Ethnic and Cultural Identity in young athletes across Europe:
Multicultural Analysis of the Ethnic - Cultural Identity Questionnaire *

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INTRODUCTION

Sport has been identified as an important socializing agent. Considering the multicultural character of modern societies it is particularly interesting, but also significant, to investigate the potential of sport as an integrative tool. The European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC) has undertaken such an initiative by developing a project in five European countries (Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, and UK) examining the role of sport in multicultural societies.

Ting-Toomey *et al.* (2000) identified ethnic and cultural identity as important determinants of social integration. Ethnic identity salience reflects the degree to which individuals hold their ethnicity to be of importance, whereas cultural identity salience reflects the degree to which individuals hold the larger culture to be of importance. Depending on ethnic and cultural identity salience, individuals may evaluate their group or the culture they live in positively or negatively, and may be more or less prone to get involved in ethnic or cultural activities and celebrations.

The purpose of the present study was to test the psychometric integrity of the Ethnic – Cultural Identity Questionnaire (Ting-Toomey *et al.*, 2000) as adapted by Kouli and Papaioannou (2009) as a tool for the assessment of ethnic and cultural identity across the five European countries.

METHOD

Participants
Pupils (N = 1370) from five countries participated at this stage of the project (UK = 101; Denmark = 451; Germany = 341; Greece = 224; Spain = 253). The mean age of participants was 15.59 (± 1.72; range from 12 to 19).

Instrument
The Ethnic – Cultural Identity Questionnaire comprises 24 items assessing two dimensions of Ethnic Identity (Ethnic Belonging and Fringe) and two dimensions of Cultural Identity (Assimilation and Lack of Interaction). In particular, ethnic belonging (5 items) reflects the degree to which individuals feel attached to their own ethnic group; fringe (6 items) refers to the degree of confusion individuals have for their own ethnicity; assimilation (6 items) refers to the degree to which individuals identify themselves with the overall dominant culture; finally, lack of interaction (7 items) refers to tendencies of individuals to avoid communication with members of other groups with different background. Responses were given on a 5-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Analyses.
Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the factorial integrity of the instrument for the different languages. In addition, multi-sample analyses were conducted to test for the invariance of the model across the five languages.

RESULTS

Confirmatory factor analysis was first calculated to test the hypothesized factor structure for the five different languages. The results showed that the model had acceptable fit (CFI > .90) for all countries expect Spain (CFI = .89). Further examination of the models revealed that one item was particularly problematic for the Spanish sample; the removal of this item resulted in acceptable CFI (.90). Furthermore, another item was identified as problematic for three of the languages. Multi-sample analyses for the original model showed acceptable fit for both the non-constrained (CFI = .917) and the constrained models (CFI = .901), and at the same time small variation in fit between them. Nevertheless, the analyses were recalculated after removing the problematic items that were identified in the single-sample analyses. The results showed improvement of fit for both the non-constrained (CFI = .923) and the constrained models (CFI = .915), and decreased variation in fit between them. The fit indices for all CFA models appear in Table 1.

Table 1. The fit indices for the CFA models.

	χ^2	df	CFI	IFI	RMSEA (confidence intervals)
Single-sample					
British	286.68	246	.956	.957	.041 (.010 - .059)
Danish	393.05	246	.914	.915	.050 (.040 - .059)
German	402.86	246	.911	.913	.047 (.039 - .055)
Greek	292.64	246	.954	.955	.032 (.013 - .045)
Spanish	379.81	246	.889	.892	.046 (.037 - .055)
Multi-sample					
Original - Non-constrained	1865.18	1230	.917	.918	.021 (.019 - .023)
Original - Constrained	2081.66	1326	.901	.901	.022 (.020 - .024)
Modified – Non-constrained	1536.62	1015	.923	.925	.021 (.019 - .023)
Modified – Constrained	1677.42	1103	.915	.916	.021 (.019 - .023)

CONCLUSION

The Ethnic Cultural Identity Questionnaire is an instrument that can help identify differences in ethnic and cultural beliefs and can be used to explore the potential integrative role of sport. The results of the present study provided preliminary evidence regarding the multicultural integrity of the scale for the five languages, but also identified changes that should be considered for the improvement of the instrument. Considering the complexity of the model and the number of languages that were tested the psychometric findings are very encouraging. In the stages to follow, the questionnaire will be adjusted according to the present findings, and ethnic and cultural identity will be examined in relation to motivational and group factors that may play a crucial role in promoting integration.

REFERENCES
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*The project is an initiative of the European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC).