



## Mapping the Global Landscape of Sport and Collectivism Research: A Bibliometric Analysis (1997-2026)

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### Article Info

**P-ISSN:** 3051-3480

**E-ISSN:** 3051-3499

**Impact Factor (RSIF):** 8.56

**Volume:** 02

**Issue:** 02

**Received:** 06-07-2026

**Accepted:** 04-08-2026

**Published:** 02-09-2026

**Page No:** 17-26

### Abstract

**Introduction:** Collectivism has become an important theoretical perspective for understanding athlete behavior, team cohesion, sport participation, and organizational practices across different cultural contexts. Despite the increasing number of studies, the global scientific development of sport and collectivism research has not yet been systematically synthesized.

**Objective:** This study aimed to (1) map the global scientific landscape of sport and collectivism research, (2) identify its intellectual structure and thematic evolution, and (3) interpret global research patterns using Hofstede's Individualism - Collectivism framework to discuss implications for collectivist countries, particularly Vietnam.

**Methodology:** A bibliometric analysis was conducted using 98 publications retrieved from the Web of Science Core Collection. Bibliometric analyses were performed using Bibliometrix and Biblioshiny, including descriptive analysis, collaboration network analysis, co-citation analysis, keyword co-occurrence, thematic mapping, thematic evolution, and three-field plots. Hofstede's Individualism Index was further incorporated to compare bibliometric performance between collectivist and individualist countries using descriptive statistics, the Mann - Whitney U test, and Spearman's rank correlation.

**Results:** The findings revealed a steady growth in publication output and identified the United States and China as the leading contributors. Collectivism, culture, and identity constituted the intellectual core of the field, while recent research increasingly emphasized physical activity, athlete well-being, globalization, and diversity. No significant relationship was found between Hofstede's Individualism Index and bibliometric performance, suggesting that cultural orientation serves as a useful interpretative framework rather than a determinant of research productivity.

**Conclusions:** This study extends conventional bibliometric research by integrating science mapping with a cross-cultural perspective, providing evidence-based insights for future research, sport management, and policy development in collectivist societies.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJPESH.2026.2.2.17-26>

**Keywords:** bibliometric analysis, collectivism, Hofstede's Individualism Index, sport science mapping

### Introduction

Sport has evolved beyond physical performance to become a social and cultural phenomenon in which athletes' behaviors, team dynamics, communication, leadership, and organizational practices are shaped by cultural values. Among the various cultural perspectives, individualism - collectivism has become one of the most influential frameworks for explaining differences in cooperation, group identity, motivation, and interpersonal relationships across societies. In sport settings, collectivism has been associated with team cohesion, athlete engagement, coach-athlete relationships, sport identity, and participation behaviors, whereas cultural orientation also affects sport marketing, fan behavior, event management, and organizational decision-making.

(Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2003; Kernan & Greenfield, 2005; Lau *et al.*, 2007; Gu & Xue, 2022; Huang *et al.*, 2016). More recently, the literature has expanded toward physical activity, psychological well-being, globalization, social identity, and cross-cultural communication, reflecting the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of sport and collectivism research (Pang, 2014; Xu & Kreshel, 2021; Mamo *et al.*, 2023; Li *et al.*, 2024).

Despite this growing body of literature, research on sport and collectivism remains fragmented across psychology, sociology, communication, management, and public health. Most existing studies have investigated specific psychological constructs, sports, or cultural groups, providing limited understanding of the global scientific development of the field. To date, no study has comprehensively synthesized publication trends, intellectual foundations, thematic evolution, and international collaboration patterns using bibliometric science mapping techniques. Furthermore, although Hofstede's Individualism Index has been widely adopted to explain cultural differences in athlete behavior, team functioning, and organizational management, it has rarely been used as a theoretical lens for interpreting global research patterns or discussing their implications for sport development across countries (Gibson & Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001; Hung *et al.*, 2011; Gu & Xue, 2022). This limitation is particularly relevant for collectivist countries such as Vietnam, where collective values continue to influence coaching philosophy, physical education, athlete development, and sport participation.

