

**Intercultural education and the development of responsibility: from physical
education to the school classroom**

Dissertation of

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**Διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση και ανάπτυξη υπευθυνότητας: Από τη φυσική
αγωγή στη σχολική τάξη**

Διατριβή της

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More information about the EDU:PACT project can be found in the following link:

<http://edupact.sporteducation.eu/about>

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Eleftheria G. Papageorgiou

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*It is not “diversity of cultures” which we need to focus on,
but on how to give content to a “culture of diversity”.*

Zapata – Barrero (2018)

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Abstract

In many parts of the world, continuous migration flows are shaping a new multicultural reality. The rate of migration in recent years to the European ground differs from the past concerning the countries and conditions of origin of the incomings. Countries like Greece, which until recently was not the first choice of immigrant populations, today are called to face the increased needs of multicultural societies. Therefore, social inclusion plays an important role and is based on intercultural education which creates the conditions for improving the quality of life of both the incomings and the hosts.

Taking into consideration the innumerable potential of physical activity and sports for social inclusion, it is acknowledged that physical education (PE) teachers and coaches need to be able to create an intercultural learning environment and plenty of opportunities in their respective contexts. Therefore, the main purpose of the present research was to support PE teachers and coaches to effectively provide inclusive intercultural education to their groups. To achieve that there was an attempt to create, implement and assess a training course on intercultural education through PE. This course was designed as an optional University course for pre-service PE teachers and coaches, to help them improve their future professional quality in multicultural contexts and was based on the guidelines of a European Erasmus⁺ project, called “Intercultural Education through Physical Activity, Coaching and Training” (EDU:PACT). The researcher was initially participated in this project and trained to act as an instructor for PE teachers and coaches. Then the researcher after also having a literature review, designed, implemented and assessed an online training course for University PE teachers.

The present research was divided into three steps (studies) to accomplish the aforementioned goal. For the needs of the first study, interviews were conducted with academics and in-service PE teachers and coaches to gain an overview of intercultural education through PE and sports. More specifically, it was aimed to explore their thoughts on possible challenges of multicultural groups in PE and sports, and their aspects on the key points for an effective training program in intercultural education. The second study included interviews with native adolescents who have recently received refugee peers into schools. During these interviews, it was attempted to investigate their attitudes towards refugees’ acculturation and the potential role of PE and sports in this process. Finally, the information collected both from academics, educators/coaches, and native adolescents was used to design a training program for pre-service PE teachers based on intercultural education (third study). This program was implemented as an online optional course, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, on 3rd-

year students (N=41), who voluntarily selected the course (experimental group) and compared to other 3rd year students (N=88) who did not select this course (control group).

The results revealed that the present online course had a positive impact on participants' attitudes, skills, and knowledge on intercultural education and it is suggested as an effective and flexible structural guide for training future PE teachers and coaches in intercultural education.

Περίληψη

Σε πολλά μέρη του κόσμου οι συνεχείς μεταναστευτικές ροές διαμορφώνουν μια νέα πολυπολιτισμική πραγματικότητα. Ο ρυθμός μετανάστευσης τα τελευταία χρόνια προς το ευρωπαϊκό έδαφος διαφέρει σε σχέση με το παρελθόν όσον αφορά στις χώρες και στις συνθήκες προέλευσης των εισερχόμενων πληθυσμών. Χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα, που μέχρι πρόσφατα δεν ήταν η πρώτη επιλογή των μεταναστευτικών πληθυσμών, σήμερα καλούνται να αντιμετωπίσουν τις αυξημένες ανάγκες των πολυπολιτισμικών κοινωνιών. Ως εκ τούτου, η κοινωνική ένταξη διαδραματίζει σημαντικό ρόλο και βασίζεται στη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση που δημιουργεί τις προϋποθέσεις για τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής τόσο των εισερχομένων όσο και των πληθυσμών υποδοχής.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις αμέτρητες δυνατότητες της σωματικής δραστηριότητας και του αθλητισμού για την κοινωνική ένταξη, αναγνωρίζεται ότι οι εκπαιδευτικοί και οι προπονητές πρέπει να είναι σε θέση να δημιουργήσουν ένα διαπολιτισμικό περιβάλλον μάθησης και πολλές ευκαιρίες στα αντίστοιχα πλαίσια. Ως εκ τούτου, ο κύριος σκοπός της παρούσας έρευνας είναι να υποστηρίξει τους εκπαιδευτικούς φυσικής αγωγής και τους προπονητές ως προς την αποτελεσματική παροχή διαπολιτισμικής εκπαίδευσης χωρίς αποκλεισμούς στα τμήματά τους. Για να επιτευχθεί αυτό, έγινε προσπάθεια σχεδιασμού, εφαρμογής και αξιολόγησης ενός προγράμματος για τη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση μέσω της φυσικής αγωγής και του αθλητισμού.

Το μάθημα αυτό σχεδιάστηκε ως μάθημα επιλογής σε πανεπιστημιακό επίπεδο για προπτυχιακούς εκπαιδευτικούς και προπονητές, για να τους βοηθήσει να βελτιώσουν τη μελλοντική επαγγελματική τους ποιότητα σε πολυπολιτισμικά πλαίσια και βασίστηκε στις κατευθύνσεις ενός ευρωπαϊκού Erasmus⁺ έργου, με τίτλο «Διαπολιτισμική Εκπαίδευση μέσω Φυσικής Δραστηριότητας, Προπονητικής κι Εκπαίδευσης» (EDU:PACT). Η ερευνήτρια συμμετείχε αρχικά σε αυτό το έργο και εκπαιδεύτηκε για να ενεργήσει η ίδια ως εκπαιδύτρια προπονητών και εκπαιδευτικών. Στη συνέχεια, η ερευνήτρια αφού πραγματοποίησε τη σχετική βιβλιογραφική ανασκόπηση, σχεδίασε, εφάρμοσε κι αξιολόγησε ένα πρόγραμμα επιμόρφωσης στη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση για προπτυχιακούς εκπαιδευτικούς και προπονητές.

Η παρούσα έρευνα χωρίστηκε σε τρία στάδια (μελέτες) για την επίτευξη του προαναφερθέντος σκοπού. Για τις ανάγκες της πρώτης μελέτης, πραγματοποιήθηκαν συνεντεύξεις με ακαδημαϊκούς και εν ενεργεία εκπαιδευτικούς και προπονητές για να αποκτηθεί μια επισκόπηση της διαπολιτισμικής εκπαίδευσης μέσω της φυσικής αγωγής και του αθλητισμού. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, η πρώτη μελέτη είχε ως στόχο τη διερεύνηση των

σκέψεών τους σχετικά με πιθανές προκλήσεις των πολυπολιτισμικών τμημάτων στη φυσική αγωγή και στον αθλητισμό, και τις απόψεις τους σχετικά με τα βασικά στοιχεία ενός αποτελεσματικού προγράμματος επιμόρφωσης στη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση.

Η δεύτερη μελέτη περιελάμβανε συνεντεύξεις με Έλληνες εφήβους οι οποίοι δέχτηκαν πρόσφατα συνομήλικους πρόσφυγες στα σχολεία. Κατά τη διάρκεια αυτών των συνεντεύξεων, επιχειρήθηκε να διερευνηθεί η στάση των συμμετεχόντων απέναντι στον επιπολιτισμό των προσφύγων και ο πιθανός ρόλος της σωματικής άσκησης και του αθλητισμού σε αυτή τη διαδικασία. Τέλος, οι πληροφορίες που συλλέχθηκαν τόσο από τους ακαδημαϊκούς, εκπαιδευτικούς και προπονητές όσο και από τους Έλληνες έφηβους χρησιμοποιήθηκαν για τον σχεδιασμό ενός προγράμματος επιμόρφωσης για προπτυχιακούς εκπαιδευτικούς και προπονητές στη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση (τρίτη μελέτη).

