

# Promoting Fairness in Cross-Cultural Psychology: Accepting a Range of Epistemologies and Encouraging Cooperative Methods

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## Abstracts

Understanding the complex relationship between culture and human behavior requires a thorough understanding of psychology, and cross-cultural psychology (CCP) in particular. The difficulties of inequality and marginalization are discussed in this paper, with particular reference to research from the Global South that has its origins in past colonial practices. It draws attention to how the contributions of scholars from the Global South and indigenous ways of knowing are frequently overlooked by intellectual extractivism and the dominance of Western research methodologies. These disparities run the risk of limiting the field of psychological research, giving American and European viewpoints precedence, and eroding the diversity of human experiences around the world. The shift toward more equitable collaborations and the acknowledgment of diverse epistemologies is advocated in this paper. It suggests avenues for a more inclusive and genuine investigation of human behavior across cultures by supporting authentic representation in research and appreciating local knowledge.

## 1. Introduction

The goal of psychology as a whole and cross-cultural psychology (CCP) as a subfield is to identify common behavioral patterns and comprehend how these patterns differ in various cultural contexts. Cross-cultural psychology, which has its roots in the idea that culture has a big influence on psychological processes, essentially recognizes how closely human behaviors, thoughts, and emotions are entwined with the social and cultural environment in which people live. It looks for underlying cultural causes, values, beliefs, and practices that might account for the observed differences rather than just comparing behaviors from various cultures ( Adair , 2002).

Western viewpoints, approaches, and interests have traditionally dominated CCP research, frequently at the expense of non-Western cultures and knowledge systems. To ensure that the field changes to be more inclusive and representative of various cultural contexts, a thorough review is necessary to evaluate and rectify this imbalance. In psychological research, ethical considerations are crucial. There are still instances of historical intellectual extractivism in

research methods, especially when it comes to communities in the Global South, which raises serious ethical issues (Adams , 2015).

Decolonizing psychological science is a complex process that necessitates a thorough and critical analysis of the practices and epistemologies that have historically influenced the discipline.

The global north and global south dichotomy:

Beyond simple geographic differences, the terms "Global North" and "Global South" refer to a geopolitical and economic split between nations. Wealthier, more developed nations that are frequently, though not always, found in the Northern Hemisphere are referred to as the "Global North." In the past, these nations have influenced global economic policies and knowledge production more than others. On the other hand, countries that are typically less economically developed, generally located in the Southern hemisphere, and have historically been marginalized within international political and economic systems are referred to as the "Global South" ( Adair , 2006).

Colonialism's legacy and its effects on psychological research:

Although its roots are in earlier anthropological and psychological investigations, cross-cultural psychology only became a separate field in the middle of the 20th century. In his writings from the 1890s, one of the pioneers, Gustave Le Bon, examined the ways in which cultural influences could affect both individual and group behavior. However, cross-cultural psychology didn't start to solidify as an academic discipline until the 1960s and 1970s, when it focused on empirical research methodologies that aimed to compare and contrast psychological phenomena across cultures (Alatas , 2003).

The post-World War II migration patterns and worldwide movements sped up the discipline's development. People from different cultural backgrounds interacted more frequently as a result of these global changes, highlighting the importance of comprehending human behavior in a cross-cultural setting. Significant cross-cultural research emerged during this time, concentrating on topics like development, emotion, and cognition and frequently exposing both culturally specific and universal aspects of human behavior ( Ali , 2012).

Problems with interpretation and representation:

Although it promotes the comprehension of various human behaviors, cross-cultural psychology may unintentionally lead to cultural misunderstandings. When researchers inadvertently project their cultural norms or biases onto another culture, such misunderstandings may result.

Stereotypes are maintained and reinforced:

In its broadest sense, stereotypes are simplistic generalizations about a population. Stereotypes frequently overlook the diversity and complexity within groups, even though they may have some truth to them. Research may unintentionally reinforce these stereotypes, particularly if results are misinterpreted or taken out of context. In cross-cultural psychology, this problem is especially noticeable because research on the distinctions between cultural or ethnic groups may unintentionally perpetuate oversimplified or unfavorable views of those groups. In a landmark study on the perils of decontextualized research, the authors emphasized the perils of

extrapolating generalizations from data without taking into account the complete situational or cultural context. Sue noted that this kind of research can contribute to biases in both the academic and public domains and reinforce preexisting stereotypes ( Allwood , 2006).

In cross-cultural psychology, addressing regional specificity:

A major flaw in the field's strategy for comprehending psychological diversity worldwide is highlighted by the criticism that cross-cultural psychology has mostly concentrated on East–West comparisons, particularly between the US and East Asian nations. Other regions have unintentionally been marginalized by this emphasis, particularly those that fall under the broad category of the Global South, which includes a diverse range of cultures, societies, and historical backgrounds. The need to expand the scope of cross-cultural research to encompass a wider variety of cultures and regions especially those in Latin America and beyond, which have been underrepresented in psychological research is emphasized by recent scholarship ( Anjum , 2020 ).

