



RAISING CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF HIGH LEVEL ATHLETES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN CONTEXT. A CASE OF STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

The following study is one of the planned activities within the Training Athletes for Sport Event Management (TASEM) project that has been funded by the European Union within the framework of Erasmus + Sport.

The whole project has as a main axis the idea that sport can be useful for the development of policies to improve coexistence between the different parts of the world, improves peace in the world and is an effective way for the integration of people of different cultural and geographical fields.

The sport encourages the teamwork or in common as it has been demonstrated in this project that has included a total of 15 partners which come from, either in the specific Sports area (Olympic Committees and Federations), or in the academic field. People and entities from 10 different countries of the Mediterranean area have been integrated, such as: Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Cyprus, Serbia, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt and Syria, as well as a Northern European country such as the United Kingdom.

More specifically, TASEM project has been based on the following specific objectives:

- To establish a sustainable transnational network of dual career expertise in Europe and in the larger Mediterranean region, aiming to exchange good practices and experiences.
- To develop a model for the education and training of athletes in the organisation and management of sport events.



- To become a reference model for the sustainable social legacy and good governance of sporting events by better exploiting their potential for the training of athletes.
- To increase the capacity of sporting event organisers by better integrating the athlete perspective in their organisation.
- To promote joint business initiatives between athletes from the both basins of the Mediterranean in order to foster their employability.

Today, unfortunately, we are immersed in new models and paradigms of social conflict, where completely different models of society, of governance, of social structure, and of political, religious and social ideologies, come into direct collision once they are immersed in a global world, where some of these ideologies or societies try to impose their model on others in order to get a supremacy in the world order.

Although a few decades ago the international conflict was manifested, essentially, in the so-called Cold War, based on the polarization of two blocks of perfectly defined countries both at the level of geographic location (east vs west) and at the level of the vertebrate ideology of the economic model of society and the State (capitalism vs socialism/communism), the current situation is completely different and responds to different models of conflict. While still maintaining in any way the bases of the preceding conflict (capitalism vs socialism) and the ability to influence of both in the international environment, we must point out that other very important variables are added to the global conflict, such as, among others, religion, and social or opportunity differences or inequalities

That division is no longer perfectly defined from "territorial or geographic locations", although this is not minor but by other mechanisms that group together collectives that are globally confronted on the basis of other variables that are not just economic or governance models.



It is precisely this globalization of conflict that imperiously demands to find the mechanisms of coexistence and common work, since it is impossible today to separate the groups or collectives in conflict in clearly separated physical spaces and with connection difficulties (it is still tending to do so in some territorial contexts or conflicts, physically closing the states or territories as it was possible to do 5 or 6 decades earlier.

Now, there is no doubt that, in a greater or lesser extent, we will all live together and that we can be there in any of the geographical or territorial areas without the hermetic separation of one from the others. This then inevitably leads to living with the other models in conflict and to look for the internal mechanisms of facilitation of this coexistence or even of the common work as a mechanism of reduction or elimination of the conflict.

In this context, the INEFC understood that, from the international experience accumulated in training and research in the field of sport, could contribute to the improvement of the essential elements of coexistence and collaboration from the structuring of projects that could be common for people coming from different society models and with ideologies of a different human development society. The program aims to develop a way of working that can could be a "model" to follow for young athletes and an encouragement for young people from both parts of the Mediterranean. On the basis of the conviction that it is possible, not only coexistence, but that one may go beyond and, in spite of the ideological, cultural, geographical differences that set different models of governance perception, of different religions or of different socio-economic contexts. It is still possible to be considered an integral member of a single group.

On the basis of that the mission of this program was and is the contribution to dialogue and teamwork between young people in Europe and the Arab World taking



advantage of sport as a prescriber for the rest of society, the study presented below and whose objective is to assess the impact on the socialization models that the implementation of this program could have produced on all participants, when one of the essential elements of the program is multiculturalism.

Thereon, it should be noted the following main features of the program's development:

- Realization of 7 sessions in the period between the months of September 2017 to December 2018 with duration of one week each of the sessions, where the participants shared training and training. These sessions were held in different cities of Italy and Spain, specifically in Tirenna, Formia and Foggia, in the case of Italy and Tarragona, Barcelona and La Seu d'Urgell in the case of Spain.
- Unlike the athletes, the duration of the coaches sessions who participated in the program, in a exchange format of professional experiences than training, was three days instead of 7.
- The training focused on the development of four different thematic areas: Interculturality, Events Management, Entrepreneurship and Languages, with a total of 240 elective hours and 120 practical hours.
- The realization of a final session, consisting of a congress in the city of Barcelona, where the participants presented, in groups of 6, the business plans developed during the program.

For more information you can consult the Academic Book (Farías et al., 2017)

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Culture, multiculturalism, interculturality

The study of various aspects linked to culture and interculturality has substantially increased during the last decades, mainly due to the impact of globalization on our current society. However, and in despite of the great efforts made



regarding to the delimitation and the study of these clearly linked terms, its conceptualization stills plagued by an important conceptual ambiguity that requires further deepening.