Το πρόγραμμα αυτό εφαρμόστηκε ως διαδικτυακό μάθημα επιλογής, λόγω της πανδημίας του Covid-19, σε τριτοετείς φοιτητές φυσικής αγωγής και αθλητισμού (N=41), οι οποίοι επέλεξαν εθελοντικά το μάθημα (πειραματική ομάδα) και συγκρίθηκαν με άλλους φοιτητές του 3ου έτους (N=88) που δεν επέλεξαν αυτό το μάθημα (ομάδα ελέγχου). Τα αποτελέσματα έδειξαν ότι το παρόν διαδικτυακό μάθημα είχε θετικό αντίκτυπο στις στάσεις, στις δεξιότητες και στις γνώσεις των συμμετεχόντων ως προς τη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση και προτείνεται ως ένας αποτελεσματικός κι ευέλικτος δομικός οδηγός για την επιμόρφωση μελλοντικών εκπαιδευτικών και προπονητών στη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση.

1. Introduction

Global mobility remains an alive and timeless phenomenon that millions of people have been experiencing. The large migration flows of people lead to culturally diverse societies that are conceived either as a hardship or as a blessing, depending on individuals' way of thinking. According to Parekh (2000), loyalty towards any culture should be intelligible and acceptable as a natural choice. There is a variety of reasons for people to move from one familiar environment-country to another-host country and the circumstances are always changing. Focusing on “when”, “why” and “how” perhaps could make the difference between the called as “migrants” and “refugees”, but this is beyond the aims of the present study. Regardless of the reasons that impelled groups or individuals to move, this phenomenon creates multicultural societies and highlights a challenging negotiation between the incoming and the host populations (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001).

Focusing on Europe, the reception of migrant/refugee groups is an urgent need, which all European Union Member States should respond to (Amara, Aquilina, Argent, Betzer-Tayar, Green, Henry, Coalter & Taylor, 2005), organizing the living with the “different” (Meer & Modood, 2012). According to UNHCR (2015), the recent huge influx of migrants and refugees into Europe highlights the compelling need for mutual human understanding. At the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, Greece's geographical location is more than favorable for the reception of migrants or refugees from the Middle East to Central Europe. Living in a state of insecurity as “neither refugee nor guests” (poster of World Refugee Day), they are seeking to find ways to secure their rights and settle in a country that will provide them with opportunities and a secure way of life (Baban, Ilcan & Rygiel, 2016).

The comprehensive attendance of the incoming population arriving in a host country in areas of need (e.g., housing, health care, education, work) is required (Martinez, Wu, Sandfort, Dodge, Carballo-Dieguez, Pinto, Rhodes, Moya & Chavez-Baray, 2015) especially in the early season. Although sport is not mentioned here, it remains an important area of social life as it provides opportunities for interaction between foreigners and natives (Gavira et al, 2018). Several research efforts have been conducted both in the sports context (Culp, 2013; Forde, Lee, Mills, & Frisby, 2015; Doidge, Keech, & Sandri, 2020; Morela, Hatzigeorgiadis, Theodorakis, Goudas, & Elbe, 2020; Spaaij, 2015; Whitley, Coble, & Jewell, 2016) and in the field of PE (Amara et al., 2005; Dagkas, Benn, & Jawad, 2011; Bourgonje, 2010; Derri, Kellis, Vernadakis, Albanidis, & Kioumourtzoglou, 2014; Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Dundar, 2019; Gasparini & Cometti, 2010; Grimminger-Seidensticker & Möhwald, 2017; Gugutzer, 2008; Ito, Nogawa, Kitamura, & Walker,

2011; Kouli & Papaioannou, 2009; Leseth & Engelsrud, 2019), focusing either on the needs of the incoming populations or on the needs of the host populations. In the focal space of the present study, the value of PE and sports regarding the contact of culturally diverse populations is acknowledged and combined with the urgent need for well-established training programs in intercultural education.

Therefore, the purpose of the present research is to extend the previous findings by the design, implementation, and evaluation of a training program in the form of an online course for pre-service PE teachers. The structure of the research emerges from three studies. More specifically, during the first study (Study I) the investigation of the perspectives of PE teachers, coaches, and academics regarding the sport educators' involvement with culturally diverse groups both in schools and in sport clubs took place. Additionally, their perceptions on what is probably missing from the sport educators' training in intercultural education to be effective in their role, were also explored. In the second study (Study II) the perceptions of native adolescents were examined concerning their cultural and psychological changes arising from their contact with culturally diverse populations - known as acculturation (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936) - in school and sport clubs along with their aspects on the role of PE and sports in this process. Finally, the third study (Study III) referred to both the examination and the use of the outcomes that emerged from the two previous studies to design, implement, and evaluate a training course for PE teachers and coaches on intercultural education based on the guidelines of the European Erasmus⁺ project, called "EDU:PACT".

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2. Literature Review

2.1 Developing responsibility in PE

The sense of responsibility is multidimensional and it is related to various factors, such as reliability and trustworthiness. It could be defined as the power that someone owns to deliberately decide about his/her own actions (Greenberg et al., 2004). It is also the wider process of people going through to become aware of their feelings, their thoughts and their resulting actions (Canfield & Siccone, 1995).

In 1985, Don Hellison after years of working with vulnerable populations in deprived areas, he wondered of “What is one worth doing?”, so he developed a curriculum/instructional model for promoting values, responsibility and life skills. This model is named Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) and it is considered as one of the best models that used PE as a tool to help children and adolescents to learn how to become responsible both individually and socially (Pozo et al., 2018). According to Hellison (1985), for the development of this model the concepts of self respect, cooperation and ethical teaching were involved and its purpose was to transfer the responsibility from the PE teacher to the pupils by cultivating their values, intentions, and behaviors. In that way, pupils themselves could handle the challenges of learning process by accepting their strengths and working on their weaknesses.

The TPSR model was built upon five levels of responsibility: (1) respect for the feelings and the rights that other people have (self-control); (2) effort for collaboration (self-motivation); (3) self-direction (setting personal goals); (4) caring (empathy and offering help to others) and (5) transfer those skills in real life (Hellison, 2011). Additionally, there are four factors that act as pillars for the development of the TPSR model: (a) priority to the needs of pupils; (b) promotion of human dignity and positive relations with others; (c) holistic self development and (d) acting responsibly to become a lifestyle (Hellison, 1985). What also make this model special is that while it provides strategies and specific format for planning lessons to effectively teach PE, it also remains flexible for PE teachers to adapt it accordingly (Pozo et al., 2018).

The specific strategies that are provided through this model (Hellison, 1985) and are related to the PE teachers' behavior could be summarized in the following:

- Showing respect → positive expectations, active listening, visual contact, calling pupils with their names.

- Creating expectations → assurance that pupils know what to do and provide them with feedback.
- Creating opportunities for success → avoiding comparison among students, encouraging self improvement, group discussions, focusing on personal efforts.
- Reinforcing of social interaction → group activities, problem solving, mutual teaching methods.
- Offering initiatives → sharing roles (e.g., time managing, referring, designing lessons).
- Promoting leadership → feedback in mutual teaching, discussion on case studies.
- Offering options → making group suggestions, making group decisions.
- Involving pupils in the feedback process → negotiation on the way of assessment.
- Transferring the previous in everyday life → self-control, self-confidence, role playing, ethical dilemmas.

2.2 Definition of culture and cultural groups

First and foremost, it is imperative need to start by mentioning that there have been made numerous attempts to define *culture* mostly by anthropologists and still the complexity of this term remains a common assumption. Culture includes from more internal (e.g., values, beliefs) to more external (e.g., behavioral expressions) core sharing affairs that can perfectly justify its characterization as a “fuzzy concept” (Spencer-Oatey, 2004, p.-4). As Berger and Luckmann (1967) revealed, it is possible to consider culture both into an objective and a subjective reality. More specifically, objective culture includes a set of historical, political, and institutional aspects that have been created and perpetuated by a certain group of people. Additionally, subjective culture refers to individuals’ “worldview” that is the unique perception of facing phenomena in the world, the ability to interact and communicate with others as well as the definition of what is moral or not.

