity and split-second global communication, which may create unity and solidarity, but also amplify difference and identity politics, providing a rationale for alienation and antagonism (Ryba et al., 2018; see also Bobrownicki & Valentin, 2022). Critical issues for SPPs are shifting from individual empowerment to facilitating the systemic resilience of communities so that they are flexible and draw energy from diversity and change, yet sustainable to provide dynamic stability and a sense of authenticity and belonging for their members (see Ryba, 2017).

We stand at an unprecedented point in history when five generations could be present in sport organisations: the Silents, born 1925–1945; Baby Boomers, born 1946–1964; Gen X, born 1965–1979; Millennials, born 1980–1994, and Gen X, born 1995–2012 (Twenge,

2023). Although the boundaries and characteristics of generations can vary depending on cultural, geographic, and sociopolitical factors, and should be treated as social constructions (see McDougall et al., 2023), Twenge argued that generational differences contribute to polarisation in society due to their vastly diverging beliefs and behaviours. While research focused on generational variations in the meaning and values of (elite) sport is limited, Gould et al. (2020) presented a case of Gen Z athletes perceived as different from other generations of athletes by their coaches, recommending generationally nuanced coaching strategies. Also, Scott et al. (2023) argued that current generations of athletes tend to be more environmentally conscious as well as concerned about putting themselves at risk in unfair-unsafe climate conditions. Research with Gen Z athletes in Nordic cultural contexts revealed complex negotiations of meaning in the construction of their athletic identities that did not fully align with the dominant discourse of elite sport (Kavoura & Ryba, 2020; Ronkainen & Ryba, 2020), potentially creating tensions in their social interactions with coaches (Saarinen et al., 2023). Additionally, the re-emergence of activism among collegiate athletes has revealed nuanced forms of using sport as a platform to advocate for social justice, diversity, authenticity, and sustainability (Kluch, 2020), which can contribute to conflicts if leadership does not promote dialogue, skilful listening, intergenerational understanding, and a systemic process of becoming.

As the aforementioned issues are intricately woven into the fabric of athletes' everyday lives, addressing challenges of geopolitical injustice, polarisation, and generational differences through cultural praxis in sport psychology requires a forward-thinking and future-forming approach. Given that sport spaces are lived through the everyday practices of individuals of different ages, it is crucial to consider generational differences and power dynamics. This approach goes beyond traditional vectors of difference to include age as a social identity. By promoting a nuanced understanding of age within the framework of intersectionality, we aim to ensure that the diverse meanings, life experiences, and needs of athletes and professionals from diverse cultures can be addressed within a socio-cultural responsive and safe practice of sport psychology. A cultural praxis that views difference as relational, constituted, and fluid (Ryba et al., 2013) and resists the commodification of intersectional analysis (Crenshaw, 2011), is central to promoting socially just and culturally safe practice. By combining cultural engagement with heuristic thinking, cultural praxis offers a framework for critical reflexivity, creativity, and innovation in dealing with complex issues, leading to the co-creation of an equitable future.

Cultural praxis – yes, but how?

As cultural praxis travels across space and time, it evokes new questions and may take different forms. In this section, we create space for cultural praxis as both a concept and a practice in applied settings. We discuss how cultural praxis can be strategically used. Our second author, Robert Schinke, embedded in Canada, shares cases of cultural praxis in working with Indigenous athletes and communities, highlighting the fluidity and benefits of this approach.

Cultural praxis cases in combative sport

Throughout his career, Robert has undertaken research informed by the contextual realities of applied practice in elite amateur and professional sport in Canada. He had no

appreciation for cultural praxis in applied sport psychology when he began to consult, as little was known about inclusion and potential harm when identities were overlooked, and treating clients the same was regarded as best practice (see Andersen, 1993; Butryn, 2002; see also Ryba & Wright, 2005). This omission was related to his formal education focused exclusively on motivational theories and mental training skills, with little discussion about context, culture or identity, and thus little understanding of how to work effectively with diverse clients and participants, while considering personal privilege (Butryn, 2010).