In spite of the traditional conceptualization that the word culture has had from the consideration of two great meanings, recognized even by the Real Academia Española de la Lengua:

- Culture as the set of knowledge that allows to the individual develops a critical judgment.
- Culture as the customs, traditions and way of life of a community as well as its history, art, etc. of the social group in question, there are several authors who delve into the conceptualization of this term from a more global perspective.

However, the diversity and conceptualization of the word culture does not end here. Numerous and diverse are the words that derive from this term: sociocultural, multiculturalism, multiculturalism or interculturality, among others. According to the Common European Framework of Reference of the Council of Europe (2020), while the socio-cultural concept is defined as the knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which the language is spoken, which influences the social learning of norms, attitudes and values in their stage of school education and language, the concepts of multiculturalism and pluriculturalism are circumscribed, respectively: to the simultaneous presence of two or more cultures in a territory and their possible interrelationship (Bernabé, 2012:69); to the presence in a territory of different cultures that are limited to coexist but not to live together (Bernabé, 2012:69).

In this sense, Bernabé (2012: 70) points out that Interculturality implies recognition and understanding of the existence of other cultures, as well as respect,



communication and interaction, and a society will only be intercultural when its members interact and enrich themselves with that interaction.

Finally, it should be noted that the contributions derived from the MERC, in relation to the differentiation of levels around the definition of interculturality: Cultural Awareness, as a cognitive phenomenon and Intercultural Skills as a communicative phenomenon, including intercultural sensitivity, the ability to relate cultures, the capacity for mediation or the ability to overcome stereotypes.

2.2. Barriers

According to Fernández & Fernández (2013), cultural diversity and the need for communication between different social groups require the recognition and overcoming of many barriers, be they linguistic, conceptual, psychological, religious and / or social. The construction, in the words of these authors, of an ideal language model, culture and universal behavior, even if it is utopian, in the long term could be effective, as long as, this social group sees the the necessity for improving the acceptance of a cultural diversity that It is part of everyones daily context, coexisting with the different identities of each one.

In this sense, five are the barriers proposed by Fernández & Fernández (2013) in relation to the achievement of an intercultural society: 1) intellectual barriers, which are divided into linguistic and conceptual referring to the difficulty to exchange messages with others for the incomprehension or inability to be understood at the communicative level; 2) psychological barriers, which refer to the attitudes of individuals, understanding the foreigner as an unknown person or stranger, which end up causing mistrust towards the rest of individuals from different cultures and which entails an uncertainty that generates insecurity among them, conditioning their communication; 3) social barriers, which are divided into customs and habits that require a certain empathy towards the other to understand their way of acting; 4)



political barriers, which refer to laws and other interests that can affect positively or negatively an individual's thinking according to the political stance that society has towards groups of other cultures; and finally, and, finally, 5) religious barriers where there is a lack of empathy or positive feelings, from one part of society, towards the understanding of customs that are alien to those of ones own culture in relation to religious aspects or assimilated beliefs. Figure 1.

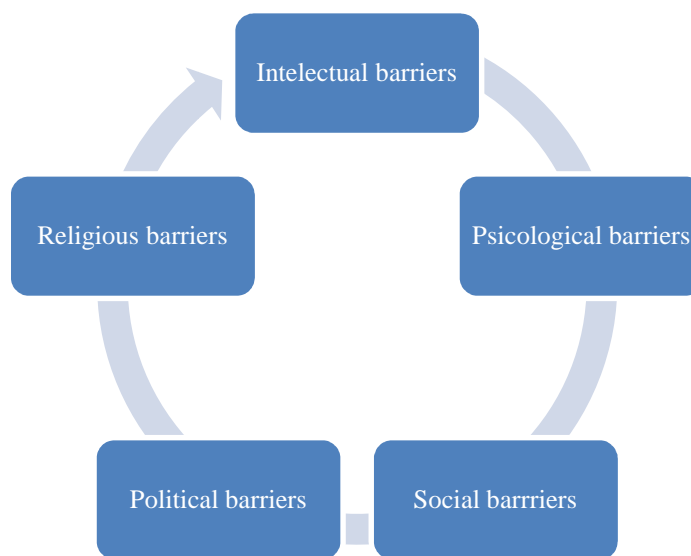


Figure 1. Main intercultural barriers (Adapted from Fernández & Fernández, 2013)

In this sense, to poitn out that, cultural barriers have always been present in the interaction between cultures to a greater or lesser extent, following an evolution in a different way in each region. According to Rozkwitalska (2010), intercultural interaction is the reciprocal influence of a person, a culture on another person or people of different cultures, and it is along this action where the cultural barriers may appear and hinder this interaction in terms of their characteristics and personal and cultural development among the individuals that participate in the interpersonal interaction. Also note that although cultural barriers appear in every society, it is important to be aware that they appear at different times and in different ways



depending on the scope, that is, the barriers will vary depending on the context in which it appears (read, educational, labor, Social).