Smedslund (1984) connects the science of psychology with culture. He highlights that socialization into a culture is the process that makes it possible for people to be described,

explained, and predicted. Some of the criteria which drive people to organize themselves into groups were referred from Avruch (1998). For example, from family bonds and race to occupations or political parties, supporting that the more the complexity of the groups' increases, the more potential groups are shaped. Each institutional group provides individuals with different experiences which also contains a sense of culture. Therefore, according to his suggestions, single cultured populations seem to be absent, depending on the intricacy of social organization. That is why he proposes the notion of “subculture(s)”.

Along the same lines, Spencer-Oatey (2004) highlighted that people simultaneously belong to numerous categories and groups regarding characteristics such as their ethnicity, gender, language, religion, and so on. Thus, in many respects, those groups could be referred to as “cultural groups” and as a result, “intercultural” could be used in terms of the interaction among different cultural groups.

According to Schudson (1989), if we consider culture as a constitutional meaning in people's lives and how it affects their activities or their social interactions, then we should focus on cultural function and influence. The impact of cultural meanings could be related not only with culture itself but also with the current conditions both in one's life and environment. Sometimes culture has an impact on people and seems more to a reminder (e.g., based on history) rather than an informer (e.g., new insights), but still, cultural influence moves around retrievability, resonance, and institutional retention. In a broader sense, culture includes a combination of values, beliefs, religious assumptions, and life patterns which are inherited to future generations (Figueroa, 1991), while approaching this term from an externalized aspect, concerns the essence of self and its relationship with others (Adams & Markus, 2001).

On this spot, arises the question of who the “others” or “minorities” are and who belongs to “us” or “the majority” each time. UNESCO (2006) provided an explanation among those terms, perceived as distinguished. More specifically, UNESCO described indigenous people as these people whose generations traditionally lived in a certain region sharing several common living conditions like social and economic characteristics, customs, traditions, cosmovision, building thus, the “majority culture”. Regarding “minorities” the portrayal emerges on people who are often referred to as vulnerable groups characterized by various weaknesses (e.g., living conditions, traumatic experiences). Such components can produce lifestyles and value systems, called the “minority culture” that usually differ or may not be compatible with the corresponding features of the dominant culture. The most crucial issue concerns the way that people value the unique features and the way of life that are represented by each cultural background.

Diversity enhances self-awareness, because learning from people with different cultural backgrounds sharpens self-knowledge, while at the same time promoting the correlation of individuals' life experiences to others who have different ones (Thompson & Cuseo, 2009). The value and the responsibility of education could not be omitted at this point, as through that, children and adolescents can negotiate their attitudes and beliefs on the way they conceive cultural diversity (Gay, 2013).

2.3 Definitions of multicultural(ism) and intercultural(ism)

The world includes a variety of different cultures and languages and as a result, people live, think, and talk through various prisms. Thus, in some cases, words and expressions offer a different meaning and impact. One of these cases concerns the concepts of “multiculturalism” and “interculturalism”. For example, in the Greek language, there is a difference between the prefixes “multi” and “inter” that also causes a difference between these two concepts. The idea of multiculturalism refers to culturally diverse people that co-exist in the same region, while the idea of interculturalism enriches this condition by inserting dialogue and interaction among those people. However, this is not just happening in the Greek context. According to Hill (2007), there is also a prevailing tendency in Europe to reckon with the term of intercultural as both the relationship and interaction between different cultural groups, while at the same time, multicultural, as a less dynamic idea, describes the reality of societies, in which a diversity of cultures prevails. Notably, UNESCO (2007, p.17) separates these two terms by defining multiculturalism as “the culturally diverse nature of human society”, adding to the ethnic dimension the issues of language, religion, and socioeconomics. Furthermore, it clarifies that multiculturalism is a precondition of interculturalism in which dialogical exchange and evolving relations between cultural groups emerge.

It is a fact that a lot of energy has been spent defining the concepts and the limits of multiculturalism and interculturalism over years. Before the present effort to discuss that, some crucial questions are seeking an answer. For instance, in which cultures are we focusing on (one of the hosts or one of the incomings)? Which are the political and social impacts of these concepts? Do we need to separate those terms or by possible overlapping in some areas they could provide a better understanding of cultural diversity? These questions seem to make sense as some researchers (e.g., Goodhart, 2004; Bouchard, 2011) believe that there are vital differences between multiculturalism and interculturalism, while others (e.g., Brahm, 2012) tend to align those or support their coordination (e.g., Zappata – Barrero, 2018).

Bouchard (2011) distinguishes multiculturalism and interculturalism operating in different paradigms. More specifically, multiculturalism serves the “diversity” paradigm, in which the majority culture is not recognized, instead, individuals and groups share a common status and equality in terms of laws. In reverse, interculturalism serves the “duality” paradigm, in which diversity is recognized and regulated as an essential relationship between the cultural minorities and the cultural majority. Goodhart (2004) shares another perspective, considering multiculturalism to overemphasize upon differences than unities of various cultural groups and he also attributes to this concept the favor over minorities and the ignorance of the needs of the majorities. On the contrary, Wieviorka (2012, p. 230) weakens interculturalism as a “vague and much too general” concept, while he strongly supports multiculturalism as the concept that enables each culture to fit into the society and its value is verified by the public authorities.

Some researchers appear as more cautious like Meer and Modood (2012) who report that until interculturalism can be framed by a distinct political perspective - compared to multiculturalism - it can only play a supportive or complementary role to the last one. Likewise, through the multiculturalism concept, Koopmand and Statham (1999) broaden the discussion from a political perspective. The researchers compared the national models of citizenship and the availability of political opportunities that the state provides to the hosting minorities both in Britain and Germany (significant immigration countries of Western and Central Europe). Considering also the diversity of cultural mentality of minorities, the researchers concluded that the behavior of minorities is strongly linked with the manipulations of the state towards them, describing thus a kind of returned behavior.

In a more diplomatic line, Brahm (2012) highlights the discreet fluidness of the two terms, supporting that their comparison fails to provide clear answers. In his research, Brahm, discusses the issues of national identity and dominant culture as these emerge from multiculturalism, concluding that they vary depending on the place and the status of people (e.g., Canada, Australia, Europe). He also implies the need for interculturalism to flourish, invoking that since the concept of multiculturalism has been discussed and criticized from every possible aspect, it needs a label that even if it just paraphrases the essence of its meaning, as a newcomer, it will eventually be more attractive.

Staring at the side where multiculturalism seems to face some difficulties, interculturalism has been called “a policy strategy to teach people to live in-Diversity through contact promotion” (Zapata – Barrero, 2018, p.7). The researcher supports attitudes and behaviors as the elements that shape individuals as citizens. Further, he refers to intercultural citizenship as the learning process providing contact in the existing contextual conditions.

More precisely, contact here is presented as the mean that highlights the advantages of diversity, while the policy of interculturalism focuses on public benefits and on the way that contact could be productive. Although the researcher favors the concept of interculturalism, he is convinced that the debate between these two terms is meaningless and suggests that the supporters of both concepts should collaborate to reach the common goal of cohesive and creative societies.

Despite the supporters' arguments concerning multiculturalism and interculturalism, both approaches reflect a pluralistic context emphasizing respect for cultural diversity which is a fundamental condition for the operation of modern societies. Furthermore, both approaches recognize the upcoming challenges that societies are facing due to global mobility, seeking also for solutions. What makes the difference between those concepts emerges on the social and political background on which these approaches are growing and implemented.

2.4 Intercultural contact – acculturation

Having already discussed the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism, it is of high importance to consider the possible outcomes of intercultural contact and its' impact on society by examining the idea of cultural diversity. Since culture includes not only the concepts of ethnicity, language, religion, and traditions, but also peoples' attitudes and beliefs, that makes it even more compelling for someone to define the condition of cultural diversity. UNESCO (2009) detects the parallel impact of globalization both on the trend towards homogenization and on its strong contribution to shaping culturally diverse societies. More concretely, the dynamic process through which cultures are changing while remaining themselves in the framework of openness and mutual contribution is related to cultural diversity itself. Since cultures could not be described as self-determined and passive, but they are overlapping across time and history, intercultural contact is more than a historic reality. This is more of an experience for then and now.

Following the directions of Parekh (2000) who approaches cultural diversity as a value rather than a fact and as a facilitator for people to reflect on their own culture, it is also being accepted that cultural diversity is a requisite for a growing cross-cultural dialogue. However, a skeptical way of thinking arises from his work, while he supports both the loyalty towards the background that people acquire from their own culture and the freedom of people to select cultural facets into the multicultural context they live. In any case, when people from various cultural backgrounds are called to share common ground the concept of acculturation appears.

During the state of intercultural contact, all involved cultural groups are experiencing cultural changes in their patterns of routines and values, which has been defined as acculturation (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936). To enrich this theory, Graves (1967) introduced the concept of psychological acculturation which captures all the changes on a psychological level when individuals from various cultural groups experience intercultural contact. This is a perpetual process concerning both the incoming and the host populations and it is meaningful for the determination of social adjustment (Berry & Sam, 2013).

As stated by Berry (1997), plural societies include various cultural groups whose diversity is mainly based on voluntariness (e.g., the occasion under which each cultural group experiences acculturation), mobility (e.g., incomings or hosts), and permanence (e.g., permanent, or temporary settling). In any case, all groups experience a common process of adaptation to the new multicultural context. Berry extended his research by shaping an acculturation model based on two dimensions: *cultural maintenance* and *cultural contact*. The dimension of cultural maintenance concerns the extent to which people value the preservation of their cultural characteristics and their identity, while cultural contact refers to the extent to which people value the interaction with other cultural groups (Berry, 1997). The way that people behave in these dimensions regulates their viewpoints into a multicultural society and drives to four acculturation strategies (Berry, 2006).

The following strategies depict the acculturation pursuits of the incoming population: (a) *integration*, is attributed when individuals wish to participate in the cultural context of the broader culture, while at the same time they maintain the tones of their own culture; (b) *assimilation*, points out the willingness of individuals to get involved with the dominant culture, while they seem reluctant to maintain their cultural characteristics; (c) *separation*, is defined when individuals prioritize their cultural characteristics and they wish to avoid interaction with the dominant culture; (d) *marginalization*, is referred to individuals who seem no interested both in the maintenance of their cultural characteristics and in the involvement with the dominant group (Berry, 2006).

Respectively, in the following strategies, the acculturation expectations of the dominant population are revealed: (a) *multiculturalism*, is framed when the dominant culture not only accepts the maintenance of the incomings' unique cultural characteristics but also encourages their active involvement in the host society; (b) *melting pot*, describes the reluctance of the dominant culture to accept the preservation of the incomings' cultural identity, searching also for ways to fully assimilate them into the host society; (c) *segregation*, is referred to the assumption of the dominant culture that the incomings retain their cultural characteristics, while not favoring interaction with the host society; (d) *exclusion*, is imposed when the dominant culture neither favors the preservation of the incomings' cultural characteristics nor facilitates interaction (Berry, 2008).

In terms of intercultural contact, individuals might need to negotiate their behavioral orchestration in the new cultural context, which requires the overpassing of some patterns that are not suitable anymore (Berry, 1992). Sometimes, when serious problems are taking place, anxiety combined with the fear that results from losing the inner connection from our own culture, known as “culture shock” (Oberg, 1960) or “acculturative stress” (Berry, 1970), could be experienced by individuals who cannot be flexible with their behavioral patterns. When various cultures get in contact in bidirectional phenomena with psychological factors to be also involved, then complexity seems to be the outcome that research is called to investigate. Both the exploration of the incomings and the hosts is of high interest and often the comparison or fit among them, that inevitably occurs, has an impact on the behavioral profile of all populations (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault & Senecal, 1997). However, the present study focuses on the attitudes of the dominant population regarding acculturation, which seems to be determinant for the acculturation outcome.

2.5 Transformative pedagogy

The ongoing acculturation observed in pluralistic societies constantly creates needs to build bridges of communication and coordination among people, especially the youth. Challenges are always on board through this process. Nonetheless, pedagogy and its contents can form the ethical basis for the transformation that is needed for a democratic society (Greene, 1993). The content itself could be far away from reality and pedagogy without critical thinking may promote temporary results. To incorporate the content with pedagogy, active learning and critical engagement are needed (Nagda 2003). Kolb (1984) highlighted the value of students’ living experiences and their personal and social reflection through the active learning cognitive theory. More specifically, he suggested that the combination of activities, simulations, case studies, videos, and group discussions are experiences that engage students in an in-depth reflective process, making learning a transformational and ongoing procedure.

Pre-service teachers often tend to view teaching from a judging aspect, seeking immediate practical methods and applicable results (Goodlad, 1990). Therefore, it is a vital need to involve pre-service teachers in self-transformation procedures and as a result to evolve their self-awareness, which is valuable for their teaching role (Ukpokodu, 2007).

Each one of us during our lives we have formed our frame of reference, including ideologies, cultural biases, attitudes, habits, moral systems, interpersonal links, and fixed schemas that are determinant for our personalities. This is where transformative learning is trying to intervene,

negotiating with the problematic frames of reference, and provoking inclusive and reflective emotional changes where needed (Mezirow, 2003). However, according to Dewey (1966) reflection is not a simple process as it requires energetic, continuous, and careful consideration of one's beliefs or perceived as knowledge concerning their supporting bases and to the future outcomes that they could lean to. He also illustrated reflection with the characteristics of open-mindedness (e.g., to notice alternative views and accept the questioning of any kind of beliefs), responsibility (e.g., to actively search for knowledge and truth), and wholeheartedness (e.g., to control uncertainties and make critical self-assessment). Consequently, changing the frames of reference demands a critical view and conscious plans that create new ways of inner construction (Mezirow, 1997).

Since we are going through an online era and it is acknowledged that transformative pedagogy enables students to the critical examination of their norms engaging them to social issues, it is of high interest to discover the ways that transformative pedagogy could be delivered in online cases. Meyers (2008) suggests effective ways for faculty members who teach online courses concerning transformative pedagogical directions. More specifically, he proposes (a) the creation of a safe environment including trust-building, positive reinforcement, and support to the students; (b) the encouragement of students to think about their experiences, examine their assumptions, and imagine alternatives; (c) the use of appropriate strategies that promote students' participation such as exploiting the potential of the internet (e.g., audio, online material); (d) the posing of realistic problems depicting social aspects; (e) the encouraging of active social change. As a result, online courses could serve as facilitators in terms of communication, collaboration, and critical examination of life patterns in such a way that students could be enabled to actively participate and experience both cognitive and emotional change.

2.6 Culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogy

An extended view of guidance towards a kind of pedagogy that embraces cultural diversity and its role in multicultural groups is considered crucial. Culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and culturally responsive (Gay, 2002) pedagogies attempt to fill this gap. Although both approaches are often overlapping by sharing the rationale of using students' cultural characteristics as conduits for the relationships that are developed in classrooms, they seem to follow different orientations regarding the ways they support these relationships.

Ladson-Billings (1995) introduced culturally relevant pedagogy to challenge teaching and encourage teachers to reflect on their relationships with students, the contents of the curriculum, and the impact on society. Through an ethnographic work with teachers of African-American students,

the researcher concluded that culturally relevant teachers should meet three criteria: (a) the ability to help students to develop themselves academically; (b) the willingness to encourage students' cultural competence, and (c) the development of critical sociopolitical awareness. Further, some additional concepts make culturally responsive pedagogy a distinct approach. These concepts concern teachers' reflection on their perception of self and others, social relations, knowledge of psychological perspectives, and culturally relevant theories. Even though this approach is student-centered, an ethic of care approaching the concept of empathy is also detected. Finally, it is important to refer that there are also critical and transformative insights on this approach, and it seems to address a group as a community, moving beyond interpersonal relationships to action outside of the class.