Sport and exercise psychology professionals have come to appreciate that they, as much as their clients, come with complex, idiosyncratic identities (Schinke et al., 2019). These identities can never be fully understood by another person, and they are subject to change within a social context and fluid across time (Douglas, 2014). Further explanations underlying the malleability of personhood might include first language, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, financial status, education, macros and micro sport or recreation context, peer associations, community of origin, and family of origin (Kavoura et al., 2015). When these intersecting elements are considered, the client and practitioner begin to navigate through meaningful dialog and acquaintance (Blodgett et al., 2017). Within Robert's professional realm, often in the world of combative sports, education, vocabulary, race, and language were often found to distance prospective clients from sport psychology services (McGannon et al., 2019). A previous service provider, who held a doctorate and an academic position, exhibited little understanding of the cultural context and its athletes. This pre-context served as the antithesis to openness and the potential for cultural praxis the athletes were seeking, whereby they could be accepted and supported within the context of their national team.

Robert was invited to meet with this national team a few months later. The initial meeting was warm and hopeful; the athletes sought respect from someone interested in their sport and personal identities and how these might be supported. They introduced themselves during an initial team meeting and listened keenly as the sport psychology practitioner introduced himself and spoke about shared interests, the skills the consultant could offer, his contextual lack of knowledge, and personal background as a former national team athlete from a high-risk sport. This approach lessened power and distance, opening the possibility for collaboration, beginning that day with athlete meetings. For three consecutive years, Rob gained proficiency in combat sports language, modes of expression within the team, dress code, and training structures, which led to international travel at major events. The team included Francophone and Anglophone male athletes, newcomers who resettled volitionally or through forced means, as well as Indigenous athletes. This diversity precipitated Rob's sport psychology career drawing upon CSP and cultural safety and commitment to serve the athletes based on their diverse identities in relation to his own (see Ryba & Wright, 2005; see also Schinke et al., 2012).

Indigenous athletes have been a consistent population within high-performance combative sport, though at the time of Rob's entry their retention was inconsistent and short-term. Athletes would qualify and experience a competitive season within the national team programme, often followed by the personal choice of deselection due to limited cultural adaptation with the onus of integration placed on the marginalised Indigenous athletes (Schinke et al., 2006). During one early international training camp, one athlete ate apart from teammates. This athlete was solitary as compared with the social integration

observed among teammates. The staff felt that the athlete was not committed to the programme and would soon return to his cultural community, as predecessors had. Hence, the onus was on the athlete to integrate, and not on the programme to facilitate welcoming. This reflects a problematic approach to acculturation (see Berry, 2005). The discussion that ensued when the Indigenous athlete met Rob was cataclysmic for Rob, just as it has been for some professionals elsewhere when first working with Indigenous performers (see Hanrahan, 2004). The athlete expressed that only one week ago his house had burned in a fire, and his family were homeless, living among friends in their cultural community – hence his sadness and consequent silence. Silence, then, was explained from the athlete's vantage differently than by the staff who were working with him. As the discussion ensued, the practitioner was shown some of the athlete's cultural artefacts (see Seanor et al., 2017), including an eagle feather and sweet grass – the latter was burned in small portion each day as part of the athlete's spiritual meditation (Schinke et al., 2006). The athlete was misunderstood, stereotyped, and marginalised by a system that was, like others of the time (see Forsyth, 2016), race-blind (see Andersen, 1993). The consequence for the athlete was alienation, exacerbated by a cultural background as someone from a highly collective community (see Hanrahan, 2009; Schinke et al., 2009).