Leaving aside the above-mentioned barriers, whatever the context they may be, there is a concrete and common barrier, not so clearly identified, but somehow it is always omnipresent and that definitely hinders all communication, as it is: the "misunderstanding". According to Delecta & Raman (2015: 333) misunderstanding is the main barrier to communication in a multicultural environment. This is common among individuals of different cultural backgrounds whose values and beliefs vary and this in general can lead a high level of anxiety and uncertainty, which ends in a misunderstanding.

On the other hand, following the intercultural barriers, Delecta & Raman (2015) assert that the norms and rules of a society are usually different in each culture, this determines for each culture a set of behaviors that are considered adequate and which are not, which are valid and which would be prohibited. This factor explains that when people from different cultures mix within a series of norms foreign to their cultural reality, it can cause the communication process to be interrupted. This intercultural connection between sender and receiver is most affected when judgments about people from other cultures come into play, which we understand by the cultural stereotypes that we perceive from other cultural groups and that appear due to lack of understanding or difference of opinions. regarding to other cultures, leading to misunderstanding again or the lack of communication. Finally, mention how ethnocentrism also affects the entire communicative process, generating less empathy towards the rest of cultures when the individual thinks that their culture is above the rest.

2.3. Interculturality. Phases of intercultural communication competence

In general terms, the road to cultural effectiveness or multicultural success depends on many aspects, which following the theories and works developed by different authors could be linked, on the one hand, to the personality of the individual (Leone, Van der Zee, Van Oudenhoven, Perugini & Ercolani, 2005) and, on the other, to the phases included within what Chen & Starosta (1997) identify as Intercultural Communication Competence (CCI): Intercultural Awareness, Intercultural Sensibility, Intercultural Effectiveness.

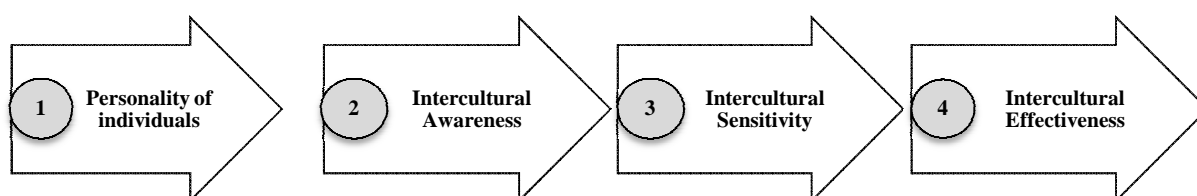


Figure 2. Determining aspects of the Intercultural Effectiveness of the Individual

Whereas for Leone, Van der Zee, Van Oudenhoven, Perugini & Ercolani (2005) there are four major variables related to the disposition of the individual towards interculturality related to personality: 1) cognitive closure needs, which are defined as individual interest to get answers to questions or problems that may appear; 2) the need for cognition, which implies a tendency to seek challenges and situations that are cognitively stimulating; 3) Performance orientation, which relates to those who tend to avoid new situations, who are afraid of facing new multicultural contexts and 4) Learning orientation, which is linked to those who recognise new situations as opportunities to develop their skills and increase their knowledge; Chen & Starosta (1997), define phases within ICC as follows: 1) intercultural awareness, such as the cognitive process by which a person comes to know their own cultures and those of others; 2) Intercultural Sensitivity, as the relationship not only with the ability of the individual to distinguish between different behaviours, perceptions and feelings of a



different culture, but also with the ability to respect and appreciate them and 3) Intercultural Effectiveness, such as the ability of any person to communicate effectively in different cultural contexts and with people of different cultures.

En este sentido cabe destacar, en lo referente a la identificación y estudio de la Sensibilidad Intercultural, las aportaciones realizadas por Bennet & Bennet (2004), que profundizan en la identificación de dos grandes subetapas a tener en cuenta: Etapas Etnocéntricas y las Etapas Etnorelativas (Figura 3).

In this sense, It should be noted that, regard to the identification and study of Intercultural Sensitivity, the contributions made by Bennet & Bennet (2004), which deepen in the identification of two major sub-stages to be taken into account: Ethnocentric Stages and Ethnorelative Stages (Figure 3).

<i>Negation</i>	<i>Defense</i>	<i>Minimization</i>	<i>Acceptance</i>	<i>Adjuntament</i>	<i>Integration</i>
<i>Ethnocentric Stages</i>			<i>Ethnorelative Stages</i>		

Figure 3. Development model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennet & Bennet, 2004)

In the first stage of the process we found an individual who rejects other cultures except his own, until he is able to recognize and internally integrate other cultures. This process is known as the development of intercultural sensitivity (Bennet & Bennet, 2004). They suggest that individuals could improve competence, from the intercultural point of view, from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. The first term is defined or conceptualized as the experience of one's own culture as something central to the person's own reality, that is, that their beliefs and behaviors in their own society and culture are unquestionable. The term ethnorelativism, meanwhile, is the opposite of ethnocentrism, that is, the possibility of jointly coexisting beliefs and behaviors of one's own and of other cultures as a single organization of the joint reality.



