

Abstract;

A Consensus Project to Define Standardized Criteria to Classify Athlete Samples For Sports Research

Background:

Presently, criteria do not exist that define athlete samples for research purposes. This heterogeneity in the sports literature prevents comparisons across studies and severely limits the ability to conduct meta-analyses and epidemiological studies. Standardized criteria to define athlete samples for research purposes is necessary to advance sports research.

Objectives:

To determine consensus on standardized criteria to define athlete samples for sports research, and subsequent validation of this taxonomy using a three-phase approach. This grant application is for our phase one studies.

Methods:

Our group has developed a three-phase solution to determine consensus on, and validation of, standardized criteria to categorize athletes based on levels of competitiveness. This involves conducting a phase 1) scoping review and nominal group technique study to develop classification methods that can be used in a phase 2) international, multi-disciplinary Delphi study to determine final consensus on a standardized method that classifies athletes based on competitive status, and a final phase 3) validation study to validate the classification system.

Analysis:

For our phase 1 approach, a scoping review will extract and synthesize both the scientific and grey literature on the topic of defining athletes based on competition level, and will be presented to a multidisciplinary group of experts in a nominal group technique study that will determine consensus on up to 5 classification methods that will be used as voting inputs in a future international, multi-disciplinary Delphi study to determine consensus on a final classification system.

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