Rob, who was relatively new to a faculty position, continued to speak with the athlete throughout the season and following months. One important outcome, with support from the athlete, was the application for external funding with a national granting agency, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The grant focused on identifying the wishes, human resources, and personal skills that could benefit Canadian Indigenous athletes across communities. The research project, in which the athlete served as the first participant and subsequently assisted with recruitment, opened a space to explore the desires of a recognised marginalised subset of aspiring athletes (see Brant et al., 2002; Phillips et al., 2019). The emphasis was initially on demystifying Canadian Indigenous practices among mainstream sport psychology practitioners. Rob shared these findings with the national team staff, its administration, and with Indigenous professionals at the North American Indigenous Games (Danielson et al., 2006). These actions might be regarded as progress toward cultural praxis, as the Indigenous athletes' voices were centralised within a sport system augmenting retention through shared understanding (Schinke et al., 2006). Within sport psychology, discussion was only beginning on decolonising methodologies (see Ryba & Schinke, 2009a). Research can provide answers to societal challenges, and, if undertaken with care, the process of designing a project, gathering and analysing data, and coauthoring can deepen the emancipatory influence of scholarship (see Schinke et al., 2009). Rob's 20-year journey into cultural praxis through research, began with one group of athletes within one team, and then extended into broader inclusion among female and male athletes (Blodgett et al., 2017), and more recently to newcomer, refugee athletes (Giffin et al., 2024). The constant values underlying Rob's experience have been (a) bridging science and practice (reciprocity), and (b) centralising athletes' identities within high-performance sport opportunities.

The necessity of cultural competence in training and certification

A wide range of definitions of competence exists within the professional psychology literature, which contributes to confusion (Rodolfa et al., 2005). Scholars generally describe

competence as an individual's suitability for a profession (e.g., Barnett et al., 2007; Kaslow et al., 2007), involving task performance aligned with practitioners' qualifications, evidence-based practices, and cultural sensitivities (APA Presidential Task Force, 2006). In addition to other knowledge-based competencies, such as in-depth knowledge of theories and interventions (see Rodolfa et al., 2005), scholars also consider the conceptualisation, integration, and implementation of cultural competence in general (Allison et al., 1994; Pope-Davis et al., 1995; Sue, 1998), and narrow further to sport psychology science and practice (Gill, 1994; 2023; Ryba et al., 2010; Quartiroli, Fogaça, et al., 2023). In this section, we explore how these shifts towards cultural praxis in sport psychology scholarship facilitated the development of cultural competence among SPPs, as underscored in the previous section.

Cultural competence

Over the past 20 years, cultural competence has become recognised as a pivotal professional competency to practice psychology (Rodolfa et al., 2005). Generally understood as encompassing cultural awareness, knowledge, skills, encounters, and desire (Bassey & Melluish, 2013; Sue et al., 2022), cultural competence has received increased attention in sport psychology (e.g., Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009). Awareness is described as developing insight into one's cultural values, attitudes, and biases, while also developing sensitivity to the diverse values, beliefs, and attitudes of clients. Knowledge is generally understood as the process of learning about the client's cultures, worldviews, and expectations, and skills as the ability of the practitioners to engage with clients in a sensitive and relevant manner (Sue et al., 2009). Finally, cultural encounters refer to the practitioners' processes of engaging directly in cultural interactions with clients from backgrounds different from their own, while desire refers to the practitioners' motivation to engage in the processes to develop these competences (Campinha-Bacote, 1999). Subsequently, practitioners began exploring the role of competence in ethical practice (e.g., Butryn, 2002; Martens et al., 2000; Ryba et al., 2013; Schinke et al., 2012). The renewed attention spurred the integration of cultural competence within the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP), the European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC), and the International Society of Sport Psychology's (ISSP) accreditations (Schinke et al., 2018) and ethics codes (e.g., AASP, 2023; Quartiroli et al., 2020).

Critiquing cultural competence

As attention to cultural competence increases among SPPs (e.g., Curvey et al., 2022), some have begun to highlight questionable assumptions (Krane & Waldron, 2021), such as limiting this discourse to race and ethnicity, and implying a finite nature of cultural competence (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015). For example, the cultural competence discourse seems to simplify cultural difference, relying on generalisations and often reduced to race and ethnicity (Quartiroli et al., 2020; Schinke et al., 2019). When considering race and ethnicity, the focus is on the "other", normalising the culture of the dominant group, in which scholars and practitioners are presumed to be members (Ryba, 2009; Quartiroli, Schinke, et al., 2023). Similarly, this discourse reduces the conversation to the practitioner's level of competence, disregarding the complexity of issues associated with the context and power

imbalances among individuals and groups (Beagan, 2018). Finally, although cultural competence is described as a process, it tends to assume a finite level of knowledge for understanding life experiences of those being served (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015; Krane & Waldron, 2021). Given the limitations, scholars and practitioners have move away from cultural competence to embrace cultural humility (Beagan, 2018; Campinha-Bacote, 2018).