Obviously, there are multiple variables that affect cross-cultural adaptation, making it difficult to study these variables, , although within these, according to Chen & Starosta (1997), sensitivity and cultural effectiveness are the key elements that must be addressed. In this regard, the measurement instruments proposed by Chen in relation to both perspectives are particularly interesting. The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (Chen & Satarosta, 1997), consists of a validated questionnaire that includes the assessment of a total of 24 items, grouped into 5 clearly differentiated dimensions (the commitment of interaction, respect for different cultures, trust in interaction, enjoyment of interaction and attention to interaction) and Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (Portalla & Chen, 2010), with a total of 20 items grouped in this section: behavioral flexibility, message skills, interaction management, behavioral flexibility, identity management and relationship management.

3. METHODOLOGY

As of the taking into account the two survey models validated by Chen: Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) and Intercultural Effectiveness Scala (IES), previously referenced (Chen & Satarosta, 1997 and Portella & Chen, 2010, respectively), a fieldwork was designed, consisting a survey, through a pre-program questionnaire, which, in this case, was done on the first day of class of the first session in September 2017 and a post program, which was carried out the last day of class, of the last session, in the month of October 2018. This was prior to the realization of the final congress in the first week of December

The socio-demographic characteristics and the sport profile of the participants as a whole was also one of the data collected in the implementation of the corresponding questionnaires (Table 1) that was distributed to all the participants, that is to say, in our study they were a total of 44 participants: 33 athletes and 11 coaches.



As an annex to this report, the models of questionnaires may be consulted. It should be noted that the models questionnaire for the athletes and coaches were slightly different, due to the sociodemographic characteristics and sports profile were obviously different and dispartates.

For the statistical analysis of the data we proceeded to use the SPSS statistical program, version 18. Descriptive statistical analyzes and Paired Sample Test.

Table 1. Dimensions, variables and indicators included in the model questionnaire

Dimensions	Variables	Indicators
Socio-demographic characteristics	Age	Year of birth
	Gender	Male - female
	Nationality	Countries of participant
	Religious	Catholic, Muslim, Protestant, others
	Studies level	Primary, High school, University, post
	Languages knowledge	Languages - level
Sport activity and sport background	Work experience	Student, employee,
	Sport activity	Participant list...
	Competition level	Regional, National, international
	Years competing	Number of years
	Years in the current level	Number of years
	Experience living abroad	Yes or no.
Intercultural profile and behavior	Time	Number of month or years
	Sensitive	24 ítems
	Effectiveness	20 ítems

4. RESULTS

4.1. Profile of the participants

In the following tables may be seen the main characteristics of the participants that we have grouped according to their participation condition: athletes - coaches. Main characteristics of the athlete group are the predominance of the male gender (67.7%), ages between 19-25 years old (66.7%), active non-practicing of any religion (36,%) and with a high level of studies and knowledge of other languages. More than 78% have studied or are studying at university-level studie, and more than 40% have knowledge of languages other than mother tongue and English (required to participate



in the program). In this sense, and taking into account the inclusion in the project of partners of 10 different nationalities, stands out, in accordance with the specific weight of the different partners, a participation of 35.3% of athletes of Spanish nationality, followed by athletes of Italian or Portuguese nationality. More than 66% are currently working in the sports field. Unlike athletes, the profile of the 11 participant coaches in the program is not so young, but with similar gender and religious proportions. In this case, with a lower level of knowledge of other languages than in the case of athletes, the profile of coaches stands out as being mostly university graduates, which represented more than 90%. Almost 91% are currently working in the sports sector.

Table 2. Socio-demographic profile of the participants

Sociodemographic profile		Athletes % n=33	Trainers % n=11
Genre	Male	66,7	63,6
	Female	33,3	36,4
Age	19-25	66,7	27,3
	26-30	27,3	18,2
	More 30	6,1	54,5
Religious	No religious	42,4	36,4
	Muslim	18,2	18,2
	Catholic	30,3	27,3
	Other religious	9,1	18,2
Studies level	High School	21,2	9,1
	University Degree	63,6	45,5
	Post-degree	15,2	45,5
Knowledge of others languages apart from English	Yes	40,9	27,3
	No	59,1	72,7
Level of languages	No	59,1	72,7
	Basic	10,6	13,6
	Intermediate	10,6	--
	High	9,1	9,1
	Without specification	10,6	4,5
Residence place	Argelia	6,1	9,1
	Serbia	3,0	9,1
	Spain	35,3	27,3
	Tunisia	9,1	9,1
	Portugal	12,1	18,2
	Italy	12,1	18,2



	Egypt	6,1	--
	Cyprus	9,1	9,1
	Syria	6,1	--
Working in sport now?	Yes	66,7	90,9
	No	33,3	9,1

With reference to the sport profile, and also in relation to the participation of the sports organizations, a majority profile of Badminton players and coaches stands out (24.5% and 45.5%, respectively), followed by athletes from the football field, with important differences between the different profiles of participants with respect to the rest of the characteristics, which in the case of athletes is characterized by collecting a greater volume of athletes who are currently competing in the international level (54.5%), who have resided at some point in his career in a residence hall (66.7%), of which 36.4% have done so outside of their country of origin.