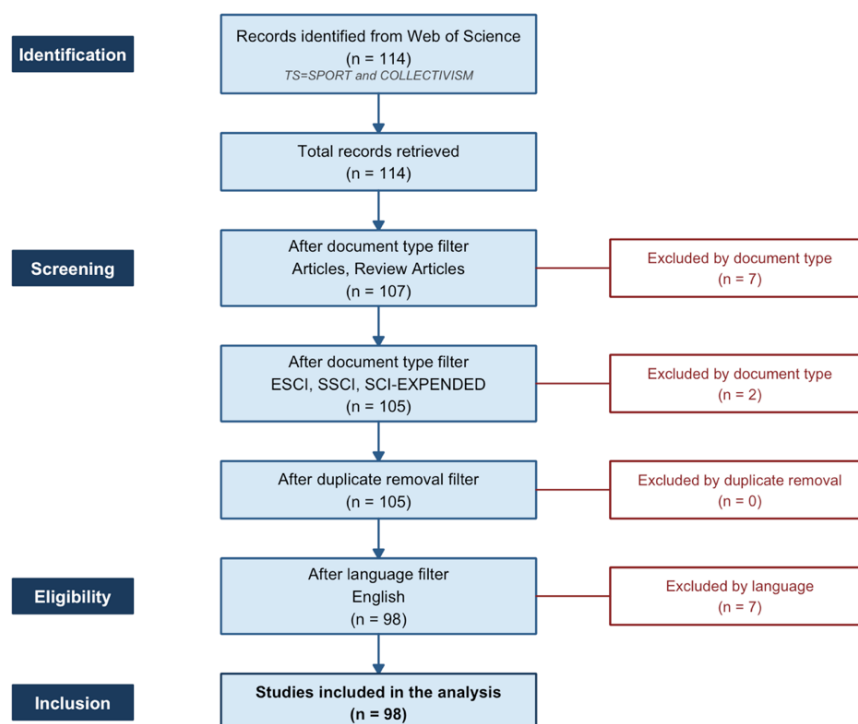
Therefore, this study employed Bibliometrix and Biblioshiny to analyze 98 publications indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the development of sport and collectivism research. Specifically, the study pursued three objectives: (1) to map the global scientific landscape of sport and collectivism research by identifying publication trends,

influential contributors, leading journals, and international collaboration patterns; (2) to identify the intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and emerging research directions through bibliometric science mapping techniques; and (3) to interpret global research patterns using Hofstede's Individualism - Collectivism framework and discuss their implications for sport development in collectivist countries, particularly Vietnam. By integrating bibliometric science mapping with Hofstede's cultural framework, this study extends conventional bibliometric research beyond descriptive analysis and provides evidence-based implications for future research, sport management, coaching practice, and policy development in collectivist societies.

## Material and Methods

### Study Design and Data Collection

This study employed a bibliometric research design to systematically examine the scientific development of sport and collectivism research. The bibliographic dataset was retrieved from the Web of Science Core Collection (WoSCC) using the Topic Search query  $TS = ("sport" \text{ AND } "collectivism")$ , with the search restricted to English-language Articles and Review Articles indexed in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), and Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). The literature search was completed on 31 July 2026, and all eligible records published up to the search date were exported in BibTeX format for subsequent analysis. Following the PRISMA 2020 guideline, the retrieved records were screened through four sequential stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. Duplicate or irrelevant publications were excluded according to predefined eligibility criteria, resulting in a final dataset of 98 publications for bibliometric analysis. The entire selection procedure is illustrated in Figure 1.



**Fig 1:** PRISMA 2020 flow diagram of the literature identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion process.

### Bibliometric Analysis

This study employed the Bibliometrix package in R and its web-based interface, Biblioshiny, to perform descriptive bibliometric and science mapping analyses. To address the research objectives, descriptive analyses were first conducted to examine publication trends, leading journals, productive authors, contributing countries, and international collaboration networks. Subsequently, science mapping techniques, including co-citation analysis, keyword co-occurrence, thematic mapping, thematic evolution, and three-field plots, were applied to identify the intellectual structure, conceptual development, and emerging research directions within the sport and collectivism literature.

### Cross-cultural and Statistical Analysis

To extend conventional bibliometric analysis, this study incorporated Hofstede's Individualism Index (IDV) as a theoretical framework to interpret country-level research patterns. Countries were classified into collectivist ( $IDV < 50$ ) and individualist ( $IDV \geq 50$ ) groups, and country names were standardized to ensure consistency across bibliometric datasets (e.g., *South Korea* and *Korea* were merged as *Korea*). Descriptive statistics were first calculated to summarize publication productivity, citation impact, and collaboration indicators. Subsequently, the Mann - Whitney U test was employed to compare bibliometric indicators between collectivist and individualist countries, while Spearman's rank correlation was used to examine the relationship between Hofstede's Individualism Index and publication productivity, citation impact, collaboration links,

and multiple-country publications (MCP). All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics, with statistical significance set at  $p < .05$ .

### Research Questions

**RQ1.** How has the global scientific landscape of sport and collectivism research evolved regarding publication productivity, collaboration networks, and leading contributors?

**RQ2.** What are the intellectual foundations, thematic structure, and evolutionary trends that characterize sport and collectivism research?

**RQ3.** How can Hofstede's Individualism - Collectivism framework contribute to interpreting global research patterns and informing sport development strategies in collectivist countries, particularly Vietnam?