From culturally competent to culturally humble

Cultural humility is a more introspective and relational approach to cultural understanding (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998), rooted in introspection, openness, and ongoing learning (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015). Rather than aspiring to be competent in culture, cultural humility encourages practitioners to recognise that understanding another person's culture requires a continual process of curiosity and willingness to learn (Quartiroli, Schinke, et al., 2023). Hence, cultural humility is a lifelong learning journey (Krane & Waldron, 2021) during which individuals commit to self-reflection and self-examination of their identities and beliefs, rather than aiming to develop knowledge until a standard is met (Chu & Bomber, 2023).

In the practice of cultural humility professionals embrace self-exploration in relation to their clients, organisational frameworks, and the societal structures, within which they exist (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015). This exploration fosters understanding of how one's identity and cultural background impact interactions with clients and contributes to advantages and disadvantages within systems and societies (Beagan, 2018; Fisher-Borne et al., 2015). Embracing cultural humility leads to a shift away from cultural differences as something that resides only in the other, to cultural difference as something inherent in the encounter of two or more equally valid worldviews (Foronda et al., 2016; Hanrahan & Lee, 2020; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Culturally humble professionals acknowledge that they may know little about their clients and participants (Hook et al., 2013; Kutob et al., 2013), while also accepting that their own values, beliefs, and perspectives are as valid as their clients' and participants' (Foronda et al., 2016). They are open to engaging in cultural interactions and new ideas, are aware of their own values, beliefs, behaviours, and appearance to others, and engage in supportive and positive interactions with others (Foronda et al., 2016). These professionals embrace the idea that each person's experience is unique and influenced by their intersecting identities and social contexts (Kirmayer, 2012). These professionals aim to develop a deep understanding of how culture influences everyone (Quartiroli, Vosloo, Schinke, Anderson, Fisher, and Middleton, 2021). They recognise the impact of social structures, power dynamics, privilege, and oppression on people's experiences, stories, and performance (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015) and aim to develop mutual empowering and respectful partnerships with clients (Foronda et al., 2016; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

From cultural humility to cultural safety

Cultural humility reflects a shift from mastery of understanding other cultures to a "way of being" (Foronda et al., 2016, p. 214), a lifelong commitment to personal accountability and advocacy against the systemic barriers that affect marginalised groups (Tervalon &

Murray-Garcia, 1998). Cultural safety challenges practitioners to actively engage in and work towards dismantling these power imbalances and prioritise cultural safety and inclusivity in their practices (Curtis et al., 2019). Cultural safety refers to the deliberate engagement in practices that challenge traditional power dynamics, mitigate systematic and individual biases, dismantle historical injustices and institutionalised discrimination and privilege, and enhance equity among individuals, systems, and organisations (Duke et al., 2009; Laverty et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2022). Cultural safety calls for prioritising clients' perspectives of safety and respecting their cultural context (Curtis et al., 2019; Lokugamage et al., 2023), thus shifting power from practitioner to clients and participants, who are entitled to decide what is (or not) culturally safe (Papps & Ramsden, 1996). Cultural safety prioritises individuals' feelings of validation and dignity (Smith et al., 2022) within the consulting relationships. Culturally safe professionals scrutinise their role in perpetuating systemic inequalities and discrimination while actively embracing practices to develop equitable relationships within their consulting and research practice. They constantly review themselves, their colleagues, organisations, profession, and practices for cultural and social responsiveness, which refers to professionals' ability to understand, respect, and adapt to their clients diverse cultural and social contexts, while recognising and valuing their unique characteristics, beliefs, and practices (Cox & Simpson, 2020; Ratts et al., 2016). These professionals not only know about culture (see Quartiroli, Vosloo, Schinke, Anderson, Fisher, and Giffin, 2021) and the organisational, social, and institutional systems within which they practice, they also accept their role in these systems. Furthermore, these professionals deliberately engage in practices aimed to dismantle systems of oppression to build a more culturally equitable, safe, and responsive system in professional settings.