Table 3. Sports profile of the participants

Sport profile		Athletes % n=33	Trainers % n=11
Sport modality*	Badminton	24,2	45,5
	Triathlon	6,1	9,1
	Football	12,1	--
	Track & Field	9,1	--
	Fencing	9,1	9,1
	Gymnastic	3,0	9,1
	Archery	3,0	--
	Kayak-canoeing	3,0	9,1
	Trampoline	9,1	--
	Golf	6,1	--
	Volley ball	3,0	--
	Basketball	--	9,1
	Weightlifting	--	9,1
	Others	12,1	9,1
Competition level*	Regional	12,1	--
	National	33,3	54,5
	International	54,5	45,5
Experience living sport residence*	Yes	66,7	18,2
	No	33,3	81,8
Experience living abroad*	Yes	36,4	63,6
	No	63,6	36,4

* As a athletes of trainer



4.2. Sensitivity and Effectiveness

The results obtained in relation to sensitivity and effectiveness, as can be seen in the following tables (Tables 4 and 5), both in regard to athletes and coaches, have different patterns of changes. While in the case of sensitivity the number of items with significant differences is significantly lower than in the case of the results obtained in the assessment of effectiveness, these are not always in the sense of progress towards multiculturalism. Items 4, 15 and 16 (dimensions Interaction Engagement and Interaction Confidence) in the case of athletes item 7 in the case of coaches (dimension Interaction Engagement).

Thus, in the case of the results obtained in Intercultural Sensitivity in athletes, 16 of the 24 present significant differences, of which 13 with a significance of $P < 0.001$ and 3 with significance $P < 0.05$, of which 4 items are not towards a contribution of the Intercultural Sensitivity. In the case of coaches, the items with significant differences are reduced to 11, of which 5 with a significance of $P < 0.05$. It is the Respect for Cultural Differences dimension, the dimension with the most quantity of items with significant differences in both cases. The totality of the Interaction Enjoyment items, in both cases, do not present any indicator with significant difference.

Regarding to the results obtained in the Intercultural Effectiveness, 19 of the 20 items related to the effectivity in the case of athletes present significant differences, of which 17 with a significance higher than $P < 0.001$. And 17 of the 20 in the case of the coaches present significant differences. In this sense, all the indicators included in the dimensions Behavior Flexibility, Interaction Relaxation, Message Skills and Interaction Management in the case of athletes present significant differences with a significance of $P < 0.001$.



Table 4. Sensitivity results both athletes and coaches

Sensitivity		Athletes			Coaches		
		Mean pre	Mean post	Sig.	Mean pre	Mean post	Sig.
Interaction engagement	1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures	4,55	1,97	,000**	4,73	2,18	,000**
	2. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts	3,52	3,82	,258	3,45	3,64	,690
	3. I am open-minded to people from different cultures	4,61	4,21	,051*	4,64	4,09	,326
	4. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction	3,67	4,00	,039	3,73	3,82	,821
	5. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons	2,18	4,00	,000**	1,64	4,36	,000**
	6. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues	3,24	2,03	,000**	2,64	2,09	,341
	7. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me	3,64	3,81	,484	2,82	3,73	,096*
Respect for cultural differences	8. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded	1,64	3,48	,000**	1,73	3,45	,000**
	9. I do not like to be with people from different cultures	1,42	3,82	,000**	1,09	3,91	,000**
	10. I respect the values of people from different cultures	4,67	3,66	,000**	4,64	3,09	,003*
	11. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave	4,42	3,18	,000**	4,45	2,73	,002*
	12. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures	1,30	3,61	,000**	1,45	3,45	,001**
	13. I think my culture is better than other cultures	2,21	3,15	,001**	1,64	3,45	,001**
Interaction confidence	14. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures	4,03	3,82	,370	3,91	4,09	,800
	15. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures	2,21	1,67	,089*	1,36	1,73	,476
	16. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures	3,48	4,39	,000**	3,55	4,27	,167
	17. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures	4,09	2,00	,000**	4,18	2,73	,034*
	18. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures	3,91	4,24	,125	3,91	4,09	,774
Interaction Enjoyment	19. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures	1,85	1,97	,619	1,73	1,82	,867
	20. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different	1,85	2,03	,475	1,82	2,00	,768



	cultures						
	21. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures	1,76	1,58	,404	2,27	1,73	,311
Interaction Attentiveness	22. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures	4,03	4,27	,332	4,09	4,00	,863
	23. Try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from others cultures	4,48	2,36	,000**	4,18	2,09	,002*
	24. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction	3,03	2,00	,000**	2,82	2,36	,242