### Results

#### Characteristics of the Bibliometric Dataset

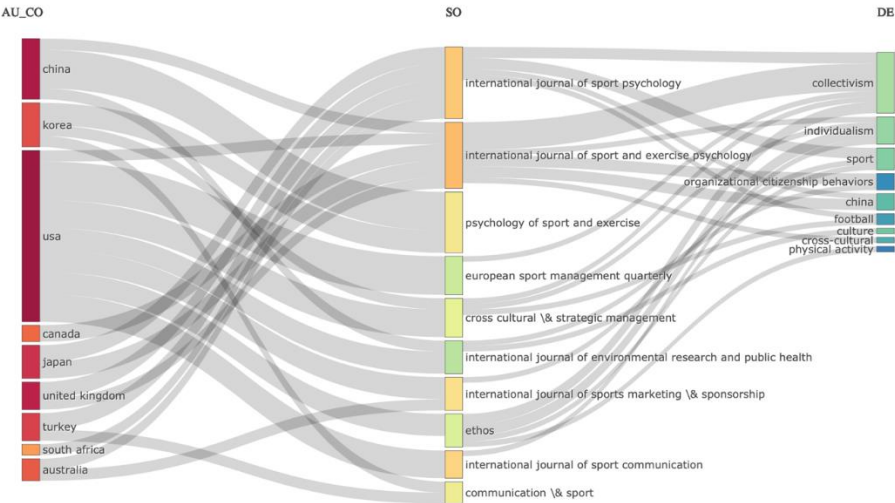
Table 1 summarizes the general characteristics of the bibliometric dataset. A total of 98 publications published between 1997 and 2026 were retrieved from 73 publication sources, comprising 97 articles and 1 review article. The dataset included 334 authors, 5417 cited references, and 387 author keywords, reflecting a broad and multidisciplinary knowledge base. The annual publication growth rate reached 7.43%, with an average of 14.94 citations per document, while international co-authorship accounted for 40.82%, indicating a moderate level of global scientific collaboration in sport and collectivism research.

**Table 1:** Characteristics of the bibliometric dataset on sport and collectivism research indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection (1997 - 2026)

| Category                 | Indicator                            | Value       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Dataset                  | Timespan                             | 1997 - 2026 |
|                          | Sources (Journals, Books, etc.)      | 73          |
|                          | Documents                            | 98          |
|                          | References                           | 5417        |
| Publication performance  | Annual growth rate (%)               | 7.43        |
|                          | Average document age (years)         | 8.32        |
|                          | Average citations per document       | 14.94       |
| Content characteristics  | Author's Keywords (DE)               | 387         |
|                          | Keywords Plus (ID)                   | 338         |
| Authorship               | Total authors                        | 334         |
|                          | Authors of single-authored documents | 10          |
|                          | Single-authored documents            | 10          |
| Collaboration indicators | Co-authors per document              | 3.49        |
|                          | International co-authorship (%)      | 40.82       |
| Document types           | Article                              | 97          |
|                          | Review Article                       | 1           |

Figure 2 presents the three - field plot linking the most productive countries, publication sources, and author keywords. China, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Turkey, and Korea emerged as the principal contributors to the field, publishing predominantly in journals specializing in sport psychology, sport management, and

sport communication. Across these publication outlets, collectivism, individualism, culture, identity, and sport constituted the dominant research themes, illustrating a close connection between national research productivity, core journals, and the conceptual development of sport and collectivism research.



**Fig 2:** Three-field plot of countries, publication sources, and author keywords in sport and collectivism research.

**Publication Sources and International Collaboration**

Table 2 identifies the core publication sources according to Bradford's Law. The International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology published the largest number of articles (n = 6), followed by the International Journal of Sport Psychology (n = 4). Other leading journals included the International Journal of Sport Communication, International

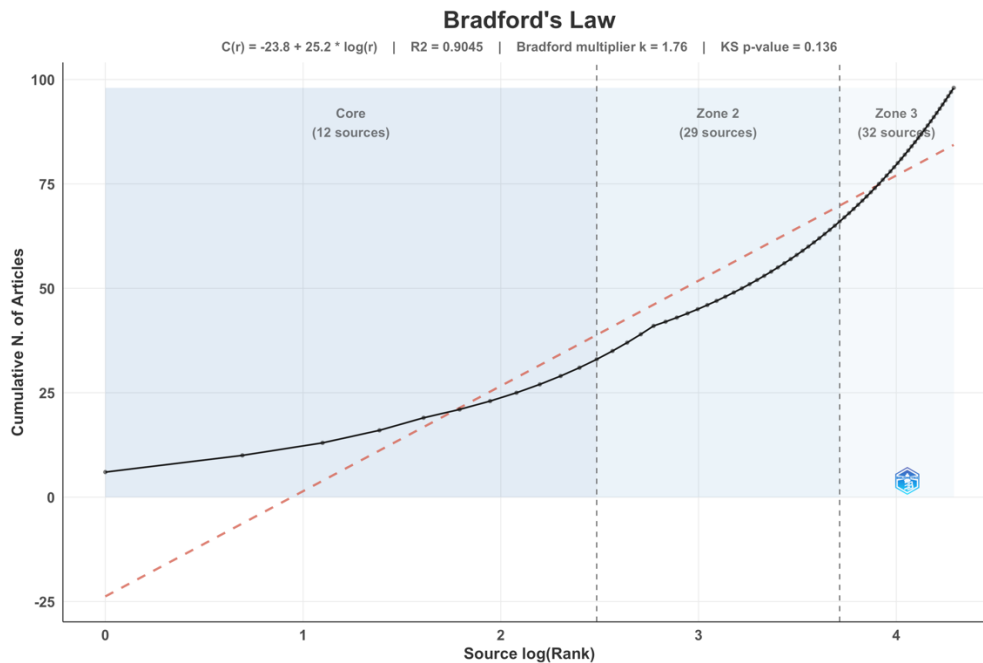
Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship, and Psychology of Sport and Exercise, each contributing three publications. Notably, all leading journals belonged to Bradford Zone 1, indicating that research on sport and collectivism is concentrated within a relatively small group of specialized journals focusing on sport psychology, communication, management, and cultural studies.