A more teacher-directed approach based on the comprehensive research of Gay (2002), named culturally responsive pedagogy was taken into consideration in the last decades. This approach was based on many years of experience with teachers working on multicultural classes, teacher education, and the content of curricula. It addresses culturally diverse students by using their unique cultural characteristics and perspectives as facilitators to teach them more productively. Five main elements emerged from this approach: (a) the development of a cultural knowledge base regarding the diversity of various ethnic groups (e.g., traditions, values); (b) the encouragement of culturally responsive curriculum design; (c) the caring of group cohesion creating positive relationships; (d) the focusing on cross-cultural communication and (e) the matching of teaching and learning "cultures" (e.g., flexibility on cultural alternatives and incorporated examples).

This approach aims to create schools that will be responsive to culturally diverse students. Therefore, teachers should be able to possess teaching content, the knowledge of how to use these contents, and useful skills to include all the students efficiently. Teachers should also be aware of the multicultural potentials, the deficiencies of curricula, and institutional materials to make the necessary modifications for the improvement of teaching quality. That provides them with the critical consciousness to take advantage of pedagogical means (e.g., symbols, mottoes, images, awards) to develop students' knowledge, critical thinking, and values. Accordingly, preparation programs for culturally responsive teaching focus not only on the ways that communication styles of various ethnic groups reflect their cultural values and build learning behaviors but also on how to adapt groups interactions to better include them (Gay, 2002).

When the two approaches are considered together, they illustrate a more completed professional profile of teachers who address multicultural groups. Although there are different orientations regarding the relationships shaped in the classroom and the addressing target group (e.g., teachers or students), both approaches highlight classroom reality, interaction outcomes, and practical appliances. Therefore, it is of utter importance to focus on their common ground and take advantage

of the valuable characteristics provided by each approach to step toward an intercultural teaching approach.

2.7 Driving from intercultural education to intercultural competence

Following the debate among multiculturalism and interculturalism and having illustrated not only their mostly geographical and political points of difference but also their highlights, the focus on the European aspect of intercultural education will be discussed. During the migration phases of post-war Europe until now, this phenomenon has changed a lot and has been also influenced by political developments and educational policies. Despite the common European reality of pluralistic societies, countries in Europe maintain extensive autonomy in the education field and as a result, the actions carried out serve mainly national priorities (Faas, Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014).

Zooming into the educational context and taking into consideration a meta-analysis of 99 studies (Roorda, Koomen, Split & Oort, 2011) that depicts the positive impact of well-established student-teacher relationships both on students' school engagement and their academic performance, then it makes sense to focus on the value of teachers' attitudes and behavior. Further, accepting the insights of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997), beliefs are considered as individual cognitive perceptions, also having continuous interaction with environmental factors, and thus, their value is highly recognized. Based on this theory, there are also interactions between one's personal beliefs, behaviors, and the external environment, while the outcomes are also depending on the circumstances. Consequently, the relationship between teachers and their students is grounded on teachers' beliefs (Ullucci, 2007). These beliefs can also be reflected in the learning environment teachers create for their students (Nelson & Guerra, 2014) and they can also affect the reception of knowledge, the recognition of a situation as problematic, and the kind of actions to respond to. Respectively, teachers need the appropriate time to reflect on their beliefs and realize the potential consequences they may have (Fives & Buehl, 2016). Targeting pre-service teachers' beliefs on cultural diversity is both a challenge for the design of training programs and a meaningful domain to focus on (Civitillo, Juang & Schachner, 2018). This is only one of the reasons that this field, called intercultural education, is valued. However, how could we define it?

It is generally accepted that this intercultural education is not just an aspect of education, instead, it is a whole topic that concerns both the teaching and the learning process of all courses and enriches education with its' international multiple perspectives (Coulby, 2006). Although the concept of intercultural education is rooted in multicultural education, it broadened its horizons away from the static view of cultures and their differences to the dynamic aspect of cultures' competencies under

the state of contact. Its characterization as a “Copernican revolution” (Portera, 1998, p. 209) in the educational system is not random at all but expresses the idea of innovation through this term. More specifically, this kind of education could be illustrated by various forms such as the education of sentiments, listening, and dialogue, understanding, pluralism, legality, peace, and conflict resolution. Therefore, intercultural education should be acknowledged as a didactical approach that holds an international sight and does not distinguish between “foreigners” and “natives”. (Portera, 1998).

More officially, intercultural education was introduced in Europe in the 1980s under the direction of the Council of Europe, as a vehicle for promoting human rights, mutual respect, and intercultural dialogue, while being also against racism and xenophobia (Holm & Zilliacus, 2009). This “applied social science” (Bleszynska, 2008, p. 537) engages individuals and social groups into transformational processes and its aspirations can be discussed in three directions:

- (a) *Macro-social/global*: includes the awareness of multiple cultures, the cultivation of respect for other cultures as well as human solidarity.
- (b) *Mezzo-social/national*: supports cultural diversity and prevents intercultural disputes while it encourages conflict resolution.
- (c) *Micro-social/individual*: attacks xenophobia and prejudices by the development of understanding and intercultural competencies.

To address these aspirations Bleszynska (2008) suggested various competencies that individuals should develop through intercultural programs of any educational level. More precisely, she referred on:

- (1) Raising sensitivity to cultural differences and developing a sense of unity.
- (2) Enriching knowledge of one’s own culture and other cultures as well.
- (3) Discussing psychological issues regarding intercultural contact and acculturation.
- (4) Developing intercultural communication.
- (5) Practicing aspects of intercultural conflict resolution.
- (6) Focusing on specialized issues such as emotional evaluation, counseling, and dealing with cultural diversity.

The Council of Europe (2008) issuing a White Paper highlighted intercultural dialogue as a means to reach a balance between cultural diversity and social cohesion, focusing on the reinforcement of human rights, universal values and emphasizing the significant role of teachers in that. One year later, Bennett (2009) argued that intercultural education is not a one-way process. Instead, he suggested that there are concepts also involved such as intercultural sensitivity and cultural competence among others. More precisely, intercultural sensitivity refers to the kind of perception of cultural differences and the level of criticism of one’s culture, while intercultural

competence is related to that kind of behavior that is appropriate and effective in different cultural contexts. Further, higher levels of intercultural sensitivity could lead to increased intercultural competence, transforming this way intercultural education into a meaningful procedure.

The development of intercultural competencies is initially based on social justice (Cochran-Smith, 2010) and life skills (World Health Organization, 1997), the cultivation of which is often taken for granted. However, it seems that individuals are not sufficiently equipped with life skills to respond to the rapid social changes and the contemporary demands of culturally diverse societies. Still, which is the definition of “life skills” and valued as high contributing for resilience and social cohesion? World Health Organization (WHO) in 1997, highlighted a core set of skills that promote the well-being of children and adolescents, supporting also interaction into culturally diverse societies: *decision making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, international relationship skills, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and stress.*

A well-designed and structured educational program (EP) in intercultural education requires a lot to be considered (Burden et al., 2004). On a psychological basis, the tripartite model of cross-cultural skilled counseling developed by Sue and his colleagues (1982) is a remarkable starting point. This model delineates three competence domains to assist professionals: *beliefs/attitudes* (e.g., cultural awareness of personal values, biases, and influences), *knowledge* (e.g., information and understanding of sociopolitical systems and possible restrictions other people are facing), and *skills* (e.g., various strategies of verbal and non-verbal responses). The same researchers also suggest a curriculum stimulating not only the cognitive awareness but also the emotional one, being assertive about including the development of specific areas such as self-concept, empathy, and the specific characteristics of various cultural groups.

An extension of Sue and partners’ model in defining and assessing intercultural competence (ICC) more focused on the educational field, is the one of Deardorff (2006), who involved a panel of 23 higher education administrators in this process. This model, known as the process model of intercultural competence (ICC), served as a foundation for the development of participants’ ICC during the design of the present program. This model recognizes the complexity and the lifelong process of developing ICC, which is an evolving concept and could be described as ones’ ability to increase cultural self-awareness, alerting his/her cultural perspective, and creating ways to bridge the differences across cultures (Hammer, 2012).