Punctuation: 1 strongly agree to 5 strongly disagree

*P<0,05

**P<0,001

Table 5. Effectiveness results both athletes and coaches

	Effectiveness	Athletes			Coaches		
		Mean pre	Mean post	Sig.	Mean pre	Mean post	Sig.
Behavior flexibility	1. I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures	2,09	3,82	,000**	1,91	4,18	,002*
	2. I am not always the person I appear to be when interacting with people from different cultures	2,27	3,94	,000**	1,91	3,91	,002*
	3. I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures	2,18	3,58	,000**	2,18	3,64	,020*
	4. I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures	4,21	2,39	,000**	3,82	3,36	,271
Interaction Relaxation	5. I find it is easy to talk with people from different cultures	4,03	2,42	,000**	4,27	2,36	,000**
	6. I find it is easy to get along with people from different cultures	4,06	2,55	,000**	4,18	2,09	,002*
	7. I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures	3,55	2,00	,000**	3,64	2,27	,031*
	8. I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures	3,97	2,67	,000**	4,09	2,36	,003*
	9. I find it is easy to identify with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction	3,64	1,33	,000**	3,91	1,36	,000**
Interacting respect	10. I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures	3,94	2,67	,000**	4,09	2,18	,002*
	11. I always show respect for my culturally different counterparts during our interaction	4,18	4,24	,768	4,73	4,09	,067*
	12. I always show respect for the opinions of my culturally different counterparts during our interaction	4,48	4,61	,013*	4,64	4,79	,567



Message skills	13. I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures	2,76	3,91	,000**	2,36	4,09	,003*
	14. I have problems distinguishing between informative and persuasive messages when interacting with people from different cultures	2,18	3,85	,000**	1,91	4,18	,001*
	15. I often miss parts of what is going on when interacting with people from different cultures	2,30	4,06	,000**	2,45	3,73	,072
Identity Maintenance	16. I find it is difficult to feel my culturally different counterparts are similar to me	2,21	3,64	,000**	1,91	3,64	,000**
	17. I always feel a sense of distance with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction	2,48	3,61	,000**	2,09	3,73	,002*
	18. I find I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	3,52	4,03	,061*	3,45	4,45	,013**
Interaction Management	19. I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.	3,85	2,67	,000**	4,00	2,09	,001*
	20. I am able to answer questions effective when interacting with people from different cultures.	4,09	2,45	,000**	4,18	2,27	,002*

Punctuation: 1 strongly agree to 5 strongly disagree

*P<0,05

**P<0,001

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

If we start from the basis that a Sensitivity person is not only a person aware of intercultural interaction, but is able to appreciate and respect the exchange of ideas, without worrying about idiosyncrasy, accepting personal complexity (Bronfenbrenner, Harding & Gallwey; 1958; Hart and Burks, 1972) and that the Intercultural effectiveness corresponds to communicative skills, including both verbal and non-verbal, an aspect that encourage the communication in an intercultural environment with effectiveness and based on the overall results of both scales , we can conclude that while the sensitivity in the set of participants has evolved towards interculturality in a moderate way, a fully expected aspect if we refer to the depth implied by these changes, the evolution in terms of effectiveness is clearly overwhelming.



On the other hand, if we focus on the differences observed in both groups of participants, athletes and coaches, and compare the number and forcefulness of the significant differences in both cases, we can conclude, taking into account the difference in the level of participation of both groups, the sessions of the athletes consisted of seven continuous days while in the case of the coaches the duration of the sessions was limited to 3 days, we could speculate that the changes can be found linked to the levels of exposure to intercultural interaction .

Finally, it should be clarified that this first report is only a superficial and descriptive presentation of the main data obtained in this study, pending a treatment of data and depth analysis in the writing of a scientific article publishable in a journal of the area.

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Complementary information 1. Questionnaire athletes

This questionnaire was elaborated in order to study the impact of the TASEM program over the participants. It is confidential. It has five parts. The first two are about intercultural issues and the following three are about your personal and sport/work current situation.

Please put a tick in the box next to the answer of your choice or write in the space provided (.....)

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

1=strongly disagree	2=disagree	3=uncertain	4= agree	5= strongly agree
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Part 1

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.					
2	I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.					
3	I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.					
4	I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.					
5	I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.					
6	I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.					
7	I do not like to be with people from different cultures.					
8	I respect the values of people from different cultures.					
9	I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.					
10	I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.					
11	I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.					
12	I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.					
13	I am open-minded to people from different cultures.					
14	I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.					
15	I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.					
16	I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.					
17	Try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures					
18	I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.					
19	I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.					
20	I think my culture is better than other cultures.					
21	I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction					
22	I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.					
23	I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.					
24	I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.					