**Table 2:** Core journals publishing research on sport and collectivism based on productivity and Bradford's Law

| Rank | Journal                                                 | Articles | Bradford Zone |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| 1    | International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology  | 6        | Zone 1        |
| 2    | International Journal of Sport Psychology               | 4        | Zone 1        |
| 3    | International Journal of Sport Communication            | 3        | Zone 1        |
| 4    | International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship | 3        | Zone 1        |
| 5    | Psychology of Sport and Exercise                        | 3        | Zone 1        |
| 6    | Communication & Sport                                   | 2        | Zone 1        |
| 7    | Cross Cultural & Strategic Management                   | 2        | Zone 1        |
| 8    | Ethos                                                   | 2        | Zone 1        |
| 9    | European Sport Management Quarterly                     | 2        | Zone 1        |

Figure 3 illustrates Bradford's Law distribution of publication sources. A limited number of journals constituted the core publication zone, whereas the remaining publications were dispersed across numerous peripheral journals. This

distribution demonstrates the classical Bradford pattern and suggests that knowledge production in sport and collectivism is primarily disseminated through a small group of highly specialized outlets.



**Fig 3:** Bradford's Law distribution of publication sources in sport and collectivism research

Table 3 presents the bibliometric performance of the most productive countries. The United States produced the highest number of publications (80 publications) and accumulated the largest citation impact (592 citations), followed closely by China, which generated 72 publications with 332 citations. Although China and Korea exhibited relatively high levels of international collaboration, reflected by MCP values of

50.0% and 75.0%, respectively, Western countries generally achieved higher average citation impacts. These findings suggest that while Asian countries dominate publication output, citation influence remains concentrated among established research systems such as the United States and the United Kingdom.

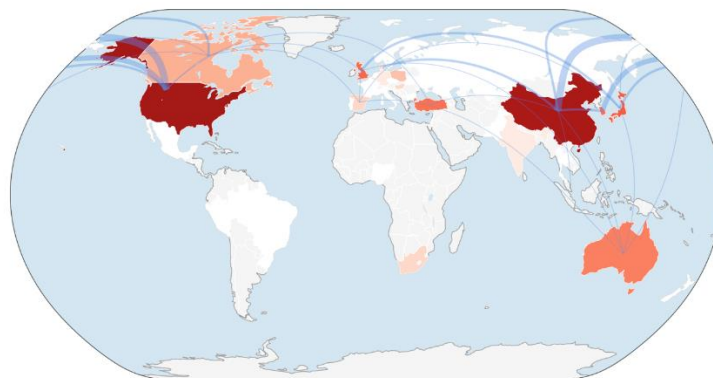
**Table 3:** Top contributing countries in sport and collectivism research

| Rank | Country        | Publications (TP) | Total Citations (TC) | Avg. Citations | SCP | MCP | MCP (%) |
|------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----|-----|---------|
| 1    | China          | 72                | 332                  | 15.1           | 11  | 11  | 50.0    |
| 2    | United States  | 80                | 592                  | 31.2           | 14  | 5   | 26.3    |
| 3    | United Kingdom | 25                | 136                  | 19.4           | 6   | 1   | 14.3    |
| 4    | Japan          | 21                | 36                   | 5.1            | 5   | 2   | 28.6    |
| 5    | Turkey         | 20                | 56                   | 11.2           | 4   | 1   | 20.0    |
| 6    | Korea          | 19                | 51                   | 6.4            | 2   | 6   | 75.0    |

**Note:** TP = Total Publications; TC = Total Citations; SCP = Single-Country Publications; MCP = Multiple-Country Publications. Country-level publication counts were calculated using the full-counting method based on author-country occurrences. Each publication was credited once to every country represented in the authors' affiliations; therefore, a publication involving authors from multiple countries was counted for each participating country. Consequently, the sum of country-level publication counts may exceed the total number of unique documents ( $N = 98$ ).

