

## WORLD RANKING OF COUNTRIES IN ELITE SPORT

by *Nadim Nassif*\*

*ABSTRACT: Researchers, media, and sports leaders use the Olympic medal table at the end of each edition of the Winter or Summer Games as a benchmark for measuring the success of countries in elite sport. This ranking, however, has several limitations, such as: i) the absolute superiority of a gold medal over any number of silver and bronze creates the false inference that a country with one outstanding athlete capable of winning a gold medal is superior to another in events where several athletes finish second and third; ii) by not considering the number of countries participating in each event, the medal table does not consider the competition level of each sport; iii) only 87 of the 206 National Olympic Committees won medals when the 2016 Summer and 2018 Winter Olympic medal tables are combined. This statistical feature prevents an adequate comparative analysis of the success of countries in elite sport, considering that 58% of participants are absent. To overcome this lack, Nassif (2017) proposed a methodology with the following characteristics: a) a computation model that gives each country its share of points in at least one sport and, consequently, its world ranking based on the total number of points that particular country has obtained in all the sports in which it participates; b) the introduction of coefficients of universality and media popularity for each sport.*

*Apart from accurately assessing the performance of all countries in international competitions, this study in the future aims to undertake in-depth studies of the factors that determine the success or failure of nations in elite sport.*

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*Keywords:* Measuring Performance; Methodology; Countries; Sport.

SUMMARY: 1. Introduction – 2. What are the limits of the Olympic medal table? – 3. The methodology of the World Ranking of Countries in Elite Sport – 3.1 Why the popularity and universality coefficients for each sport? – 3.2 How are these coefficients calculated? – 3.3 What changes did the WRCES methodology bring? – 4. Future prospects for research – 5. Conclusion – References

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\* Ph. D. Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities – Department of Psychology, Education and Physical Education, Notre Dame University – Louaize, Lebanon; E-mail: [nnassif@ndu.edu.lb](mailto:nnassif@ndu.edu.lb).