Part 2

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I find it is easy to talk with people from different cultures.					
2	I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.					
3	I find it is easy to get along with people from different cultures.					
4	I am not always the person I appear to be when interacting with people from different cultures.					
5	I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.					
6	I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures.					
7	I am able to answer questions effective when interacting with people from different cultures.					
8	I find it is difficult to feel my culturally different counterparts are similar to me.					
9	I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures.					
10	I have problems distinguishing between informative and persuasive messages when interacting with people from different cultures.					
11	I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.					
12	I often miss parts of what is going on when interacting with people from different cultures.					
13	I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.					
14	I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures.					
15	I always show respect for my culturally different counterparts during our interaction					
16	I always feel a sense of distance with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
17	I find I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
18	I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures.					
19	I find it is easy to identify with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
20	I always show respect for the opinions of my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					

Part 3

1- Age	
	1- Less 18
	2- 19-25
	3- 26-30
	4- More 30
2- Gender	
	1- Male

7- If yes, how long? Specify
8- Education Level
1- Primary
2- Secondary School
3- High School
4-University Degree



	2- Female
3- Residence place	
	1- Algeria
	2- Malta
	3- Serbia
	4- Spain
	5- Tunisia
	6- Portugal
	7- Italy
	8- Egypt
	9- Cyprus
	10- Greece
	11- Syria
	12- Others countries. Specify.....
4- Experience living abroad	
	1- Yes
	2- No
5- If yes, how long? Specify.....	
6- Experience living in sports residences	
	1- Yes
	2 No

	5- Post-degree
9- Religious	
	1- No religious
	2- Muslim
	3- Catholic
	4- Anglican
	5- Other. Specify.....
10- Mother languages	
	1- Spanish
	2- Arabic
	3- Portuguese
	4- Frances
	5- Others. Specify.....
11- knowledge of other languages.	
	1- Yes
	2- No
12- If yes, specify the language/s - level/s	
	1- English. Level.....
	2- Arabic. Level.....
	3- Portuguese. Level.....
	4- Frances. Level.....
	5- Others. Specify.....

Part 4

13- Sport activity	
	1- Badminton
	2- Triathlon
	3- Football
	4- Track & Field
	5- Fencing
	6- Gymnastic
	7- Archery
	8- Kayak- Canoeing
	9- Trampoline
	10- Taekwondo
	11- Weightlifting
	12- Golf
	13- Basketball
	14- Volley ball
	15- Others.....

14- Current competition level such as athlete	
	1- Regional
	2- National
	3- International
15- Age when started competing.....	
16- Number of years competing in the current level.....	
If you have any comment you may add here. For instance, change the sport during your sport career, etc.....	

Part 5

17- Are you working now?	
	1- Yes
	2- No
18- If not, Have you worked before?	
	1- Yes

20- Have you worked in sport?	
	1- Yes
	2- No
21- If yes, how long?	
22- Have you worked in international	



	2- No
19- If yes, now or before. How long?..	
.....	
.....	

context or abroad?	
	1- Yes
	2- No
23- If yes, how long?	

If you think it is necessary some explanation regarding some of the issue of this questionnaire, please, use this space

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Complementary information 2. Questionnaire trainers

This questionnaire was elaborated in order to study the impact of the TASEM program over the participants. It is confidential. It has five parts. The first two are about intercultural issues and the following three are about your personal and sport/work current situation.

Please put a tick in the box next to the answer of your choice or write in the space provided (.....)

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are not right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

1=strongly disagree	2=disagree	3=uncertain	4= agree	5= strongly agree
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Part 1

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.					
2	I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.					
3	I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.					
4	I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.					
5	I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.					
6	I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.					
7	I do not like to be with people from different cultures.					
8	I respect the values of people from different cultures.					
9	I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.					
10	I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.					
11	I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.					
12	I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.					
13	I am open-minded to people from different cultures.					
14	I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.					
15	I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.					
16	I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.					
17	Try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures					
18	I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.					
19	I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.					
20	I think my culture is better than other cultures.					
21	I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction					
22	I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.					
23	I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.					
24	I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.					