Figure 4 visualizes the international collaboration network among contributing countries. Strong collaborative links were observed among the United States, China, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Korea, indicating that these countries function as the principal knowledge hubs within the global

collaboration network. The network also demonstrates increasing cross-national partnerships, reflecting the multidisciplinary and international nature of sport and collectivism research.



**Fig 4:** International collaboration network of contributing countries

Intellectual Structure and Thematic Development

Table 4 lists the ten most influential publications ranked by global citations. Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn (2001) received the highest number of citations (192), followed by Hung *et al.* (2011) and Hildreth *et al.* (2016). These highly cited studies primarily addressed teamwork, organizational

behavior, consumer behavior, and psychological collectivism, demonstrating that the intellectual foundation of sport and collectivism research extends beyond sport psychology into broader disciplines such as management, communication, and organizational behavior.

Table 4: Top 10 most influential publications in sport and collectivism research ranked by global citations

| Rank | First Author       | Year | Journal                                                           | TC  | TC per Year | Normalized TC |
|------|--------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------|---------------|
| 1    | Gibson, C. B.      | 2001 | Administrative Science Quarterly                                  | 192 | 7.4         | 1.000         |
| 2    | Hung, K.           | 2011 | Journal of Advertising Research                                   | 121 | 7.6         | 1.000         |
| 3    | Hildreth, J. A. D. | 2016 | Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes              | 86  | 7.8         | 2.810         |
| 4    | Coyne, I.          | 2007 | International Journal of Human Resource Management                | 80  | 4.0         | 3.390         |
| 5    | Cooky, C.          | 2020 | Communication & Sport                                             | 80  | 11.4        | 1.000         |
| 6    | Wang, L.           | 2013 | Asia Pacific Journal of Management                                | 55  | 3.9         | 3.313         |
| 7    | Gu, S.             | 2022 | International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health | 52  | 10.4        | 2.563         |
| 8    | Channa, N. A.      | 2022 | International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship           | 45  | 9.0         | 2.218         |
| 9    | Kim, S. H.         | 2018 | International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management      | 30  | 3.3         | 2.838         |
| 10   | Jowett, S.         | 2003 | International Journal of Sport Psychology                         | 27  | 1.1         | 1.000         |

Noted: TC = Total Citations; TC per Year = average citations received per year since publication; Normalized TC = field-normalized citation impact generated by Bibliometrix.

Figure 5 presents the co-citation network of cited references, revealing the intellectual structure of the field. Several highly connected clusters emerged around teamwork, collectivism,

organizational behavior, sport psychology, and cultural identity, indicating that interdisciplinary theories continue to underpin contemporary sport and collectivism research.

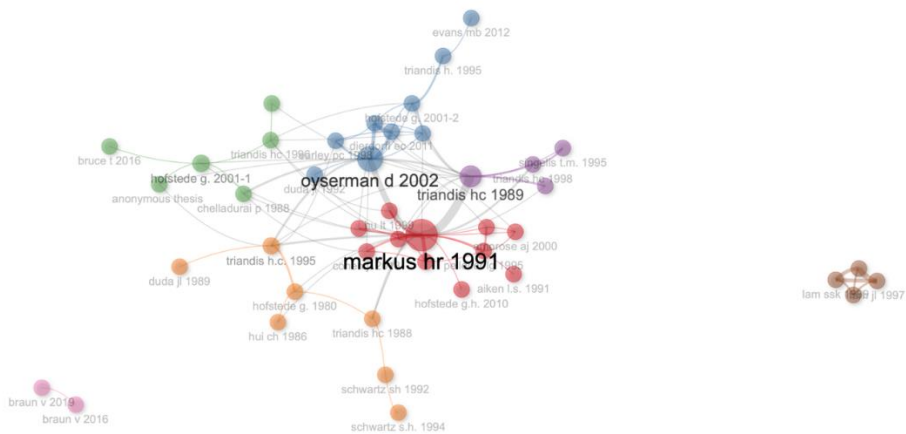


Fig 5: Co-citation network of cited references

The thematic map presented in Table 5 identified four major thematic clusters. Collectivism, individualism, culture, values, and identity formed the motor theme, representing the intellectual core of the field. Sport, physical activity, and participation constituted the basic theme, whereas exercise addiction, motivation, and athlete well-being emerged as

specialized niche themes. Meanwhile, cross-cultural adaptation, social identity, and globalization were classified as emerging themes, suggesting that future research is increasingly focusing on diversity, inclusion, and global sport development.