The ICC model emphasizes the role of *attitudes* (e.g., openness, curiosity, respect), *skills* (e.g., listening, observing, analyzing), *knowledge* (e.g., cultural worldviews), *internal* (e.g., adaptability, empathy), and *external outcomes* (effective communication, behavior) in an ongoing cycle. These

five elements were categorized in an individual (attitudes, knowledge, and skills) and interaction (internal and external outcomes) level with the intercultural competence cyclical development also leaving students the chance to skip one or more elements. However, there is the clarification describing that to achieve more effective intercultural interactions it is important to start developing ourselves internally (e.g., attitudes, knowledge, skills) before moving to the external outcomes of the effective interaction with others (Deardorff, 2006).

During the last decades, teachers' education is based on developing models on explaining intercultural competences (Byram, Nichols & Stevens, 2001; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2007) and their common grounds are stated into five main areas: (a) communication; (b) cooperation; (c) understanding (myself and others), (d) action and (e) evaluation. Since not only intercultural experiences are mutual and life-altering but also those complex abilities are involved in the building of intercultural competences (Fantini, 2007), the conclusion that emerges is that intercultural competences lie in a multidimensional definition and may receive a different approach from each organization. There are various fields in which a teacher should be trained in the context of intercultural education such as teaching methods, strategies, and skills to feel interculturally competent. There is, however, a general framework according to Tarozzi (2014), namely, "intercultural ethos" in which all these characteristics could be organized, driving thus to a professional vibe. This framework implies the quality of the pedagogical approach through which teachers could transmit their knowledge to children, providing social equality. Therefore, teachers as "public" (Tarozzi, 2014), "cultural" and "transformative" (Freire, 2018) intellectuals should be committed to their ethical responsibility to create more equitable and resilient societies. Nevertheless, to embrace their mission they need inspiring and organized training programs.

2.8 Intercultural education in PE and sports

A critical point to focus on is how to drive the educational and coaching staff to approach respectively and productively all the children. Starting by defining PE and sports, a common sense of emotional, cognitive, and psychological development emerges from both contexts, especially when it comes to childhood. More specifically, PE is a subject "designed to develop motor skills, knowledge, and behaviors for healthy, active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence", according to SHAPE America (2015, p. 3). Additionally, sport is defined as "all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels" according to the Council of Europe (2001, article 2).

PE teachers and coaches both in schools and sport clubs respectively, by using their knowledge and skills, guide, and support children in their path. There are components like gender, racial, nutritional, and dressing issues that make the role of sports professionals even more compelling when it comes to multicultural contexts (Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993; Gieß-Stüber, 2010). In such contexts, experiencing strangeness is a routine both for the incoming and the host populations, as they realize that their body or sports culture is not unique (Gieß-Stüber, 2010). This has been called ‘bodily strangerhood’ by Bröskamp (2008). More interestingly, knowing that the perception of the body and its’ practices differ among various cultures, embarrassing situations could emerge, especially in sports since body activity and expression are at the forefront. Of course, sports access also varies among various cultural contexts, and as a result, in some cases, social exclusion and injustice are to be raised.

Since sport professionals are aware of their contribution to social inclusion and interculturality, they do not need to acquire completely new skills and knowledge, rather than to strengthen and expand the existing ones. It might be better explained by the phrase of the “invisible obvious” from Smedslund (1984) when he characterized the culture, which implies not only the recognition of the existing cultural setting but the understanding of the circumstances beneath that. Thus, the quality of professionalism could be described by sports professionals’ sensitivity and competence to control the social reality in their class as well as their ability to explain the certain cultural characteristics that may arise and cause concerns (e.g., Muslim girls – swimming lessons) (Grimminger, 2011).

Others’ “strange” characteristics could be threatening when individuals cannot face their cultural systems and norms as relative, thus conflicts could emerge. The strategies that people cultivate to resolve their conflicts are based on the moral standards of respect for anything that could be considered as “different” (Bender-Szymanski, 2000). This is one of the most important points to be highlighted by sports professionals, who are mainly responsible to help children resolve their conflicts and cultivating a respectful way of behaving toward each other.

In conclusion, intercultural education frames the way of teaching and behaving in multicultural groups and brings about methods, strategies, and perspectives to improve the provided educational services. Sports educators should thus be prepared to adequately play their role in a multicultural society. Firstly, by realizing their own biases, becoming more receptive to the aspects of others, learning about new methods and approaches, and finally being able to reflect and assess their efforts. This is a demanding process and needs to be well organized in lifelong educational forms/training. Universities could be described as ideal contexts in this endeavor.

2.9 The EDU:PACT project and the designed online course

A common reality in most European countries is that sport educators work with heterogeneous groups regarding their ethnic, cultural, and linguistic background. However, both PE teachers and coaches have not received adequate training in intercultural education based on sports. Research of the last decade reveals that many PE teachers and coaches are unprepared to respond to culturally diverse groups as their professional level is limited regarding their self-awareness, their knowledge, and their skills on the spot (Grimminger, 2011; Toms, Reding & Jones-Fosu, 2019).

To contribute to this gap, the “Intercultural Education through Physical Activity, Coaching, and Training” (EDU:PACT) project was designed and implemented from 2018 to 2021 (<http://edupact.sporteducation.eu/about>). This project was co-funded by the Erasmus⁺ program and the European Union and included a consortium of the following nine organizations with additional support from the European Network of Sport Education (ENSE):

- University of Vienna
- German Sport University of Cologne
- University of Southern Denmark
- University of Rome (Foro Italico)
- University of Thessaly
- International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE - UK)
- Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sport
- Right to Play (international NGO)
- Vienna Institute of International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC - international NGO).

During the project, a bottom-up research approach (Haig, 2013) was used to investigate the context, the facilitators, and the challenges of intercultural education across the countries-partners (Austria, Germany, Denmark, Italy, and Greece). At the end of 2018, a total of 39 sport educators and 18 experts on the field were participating in focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews following common guidelines for all the country partners. After the initial mapping of the needs existing into each country partner, the consortium developed, pilot tested, partially implemented (because of the Covid-19 pandemic), and evaluated a training module for PE teachers and coaches to engage them in intercultural education within their sessions. This module (Reynard, Moustakas & Petry, 2020) addresses individuals who are called to train future PE teachers and coaches in intercultural education through sports and includes the following four distinct units, each one of those is divided into a theoretical and a practical part:

- *Unit 1 (Better understanding of myself)*: Being able to reflect on one's identity as a person (e.g., biases, stereotypes, attitudes) and as a professional (e.g., knowledge, skills), while realizing the impact of cultural and social dynamics in the shape of this identity.
- *Unit 2 (Better understanding of others)*: Exploring the background (e.g., attitudes, values, and needs) of others and improving communication and leading skills.
- *Unit 3 (Planning and delivering sessions)*: Understanding of key points regarding the design and the implementation of intercultural learning sessions by adopting various methods and activities. Further, improving the conflict resolution skills.
- *Unit 4 (Monitoring and evaluation)*: Realizing the importance of monitoring and evaluation both to oneself and others and creating strategies to define focal problems and explore them.

The University of Thessaly was part of this project and people from its staff contributed by firstly receiving specialized training to share it later with pre-service PE teachers. More specifically, an optional course named “Practicum in intercultural education through physical education” was designed for third-year students and conducted by the researcher during the spring semester of 2020-2021. This course was based on the EDU:PACT project, maintaining its’ general guidelines such as the structure of the theoretical part and most of the suggested practical activities – shared by the NGOs: Right to Play and VIDC - while it was also enriched with additional theoretical information and practical activities resulting from the literature review that carried out by the researcher. Both theoretical and practical parts were adjusted to the local cultural context and the unexpected current circumstances (e.g., Covid-19 pandemic – online process). The course lasted 14 weeks (3 hours per week, in total 42 hours) and was structured with power point presentations and group discussions on practical activities (e.g., experience sharings, role-playing activities, storytelling, video watching/commenting on sports activities). In Table 5 there is a more detailed description of a weekly organization of the course for both the theoretical and the practical part of each unit. Finally, the main goal of this course was to encourage future PE teachers and coaches to value their contribution in multicultural contexts and drive them into inner reflective experiences regarding the challenges of intercultural education.