Increasing the variety of epistemologies in cross-cultural psychology:

With its theoretical foundations firmly anchored in Western viewpoints, cross-cultural psychology is at a turning point in its history, marginalizing the rich and varied epistemologies of researchers in developing nations. This dominance restricts the understanding of human behavior in diverse cultural contexts and the breadth of psychological research. In order to expand the theoretical foundation of cross-cultural psychology and promote a more inclusive and globally representative field, it is imperative that this discrepancy be acknowledged ( Anjum , 2019).

The Economics of CC Psychology's Knowledge Production:

CC As a field that aims to comprehend human behavior in various cultural contexts, psychology is situated at a critical juncture in the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Beneath its admirable goals, psychology is impacted by intricate historical, economic, and geopolitical elements that are frequently overlooked. When examined, these factors reveal important problems, including the Global North's strong hold on funding and research agendas and the difficulties Global South scholars face in obtaining essential scholarly resources. This kind of investigation highlights the undervaluation of the work done by scholars in the Global South, who provide invaluable local contexts and insights ( Arnett , 2002).

There has long been concern about the Global North's dominance in psychological research, which emphasizes a biased focus on WEIRD populations, mainly from the US and Europe. This bias extends beyond research participants to include funding allocations and research agendas, which are primarily controlled by institutions in these areas. A limited portrayal of human behavior is encouraged by this imbalance, which frequently extrapolates results from Western populations to a global level while ignoring the wide range of human experience (Arnett , 2008; Arrow, 2004).

In the field of global research, the distribution and emphasis of funding by well-known organizations in the Global North greatly influences the research agendas, frequently causing them to deviate from the urgent problems and requirements of communities in the Global South.

As previously mentioned, this misalignment results from the funding organizations' disproportionate influence, which gives priority to research themes and methodologies that align with their own viewpoints and interests ( Barnwell , 2022).

## **2. Recommendations:**

Here are some practical methods that can be used in psychological research to make it more accessible and equitable for researchers from the Global South, based on this review and the researchers' personal experiences:

1. Provide funding opportunities that are especially intended for scholarly collaborations between the Global North and South, with an emphasis on projects that tackle issues that are pertinent to the Global South. In every stage of the research process, equal partnership should be the top priority for these grants.
2. Policies that actively encourage the publication of research from the Global South should be implemented by journals. This might entail setting quotas for research articles from the Global South, waiving publication fees, and expediting submissions from scholars in the region.
3. Establish mentorship and training initiatives that match seasoned academics from the Global North with up-and-coming researchers from the Global South. Specifically designed to meet the needs of researchers in the Global South, these programs ought to emphasize developing research skills, writing for publication, and grant writing.
4. Encourage and provide funding for conferences, journals, and platforms that honor and promote indigenous methods and epistemologies. Promote the inclusion of these approaches in psychology research that is more widely accepted.
5. Create initiatives that make it easier for academics from the Global North to work in institutions in the Global South and vice versa. These ought to promote long-term partnerships, capacity building, and the sharing of knowledge.
6. Make sure that local researchers are in charge of research projects in the Global South, with scholars from the Global North playing supporting roles. This change in leadership style recognizes and capitalizes on the knowledge of regional academics.
7. Create and distribute unambiguous ethical standards for intercultural cooperation that cover authorship, power disparities, monetary compensation, and the appreciation of all contributions, and make sure they are accepted by all.
8. To guarantee that the work of scholars from the Global South is accessible, provide financial support for open access publishing. This can entail setting aside money expressly for article processing fees.
9. Create special issues in reputable journals that highlight decolonization in psychology and research from the Global South. Additionally, establish prizes and honors for researchers from the Global South who have made exceptional contributions to cross-cultural psychology.

### 3. Conclusion:

Unquestionably, cross-cultural psychology plays a crucial role in understanding human behavior across various cultural matrices. Yet, the field is tainted by disparities and exploitative behaviors that harken back to the dynamics of the colonial era. This paper has critically examined the complex issues that Global South scholars face, ranging from the perils of intellectual extractivism to the dominance of Western research methodologies. Furthermore, representative research grounded in the realities of the Global South faces significant obstacles due to the powerful forces that shape research trajectories, particularly the broad frameworks of the Global North's financial and institutional systems. Such limitations impede the discipline's larger goals, which include a thorough understanding of human subtleties across various cultural spectrums, in addition to restricting authentic cultural representations.

A paradigm shift that actively rebalances historical and ingrained inequalities is clearly necessary when considering the discipline's future course. This change is an active attempt to make the discipline forward-thinking, inclusive, and truly representative of the world cultures it encompasses, rather than merely correcting past errors. Emphasizing understanding, respect, and sincere cooperation is essential to this development. Every culture is a wealth of knowledge and understanding, regardless of its historical background or position in the world. It is crucial to acknowledge and value these contributions.

Genuine partnerships characterized by equality and holistic integration should be the focus of collaborative engagements, which should go beyond token inclusions. Cross-cultural psychology can reveal deep insights free from a single, frequently Western-biased point of view by encouraging such genuine collaborations.

Therefore, there is a pressing need for the academic community in both the Global North and the South to unite in opposing and destroying these hegemonic practices. The pursuit of inclusivity, representation, and equity in cross-cultural psychology research holds promise for a field that is both all-encompassing and universally relevant, combining the various strands of human experience to create a rich mosaic of cultures and psychologies from around the world.

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