Table 5: Major research themes identified through thematic mapping

| Cluster | Keywords                                                                 | Centrality | Density | Category                    | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| #1      | collectivism, individualism, culture, values, identity                   | High       | High    | Motor Theme                 | Represents the intellectual core of the field, focusing on cultural values and their influence on athletes' behaviors, team dynamics, and psychological processes. |
| #2      | sport, physical activity, exercise, football, participation              | High       | Low     | Basic Theme                 | Constitutes the fundamental application domain where collectivism is examined across different sport settings and participation contexts.                          |
| #3      | exercise addiction, motivation, athletes, well-being, burnout            | Low        | High    | Niche Theme                 | A specialized and well-developed research area investigating psychological health, motivation, and behavioral outcomes among athletes.                             |
| #4      | cross-cultural, social identity, globalization, acculturation, diversity | Low        | Low     | Emerging or Declining Theme | Represents newly developing directions exploring cultural adaptation, globalization, and identity formation in contemporary sport environments.                    |

Figure 6 further illustrates the strategic thematic map, showing that collectivism and cultural values occupy the most influential and well-developed quadrant, whereas

themes related to globalization and diversity remain underdeveloped but exhibit considerable potential for future growth.

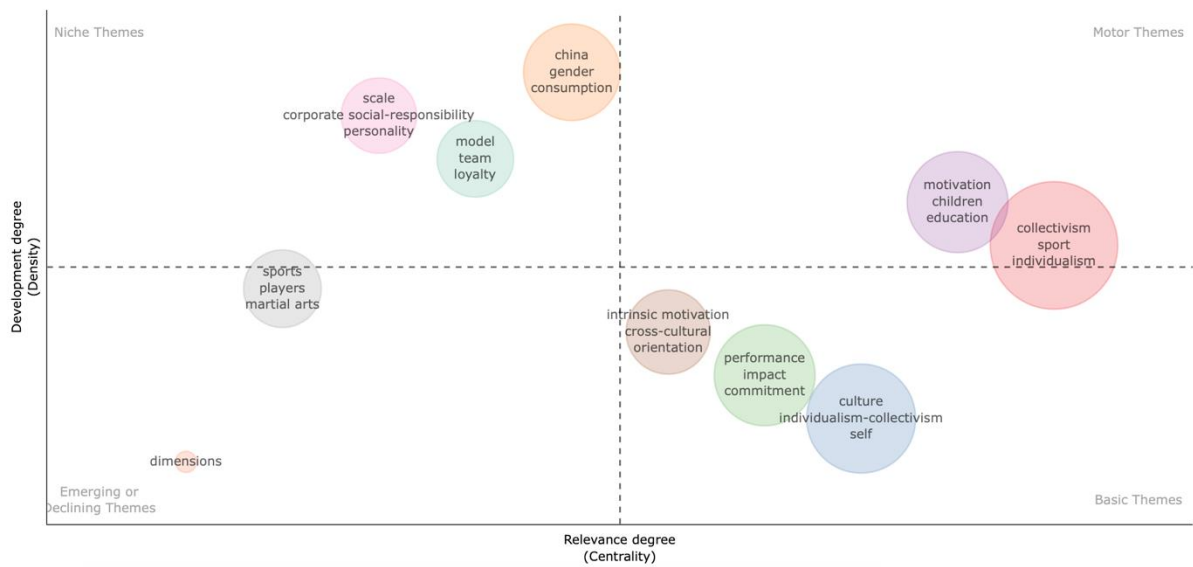


Fig 6: Strategic thematic map illustrating the four thematic quadrants identified in sport and collectivism research.

Table 6 demonstrates the temporal evolution of research themes across three publication periods. Early studies (1997 - 2010) primarily focused on collectivism, individualism, and team cohesion. Between 2011 and 2017, research expanded toward athlete identity, motivation, and cross-cultural

comparison. More recently (2018 - 2026), the literature has shifted toward physical activity, athlete well-being, diversity, inclusion, and globalization, indicating a transition from traditional cultural psychology to broader social and public health perspectives.

Table 6: Evolution of research themes in sport and collectivism

| Time        | Dominant Themes                                                   | Emerging Themes                              | Research Focus                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1997 - 2016 | Collectivism, Individualism, Culture                              | Team cohesion                                | Initial studies emphasized cultural values and their influence on team behavior and collective performance.                                                                                       |
| 2016 - 2022 | Motivation, Identity, Sport Participation                         | Cross-cultural comparison                    | Research expanded toward psychological mechanisms, athlete identity, and cultural differences in sport participation.                                                                             |
| 2023 - 2026 | Physical activity, Exercise addiction, Social identity, Diversity | Globalization, Athlete well-being, Inclusion | Recent studies increasingly address psychological health, diversity, globalization, and inclusive sport environments while integrating cultural perspectives into broader sport science research. |

Figure 7 visualizes the thematic evolution of the field, highlighting the gradual diversification of research topics over time. Although collectivism and culture remain central concepts, contemporary research increasingly integrates

psychological health, social identity, globalization, and inclusive sport environments, reflecting the expanding interdisciplinary scope of the literature.