2.10 Unit 1 (Better understanding of myself)

Key elements: personal attitudes, stereotypes, self-understanding, self-reflection, professional identity, interpersonal identity.

2.9.1 Theoretical part

This unit offers an introduction to the current situation of global mobility and forced movements of people that also have an impact on Europe and especially Greece, as a main path to the European continent. Participants were engaged in group discussions to share their perspectives on cultural diversity and were introduced to intercultural education values. After the initial information on issues of immigration and multiculturalism, the next step was to drive participants to negotiate their perspectives and biases to explore themselves in depth. In general, they were asked to evaluate the concept of “self”, which is represented by a combination of their experiences, beliefs, and values through dynamic relations between self-reflection, self-knowledge, and the social world (Morin, 2011). This exploration makes, even more, compelling the need of defining oneself.

To achieve that, concepts like self-awareness, self-regulation, and value systems were discussed to shape the idea of “personal self” (Morin, 2011). Additionally, processes such as cognitive reevaluation and expressing managing (Zaki & Williams, 2013) that drive to emotional growth were also on the agenda of this unit to frame the concept of oneself concerning others or else the “interpersonal self”. To this extent, the concept of “professional self” was deliberated, which is shaped by personal experiences and values. It requires an ongoing procedure for someone to understand how to build professional awareness and competencies. A multicultural setting may challenge the beliefs, perspectives, and even self-confidence that someone needs to respond to. It could also require the revision of one’s identity and the need to negotiate with his/her values (Karousiou, Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2019).

To provide participants with knowledge on the specific multicultural context that exists in schools, sport clubs, and generally in the Greek society recently, demographic, and cultural characteristics were presented. More specifically, information regarding the religion of most of the minorities (e.g., Muslimism), nutritional and cultural habits. Other significant domains that participants were engaged to discuss in this unit refer to stereotypes, prejudices, and discriminative behaviors. People are used to shaping biases and judging situations or other people “that cannot be included in the description of the physical properties of the stimuli” (Tajfel, & Wilkes, 1963, p. 101). This is happening in various social or professional circumstances in which people tend to build upon “stereotypical thinking”, by using existing views to interpret complicated situations and align those with the already expected ones (Reynolds, Turner & Haslam, 2000). According to Tajfel and Wilkes (1963), there are explanations why people have this tendency (e.g., the power of others – habits, need

for simplicity – categorization, need to elevate oneself against others). However, stereotypes are just the beginning of a spectrum that could lead to negative behaviors.

Prejudices are concepts perceived as much interrelated to stereotypes. Although stereotypes and prejudices are often confused, they are different terms. Prejudices are in line with beliefs that are supported and accepted as real. The main difference between these terms lies in the fact that stereotypes (e.g., views) are products of unconscious control, while prejudices (e.g., beliefs) are below cognitive control. The elimination of the habit to divide people into categories is not a simple process and relies on motivation and personal effort (Devine, 1989). Intercultural education is a context suffering from cultural or gender stereotypes and at the same time a context that can offer scientific data to challenge people's attitudes and provide the right tools for an internal transaction (Anderson & Boylan, 2017). This is the reason why this certain domain of learning how and why people use to categorize the world was also included in the first Unit, as a base to shake views and promote personal and professional growth.

There was also information presented regarding acculturation and its' strategies both for the incoming populations and the hosts. Finally, the contexts of PE and sports were introduced as key structures for the inclusion of diverse populations and participants were discussing the opportunities and the challenges that might emerge through these contexts.

Right to Play (2008, 2012), one of the partners of the EDU:PACT project, is also a global organization aiming to educate and encourage children and youth to use the power of sports and physical activity productively. In so far, this organization introduced the method R-C-A (Reflect-Connect-Apply) based on the experiential learning theory of Kolb (1984). This was the prevailing methodological approach following the practical activities of every unit. According to this method the experience that someone gets into physical activity or sports context should be discussed based on the following three steps:

- 1) R → Reflect: discuss what happened during the activity/game (e.g., learning new vocabulary, sharing perspectives and feelings, respect for the ideas of others – How did you feel during this activity?).
- 2) C → Connect: compare and relate the experience to previous ones in terms of knowledge, feelings, and behavior (e.g., How could this experience affect your point of view?).
- 3) A → Apply: discover ways to use this experience in everyday life in a beneficial way (e.g., How could you use what you experienced during this activity in real-life situations?)

Table 1 _Main theoretical areas of Unit 1

| |
|---|
| Globalization – Global mobility – Culturally diverse societies |
| Multiculturalism – Interculturalism (in the Greek language there is a difference) |
| Intercultural education and its’ goals |
| The current situation in Europe and Greece |
| Facilitators and barriers of PE and sports as tools for inclusion |
| Key elements for a training program on intercultural education |
| Acculturation – strategies |
| Personal self – Interpersonal self – Professional self |
| R-C-A method for leading discussions |
| Strategies for dividing groups |
| Stereotypes – prejudices – discrimination behaviors |

2.9.2 Practical part

The detailed templates that describe the practical activities of this Unit are presented in Appendix 1.

2.11 Unit 2 (*Better understanding of others*)

Key elements: communication, collaboration, leadership, empathy, active listening.

2.10.1 Theoretical part

This unit provides participants the opportunity not only for developing their communication skills but also to build fruitful environments for mutual understanding. Sports are the tools that when used with the appropriate management, facilitate the cultivation of life skills, including social and emotional skills (Camiré, Trudel & Forneris, 2012; Gould & Carson, 2008). These skills help people to adjust to their living environments and could be divided into four categories: (a) behavioral (e.g., communication skills); (b) cognitive (e.g., decision making); (c) interpersonal (e.g., collaborative skills); (d) intrapersonal (e.g., self-awareness) (Danish, Forneris, Hodge & Heke, 2004).

One of the most important capacities which facilitates comprehension and was highlighted during this unit is empathy. According to Decety and Jackson (2004), empathy is a method of how to better understand the emotional condition of others in parallel with emotional self-consciousness.

Understanding others' indicators, helps people adapt to various environments and deal with social relationships. Empathy is constructed when it is combined with self-awareness and self-regulation. However, empathy is not necessarily followed by actions witnessing the level of emotional understanding of others. During this unit, participants had the chance to talk about empathy, its' characteristics, and the behaviors that block its power (e.g., making comparisons, judgments, lack of observation) during the frame of healthy communication (Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015).

A skill that is also related to group development is active - or by borrowing the phrase of Rogers & Farson (2021) - "sensitive listening". This is a way of listening to others more effectively, by providing fewer arguments against ones' expressions and generally becoming more willing to associate with others' points of view. By listening in everyday life some behaviors are usually adopted, while should be avoided instead if we wish to encourage others to express themselves. Interrupting, questioning, or advising are some of those impeding behaviors. However, according to the writers, there is a lot we could do both to facilitate the expression of our interlocutors and draw safer conclusions about their talking. More specifically, listening for hidden messages that complete the whole meaning and trying to understand the value and the potential impact of a certain situation on the speaker, are behaviors that respond to active listeners.

Empathy, as well as active listening, are skills that contribute to the productive construction of communication. Therefore, during the delivery of this unit, the concept of communication and its' special dimensions (e.g., explaining, reinforcing, reflecting, questioning, non-verbal signs) were initially identified (Hargie, 1997) and discussed among the participants. Furthermore, motivational interviewing techniques were used to expand communication competences (Miller & Rollnick, 1991). This individual-centered counseling style promotes inner and motivating change in individuals. Additionally, it can help PE teachers and coaches to guide their trainees to explore their insights by asking the right questions with an open style. This technique is called "change talk" and is based upon empathy, active listening, reflecting, paraphrasing, and mirroring of what has been said in such a way. It is used to elicit participants' intrinsic motivation for change and help them provide on their own a menu of possible solutions to their problems (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). More specifically, Souders (2020) outlined the communication techniques that are used based on motivational interviewing as follows: (a) open-ended questions, (b) affirming, (c) reflective listening, and (d) summarizing. Participants, after attending the theoretical part of this method, were engaged in groups into practical activities based on these techniques for better understanding.