A call for a culturally safe sport psychology

The evolution from cultural competence through cultural humility to cultural safety represents a transformative journey towards greater inclusivity, equity, and respect for diverse cultural identities, fuelled by CSP and cultural praxis. Cultural praxis's emphasis on the practical application of cultural theory, urging professionals to understand cultural nuances and to actively integrate this understanding into their interactions and interventions, has been a guiding principle. As professionals shift their focus beyond developing relevant cultural knowledge and behaviours to a paradigm where self-awareness takes precedence, they work more effectively with diverse clients (see Parham, 2011; Schinke et al., 2016; Quartiroli et al., 2020). This shift also involves recognising power dynamics and actively contributing to the creation of safe and inclusive spaces in consulting and research relationships, sport systems, and society at large (Ryba, 2009; Quartiroli, Schinke, et al., 2023; Schinke et al., 2019). Echoing Freire's (2021) emphasis on critical consciences, professionals move from seeking to develop their own competence to becoming deliberate agents of change, fostering systemic transformations within sport psychology. The transition is a shift from mere understanding of culture to creating space where cultural identities and differences are acknowledged, explored, valued, celebrated, respected, and integrated in consulting relationships and interventions (Chroni & Kavoura, 2020; Herman et al., 2007; Quartiroli, Schinke, et al., 2023).

While professionals cannot become fully culturally competent due to the endless layers of diversity, they can develop an approach grounded in humility, cultural reflexivity, and a willingness to learn from each client's and participant's experiences and stories, as well as their own responses to the complexities of one's cultural identities (Ryba et al., 2013; Quartiroli, Schinke, et al., 2023; Schinke et al., 2019). The practitioner becomes a facilitator of meaningful dialogue and interactions aimed at building trust and rapport and empowering clients to articulate their needs, expectations, and desires (Hanrahan & Lee, 2020). In line with recognising the complexity of cultural identities, culturally safe professionals conceptualise, develop, and implement interventions that are tailored to clients' cultural backgrounds, identities, and stories, which may lead to enhanced clients' performance and well-being (Quartiroli, Schinke, et al., 2023; Schinke et al., 2012). In the cultural practice heuristic articulated by Ryba and Wright (2005, 2010), insights drawn from cultural studies and critical pedagogy are integrated into pedagogical model of service delivery to promote culturally safe and transformative sport psychology practice.

Furthermore, culturally safe professionals embrace their role as scientist-practitioners, intertwining research and practice. They systematically study their practices and relevant scholarship to evaluate and critique their work. They actively seek diverse perspectives, fostering an environment that encourages innovative approaches to research, training, supervision, and interventions (Poczwardowski et al., 2023; Quartiroli, Schinke, et al., 2023; Schinke et al., 2023; Stambulova & Schinke, 2017). This scientist-practitioner model, inspired by the integration of scholarly insights and cultural praxis considerations, ensures ethical, effective, and safe consulting, research, and supervisory relationships and environments.

Let's do better! Critical reflections and postulates

As demonstrated in the previous sections, the cultural praxis of sport psychology integrates theory, research, and the lived culture of practice, while demanding an ongoing dialogue with intersectionality. The initial ambition of cultural praxis was an alternative future for applied sport psychology scholarship and practice focused on critiquing Eurocentrism and broadening the epistemological lens, as well as providing a pedagogical model that promotes critical awareness, empowerment, and capacity building. Over the years, the focus has broadened to include the promotion of a culturally responsive environment; that is, an inclusive and supportive space that recognises, respects, and values the cultural diversity of individuals. It is an environment that fosters a sense of belonging, promotes cultural safety and understanding, and adapts practices and approaches to meet the unique needs of people from diverse backgrounds. This transformative journey within sport psychology has truly shaped the future of professional practice. However, as sporting environments have become more diverse, creating cultural praxis in real-life situations has become increasingly challenging. The pace of sport globalisation and the transnational movement of people, ideas, and cultural practices, as well as the rapid development of technology, has accelerated faster than sport participants and professionals can adapt. In this section, we reflect on the challenges and ethical considerations associated with the implementation of cultural practices. We also provide recommendations for advancing application in six key postulates for cultural inclusion in terms of scholarship and practice:

1. **Navigating Political Polarisation.** The global trend of the escalating political polarisation and geopolitical struggles necessitates sport psychology interventions, studies, and consultations based on cultural safety, inclusivity, and ethical practices. Polarisation sometimes results from marginalised identities within athletes, sport groups and organisations. Thus, it is crucial that professionals in our international community unite to promote humanity, cultural inclusion, and equitable justice through sport psychology science and practice.
2. **Cultivating Cultural Reflexivity.** Given that cultural practices and identities are not fixed but shaped by ongoing interactions and societal shifts, a cultural praxis heuristic with cultural reflexivity involves being aware of the lens through which we view the world, recognising how our perspectives are shaped by our cultural backgrounds and lived experiences, and allowing for alternative perspectives and ways of understanding. It requires sport psychology professionals to reflect on their identities, position, and privilege as trained professionals. Although considerable emphasis has been placed on understanding the client and participant, much more emphasis should be placed on understanding the sport psychology professional. Ongoing training is necessary to understand oneself in relation to diverse clients. It encourages empathy, openness, and willingness to learn from others. Shared understanding and promotion of clients' mental health is only likely when cultural awareness includes equal and serious consideration of the sport psychology professional.
3. **Enriching Cultural Praxis through Intersectionality.** Recognising that individuals embody a myriad of intersecting identities, incorporating intersectionality is central to advancing the understanding and application of cultural praxis in sport psychology. Incorporating intersectionality requires examination of how different social categories, such as race, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and age intersect and influence an individual's experiences within the sport context. This nuanced approach not only enriches understanding, but also informs tailored interventions that resonate with the complex identities of athletes. In doing so, sport psychology professionals can move beyond traditional, monolithic views of cultural competence and foster a more inclusive and responsive practice that is in tune with the evolving landscape of sport and society.
4. **Embracing Pluralism and Recontextualisation in the Local-Global Nexus.** In the cultural praxis of sport psychology, cultivating a shared understanding is intricately linked to challenging the hegemony of Eurocentrism. To navigate the local-global nexus, scholars, practitioners, and scientist-practitioners must embrace methodological pluralism and recontextualisation of ideas. Rather than relying solely on cross-cultural approaches, a more nuanced and effective strategy involves incorporating idiosyncratic aspects of the client's background and local context to derive meaning. This requires a departure from intuitive action alone and emphasises evidence-based practice. Engaging in systematic explorations of self and the target audience is a prerequisite for designing interventions that truly enhance performance and well-being. With openness to diverse methodologies, sport psychology professionals can move towards cultural safety and promote inclusive practices within global and local sport contexts.
5. **Decolonising and Diversifying Perspectives on Cultural Safety.** The dominant understanding of cultural safety is largely shaped by Westernised, Eurocentric ideals,

limiting the cultural perspectives represented. While these perspectives have their place, it is essential to recognise the valuable and necessary insights from the Global East and Global South. The current focus on Western ideals should be complemented by more nuanced approaches. To achieve a more balanced and inclusive approach, knowledge derived from theory, science, and practice must broaden to include cultural knowledge that incorporates the rich traditions, norms, and perspectives of diverse global cultures. These less visible but invaluable knowledges and culturally safe strategies demand greater visibility and understanding. Professionals and future professionals should seek comprehensive training that embraces the diversity of potential clients and participants with whom they seek to engage and understand.

6. **Advancing Cultural Praxis Beyond Sport Psychology Professionals.** The educational imperatives outlined above are vital for sport psychology professionals. However, these principles should not be the sole purview of sport psychology professionals; rather they must be expanded into comprehensive training modules for other sport professionals including coaches and organisational staff. This expansion is critical to instilling cultural safety within sport organisations and systems. As these principles permeate educational and organisational sport spaces, they cease to be mere theoretical concepts. A holistic commitment to the ethics of difference, inclusivity, and social justice through cultural praxis becomes a catalyst for creating an inclusive future in and through sport psychology.

Note

1. Although we acknowledge that terminology for professionals varies around the world due to different legal and professional requirements as well as personal preferences, in this manuscript we use the term "sport psychology professionals" to refer to all professionals engaged in sport psychology work, both applied and academic (see Quartiroli et al., 2022).

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