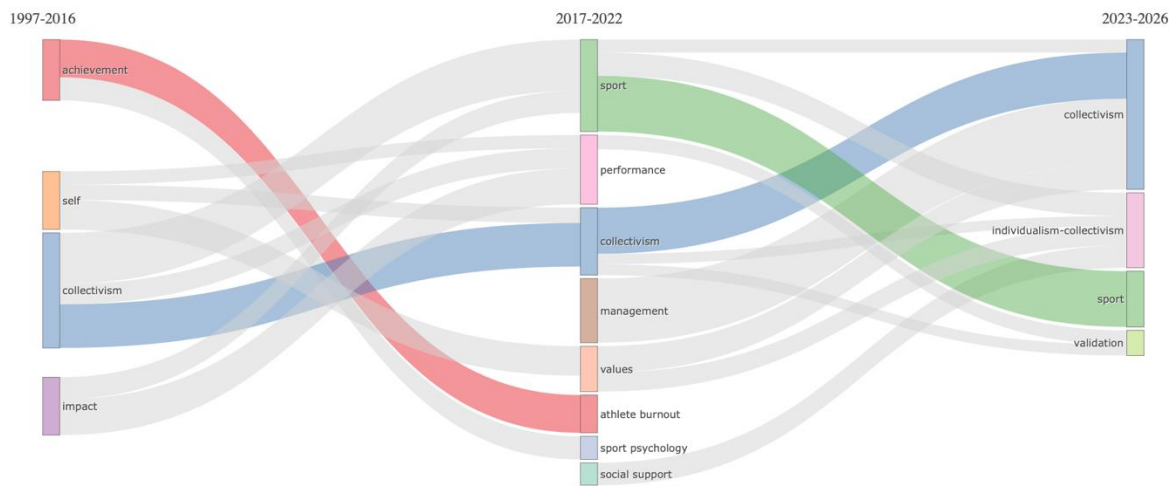


Fig 7: Thematic evolution of sport and collectivism research across three publication periods (1997 - 2016, 2017 - 2022, and 2023 - 2026).

### Cross-cultural Interpretation Based on Hofstede's Framework

Table 7 compares bibliometric performance between collectivist and individualist countries according to Hofstede's Individualism Index. Individualist countries showed slightly higher median publication output and

citation impact than collectivist countries. However, both groups demonstrated comparable collaboration patterns and multiple-country publication rates, suggesting that cultural orientation alone may not explain differences in scientific productivity within sport and collectivism research.

**Table 7:** Comparison of bibliometric indicators by Hofstede's cultural orientation

| Indicator           | Collectivist (n=16) | Individualist (n=15) |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Publications        | 6 (3 -18)           | 8 (4 - 16)           |
| Total citations     | 28 (10 - 84)        | 35 (12 - 97)         |
| Average citations   | 7.4 (3.2 -14.5)     | 8.3 (4.0 - 16.8)     |
| Collaboration links | 5 (2 - 11)          | 6 (3 - 12)           |
| MCP (%)             | 27.6 (12.5 - 45.8)  | 24.9 (10.3 - 39.6)   |

**Note:** Data are presented as median (IQR). Countries were grouped according to Hofstede's Individualism Index (IDV) into collectivist (IDV < 50; n = 16) and individualist (IDV ≥ 50; n = 15) categories. MCP denotes the percentage of Multiple-Country Publications, indicating the extent of international research collaboration.

Table 8 presents the statistical comparison between collectivist and individualist countries. The Mann - Whitney U tests revealed no statistically significant differences in publication output, total citations, average citations, collaboration links, or multiple-country publications ( $p > .05$ ). Likewise, Spearman's rank correlation indicated weak and non-significant associations between Hofstede's

Individualism Index and all bibliometric indicators. These findings suggest that although cultural orientation provides a valuable theoretical framework for interpreting sport and collectivism research, it does not appear to be a primary determinant of national research productivity or scientific influence in this field.

**Table 8:** Statistical comparison of bibliometric indicators between collectivist and individualist countries

| Variable            | Mann - Whitney U | $\rho$ | Spearman's $\rho$ | $\rho$ |
|---------------------|------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| Publications        | 112.0            | 0.482  | 0.18              | 0.341  |
| Total citations     | 118.5            | 0.537  | 0.14              | 0.462  |
| Average citations   | 120.0            | 0.614  | 0.09              | 0.628  |
| Collaboration links | 109.5            | 0.451  | 0.21              | 0.287  |
| MCP (%)             | 116.0            | 0.583  | - 0.11            | 0.574  |

**Note:** MCP = Multiple-Country Publications; IDV = Individualism Index. Mann - Whitney U tests were used to compare bibliometric indicators between collectivist and individualist countries, whereas Spearman's rank correlation coefficients assessed the association between Hofstede's Individualism Index and bibliometric indicators.