Part 2

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I find it is easy to talk with people from different cultures.					
2	I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.					
3	I find it is easy to get along with people from different cultures.					
4	I am not always the person I appear to be when interacting with people from different cultures.					
5	I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.					
6	I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures.					
7	I am able to answer questions effective when interacting with people from different cultures.					
8	I find it is difficult to feel my culturally different counterparts are similar to me.					
9	I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures.					
10	I have problems distinguishing between informative and persuasive messages when interacting with people from different cultures.					
11	I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.					
12	I often miss parts of what is going on when interacting with people from different cultures.					
13	I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.					
14	I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures.					
15	I always show respect for my culturally different counterparts during our interaction					
16	I always feel a sense of distance with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
17	I find I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
18	I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures.					
19	I find it is easy to identify with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
20	I always show respect for the opinions of my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					

Part 3

1- Age	
	1- Less 18
	2- 19-25
	3- 26-30
	4- More 30

7- If yes, how long? Specify	
.....	
8- Education Level	
	1- Primary
	2- Secondary School



2- Gender	
1- Male	
2- Female	
3- Residence place	
1- Algeria	
2- Malta	
3- Serbia	
4- Spain	
5- Tunisia	
6- Portugal	
7- Italy	
8- Egypt	
9- Cyprus	
10- Greece	
11- Syria	
12- Others countries. Specify.....	
4- Experience living abroad	
1- Yes	
2- No	
5- If yes, how long? Specify.....	
.....	
6- Experience living in sports residences	
1- Yes	
2- No	

3- High School	
4- University Degree	
5- Post-degree	
9- Religious	
1- No religious	
2- Muslim	
3- Catholic	
4- Anglican	
5- Other. Specify.....	
10- Mother languages	
1- Spanish	
2- Arabic	
3- Portuguese	
4- Frances	
5- Others. Specify.....	
11- knowledge of other languages.	
1- Yes	
2- No	
12- If yes, specify the language/s - level/s	
1- English. Level.....	
2- Arabic. Level.....	
3- Portuguese. Level.....	
4- Frances. Level.....	
5- Others. Specify.....	

Part 4

13- Sport activity	
1- Badminton	
2- Triathlon	
3- Football	
4- Track & Field	
5- Fencing	
6- Gymnastic	
7- Archery	
8- Kayak- Canoeing	
9- Trampoline	
10- Taekwondo	
11- Weightlifting	
12- Golf	
13- Basketball	
14- Volley ball	
15- Others.....	

14- Current competition level such as trainer	
1- Regional	
2- National	
3- International	
15- Age when started training	
.....	
16- Number of years training in the current level.....	
If you have any comment you may add here. For instance, change the sport during your sport career, etc.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	

Part 5

17- Are you working now?	
1- Yes	
2- No	

20- Have you worked in sport?	
1- Yes	
2- No	



18- If not, Have you worked before?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1- Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	2- No
19- If yes, now or before. How long?..	
.....	
.....	

21- If yes, how long?	
22- Have you worked in international context or abroad?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1- Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	2- No
23- If yes, how long?	

If you think it is necessary some explanation regarding some of the issue of this questionnaire, please, use this space

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Complementary information 3. Questionnaire athletes and trainers post

This questionnaire was elaborated in order to study the impact of the TASEM program over the participants. It is confidential. It has five parts. The first two are about intercultural issues and the following three are about your personal and sport/work current situation.

Please put a tick in the box next to the answer of your choice or write in the space provided (.....)

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are not right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

1=strongly disagree	2=disagree	3=uncertain	4= agree	5= strongly agree
---------------------	------------	-------------	----------	-------------------

Part 1

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.					
2	I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.					
3	I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.					
4	I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.					
5	I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.					
6	I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.					
7	I do not like to be with people from different cultures.					
8	I respect the values of people from different cultures.					
9	I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.					
10	I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.					
11	I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.					
12	I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.					
13	I am open-minded to people from different cultures.					
14	I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.					
15	I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.					
16	I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.					
17	Try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures					
18	I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.					
19	I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.					
20	I think my culture is better than other cultures.					
21	I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction					
22	I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.					
23	I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.					
24	I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.					



Part 2

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I find it is easy to talk with people from different cultures.					
2	I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.					
3	I find it is easy to get along with people from different cultures.					
4	I am not always the person I appear to be when interacting with people from different cultures.					
5	I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.					
6	I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures.					
7	I am able to answer questions effective when interacting with people from different cultures.					
8	I find it is difficult to feel my culturally different counterparts are similar to me.					
9	I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures.					
10	I have problems distinguishing between informative and persuasive messages when interacting with people from different cultures.					
11	I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.					
12	I often miss parts of what is going on when interacting with people from different cultures.					
13	I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.					
14	I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures.					
15	I always show respect for my culturally different counterparts during our interaction					
16	I always feel a sense of distance with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
17	I find I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
18	I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures.					
19	I find it is easy to identify with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					
20	I always show respect for the opinions of my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.					

Part 3

1- Age	
	1- Less 18
	2- 19-25
	3- 26-30
	4- More 30
2- Gender	
	1- Male



	2- Female
3- Residence place	
	1- Algeria
	2- Malta
	3- Serbia
	4- Spain
	5- Tunisia
	6- Portugal
	7- Italy
	8- Egypt
	9- Cyprus
	10- Greece
	11- Syria
	12- Others countries. Specify.....

If you think it is necessary some explanation regarding some of the issue of this questionnaire, please use this space

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