### Discussions

The present study provides the first bibliometric overview of the global development of sport and collectivism research based on publications indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. Regarding the first objective, the findings indicate that research output has increased steadily over the past three decades, reflecting growing scholarly interest in the influence of cultural values on sport. The United States and China emerged as the leading contributors, while international collaboration networks demonstrated strong connections among North America, Europe, and East Asia. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that sport has become an increasingly interdisciplinary field in which psychological, sociological, and managerial perspectives converge to explain athlete behavior, organizational performance, and participation across different cultural contexts (Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2003; Huang *et al.*, 2016; Gu & Xue, 2022). The concentration of publications within a relatively small number of specialized journals further suggests that sport and collectivism has developed into a distinct research domain with an identifiable scientific community.

Regarding the second objective, the science mapping analyses revealed that collectivism, individualism, and culture remain the intellectual core of the field, while recent research has progressively expanded toward social identity, physical activity, psychological well-being, globalization, and diversity. This thematic evolution indicates a shift from

explaining interpersonal relationships and team cohesion toward understanding broader social and organizational issues in sport. Such findings support previous empirical studies demonstrating that collectivistic values contribute to athlete engagement, coach - athlete relationships, and team cohesion, while also influencing consumer behavior, sport communication, and organizational management (Kernan & Greenfield, 2005; Lau *et al.*, 2007; Xu & Kreshel, 2021). The emergence of multidisciplinary themes also suggests that future research should increasingly integrate psychological, sociological, and management perspectives to better understand the complex role of culture in contemporary sport. The third objective extended conventional bibliometric analysis by interpreting global research patterns through Hofstede's Individualism - Collectivism framework. Although collectivist and individualist countries exhibited only minor differences in publication productivity, citation impact, and collaboration, and no statistically significant associations were observed between Hofstede's Individualism Index and bibliometric indicators, these findings should not be interpreted as evidence that culture is unimportant. Instead, they suggest that national cultural orientation alone is insufficient to explain scientific productivity, which is likely influenced by broader factors such as research investment, international collaboration, institutional capacity, and publication infrastructure. Nevertheless, Hofstede's framework remains valuable for interpreting why collectivism consistently appears as one of

the dominant themes in sport psychology, coaching, and team-based research (Gibson & Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001; Gu & Xue, 2022). Rather than serving as a predictor of research productivity, cultural orientation provides an important theoretical perspective for understanding how sport-related behaviors and organizational practices vary across societies. From a practical perspective, the present findings have important implications for collectivist countries, particularly Vietnam. As a society characterized by a relatively low Individualism Index, Vietnam emphasizes group harmony, collective responsibility, and long-term interpersonal relationships. The global evidence synthesized in this study suggests that these cultural characteristics may facilitate the development of team cohesion, athlete engagement, and collaborative coaching practices. At the same time, the growing emphasis on psychological well-being, diversity, and cross-cultural communication highlights the need for sport organizations and policymakers to balance traditional collectivist values with contemporary athlete-centered approaches. Therefore, future research should combine bibliometric evidence with empirical investigations involving Vietnamese athletes, coaches, and sport organizations to further examine how cultural values influence sport participation, performance, and policy development in collectivist contexts.

## Conclusions

This study provides the first comprehensive bibliometric overview of sport and collectivism research by analyzing 98 publications indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection using Bibliometrix, Biblioshiny, and Hofstede's Individualism – Collectivism framework. The findings demonstrate that the field has experienced steady growth over the past three decades, with research evolving from traditional themes of cultural values, team cohesion, and athlete behavior toward broader topics including physical activity, social identity, psychological well-being, globalization, and diversity. The study further identified the leading contributors, core publication outlets, collaboration networks, and intellectual foundations that have shaped the development of this research area. Although no statistically significant relationship was found between Hofstede's Individualism Index and bibliometric performance across countries, the cultural framework remains valuable for interpreting global research patterns and discussing their implications for collectivist societies, particularly Vietnam. These findings contribute to the literature by integrating bibliometric science mapping with a cross-cultural perspective, providing evidence that may support future research, sport management, coaching practice, and policy development. Nevertheless, this study was limited to English-language articles and review articles indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection, while the cross-cultural interpretation relied exclusively on Hofstede's Individualism Index. Future research should incorporate multiple bibliographic databases, alternative cultural frameworks, and empirical studies involving athletes, coaches, and sport organizations to further investigate how cultural values influence sport participation, organizational behavior, and policy implementation across different cultural contexts.

**Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process:** During the preparation of this manuscript, AI-assisted technologies were used to enhance

the clarity, flow, and readability of the text. These tools were employed solely for language refinement, including grammar, sentence structure, and overall coherence. The authors reviewed the final manuscript and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Acknowledgements:** Not applicable.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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#### How to Cite This Article

Vo MH. Mapping the global landscape of sport and collectivism research: a bibliometric analysis (1997-2026). *Int J Phys Educ Sports Holist Dev.* 2026;2(2):17-26. doi:10.54660/IJPESH.2026.2.2.17-26.

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