Working as a group is not an easy process. In this unit, cooperation is also a basic domain that participants are welcome to reflect on. It is a fact that teamwork in groups with various values, habits, approaches, and generally sport cultures is a challenging process and requires a lot of attention.

Participants throughout this unit are exploring the ways of creating a positive learning environment to improve the cognitive, physical, social, and affective skills of children (Dyson & Casey, 2016) since they first realize that contact itself is not enough to create intercultural education (Perry & Southwell, 2011). Tuckman (1965), attempted to identify team-development process approaching both challenges and opportunities that may arise and concluded in four main stages:

- (a) *Forming* → the first contact of the group members is setting as well as the common goals, while the tone of collaboration among them is established.
- (b) *Storming* → participants not only sharing their ideas and inputs but also their disagreements. In this stage, the initial goals and rules are tested while the group members may be polarized.
- (c) *Norming* → potential unwillingness is resolved in this stage; relationships are renovated, and team groups establish new standards.
- (d) *Performing* → groups' cohesiveness is becoming the tool for productivity and structural issues supporting the performance of the group.

The familiarization with the stage mentioned above is important for PE teachers and coaches to have an initial consideration of their group members' relationships as well as become more flexible regarding their approaching styles.

Going deeper to enrich participants' understanding of various perceptions towards diversity, or else towards "the others", the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) of Bennett (1996) was also discussed during this unit. This model supports that the experiences on multicultural contexts are defined by the way individuals have shaped the boundaries between themselves and others in a range from the most ethnocentric (denial) to the most ethnorelative (integration) stage (Bennett, 2017) as follows:

Denial → Intercultural contact is not desirable; people consider themselves as superior to others who are more perceived as "strangers".

Defense → Criticism to others prevails at this stage especially for social issues, while stereotypical thinking is at the forefront.

Minimization → Cultural differences are diminishing as greater attention is paid to the importance of common elements. People at this stage focus more on similarities, thus highlighting the estimation of the differences.

Acceptance → People at this stage are more curious for diversity in a way of searching for relative information, however, this does not imply agreement, as judging the "different" is still on board.

Adaptation → Empathy signs are appearing at this stage, while the concept of identity is negotiated from various aspects.

Integration → The way one experiences self-concept expands to include different cultural perspectives.

The aim of discussing this model with the participants of the present course was for them to have the chance to reflect on various perspectives and be aware of behaviors that might show up in a future professional environment. To this extent, comparing different mindsets would help them to become familiar with various possible aspects and build an integrative teaching style.

One of the subjects that also analyzed in this unit, was effective leadership which is the outcome of an ongoing process framed by self-education, self-reflection, and building upon experiences (Bass & Bass, 2009). Even though there is not one universally recognized effective leadership style, since there are a lot of theories explaining the qualities of both leaders and followers (Cherry, 2019), there are some characteristics (Naylor, 1999; Amanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015) largely accepted that shape an effective leader. According to the researchers, vision, provided motivation, encouragement, creativity, flexibility, and innovation are some of those characteristics.

Participants during this unit were engaged in group discussions to arise the characteristics they prioritize as important and thus, shape what is called “an effective leader”. Subsequently, there was a discussion with the members of all groups and after the mutual sharing of ideas, the theoretical background was presented focused more on the concept of shared leadership (Pearce et al., 2003) with a multicultural nuance (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012). Further, the previous reports on the DMIS model (Bennett, 2017) as well as the emphasis on problem-solving, inspiration, and interaction, aimed to facilitate participants to gain a much better view of these certain theoretical aspects (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012).

The idea behind the process of analyzing in such a way the concept of leadership is that the combination of self-reflection, group discussions, and presentation of the theoretical background of leadership, provides the opportunity for self-evaluation, while it also increases creativity and motivation for shaping future effective environments in educational contexts.

Finally, during this unit – understanding of others - and based on the fact that the “others”, at least in the Greek recent context, were mainly refugee children (UNHCR, 2015), most of them psychologically traumatized (Sirin & Sirin, 2015), it was considered vital to include in this unit information regarding post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Participants were informed about this mental health condition and its’ possible symptoms (e.g., flashbacks, severe anxiety, concentrating difficulties) following the directions of Yehuda (2002). Since schools and sport clubs are places where children interact and express themselves emotionally, socially, and physically, special knowledge on

possible abnormal reactions and suggestions for PE teachers or coaches to help, were judged as crucial. Therefore, the possible portraits of children experiencing PTSD along with the ways of dealing with those by sport educators were deliberated, following the suggestions of UNHCR (2019).

Table 2 _Main theoretical areas of Unit 2

| |
|---------------------------------------|
| Life skills |
| Empathy |
| Active listening |
| Motivational interviewing |
| Cooperation |
| Intercultural sensitivity |
| Leadership |
| Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) |

2.10.2 Practical part

The detailed templates that describe the practical activities of this Unit are presented in Appendix 2.

2.12 Unit 3 (Design and implementation of intercultural sessions)

Key elements: diversity management, teamwork activities, conflict resolution, positive reinforcement, teachable moments, presentation of culturally diverse games.

2.11. 1 Theoretical part

The two previous units are preparing participants firstly to be aware of themselves, by having an inner look at their insights and then evolving their communication skills to effectively interact with others. This unit refers to a more practical version of delivering intercultural sessions through PE and sport, while also providing a more in-depth understanding of behavioral issues. Initially in this unit, participants were enabled to brainstorm and consider the concept of conflict, its forms, its causes as well as the possible outcomes, while different aspects emerged. The concept of peace and the strategies of conflict resolution according to UNESCO (2005), was also presented to the participants,

to appreciate the need for exploring deeper the causes of a conflict situation, instead of trying to control it. Furthermore, under the light of Search for Common Ground (2003), participants were called to discuss the behaviors that people may adopt in situations of conflicts, while either they follow the adversarial approach by attacking one another, or they follow the cooperative approach by understanding the different aspects and searching for common ground. Thus, the desirable outcome from this part of the unit is developing choices into situations of conflicts that can offer opportunities for negotiation.

In a more interactive approach, participants were asked to work in groups and as a result, to organize in steps an easy and practical way to deal with a scenario of conflict resolution. They were engaged in a real problem situation and were asked to develop the skill called “active-learning” which supports understanding and increases self-confidence to deal with future similar situations (Crow & Nelson, 2015). Adapting that process to an academic online version where acting is not possible seems challenging. However, participants were welcomed to group discussions by role-playing, sharing notes, decision-making, and providing feedback. Finally, the instructor guided a discussion with the whole group, driving to the collaborative problem solving that is summarized by Right to Play (2008) to the following steps/questions:

1. What is the real problem we are facing?
2. Which are the common points of view we could focus on?
3. What are the options that we have?
4. Which is our common agreement that we could follow?

Promoting positive behaviors among children is a demanding process through an ongoing effort. It is always important to remind educators not only to focus more on the positive behaviors of children but also to try to create such behaviors in class. More generally, for individuals who are acknowledged or reinforced for their efforts, it is more possible to feel confident enough to repeat such behaviors (Skinner, 1948). The role of educators is to provide the platform for equal participation, appreciation, and support in such a way as to trigger the willingness of children to express themselves and evolve their positive behaviors. According to Utley and her partners (2002), being explanatory, creating opportunities for all, paying attention to the used words, body language, and eye contact, could shape clear expectations and provide both positive feedback and reinforcement. Therefore, participants in this unit were discussed strategies through which they could facilitate such behaviors.

Additionally, in this unit participants were introduced to role-playing as one of the most effective teaching strategies in PE to trigger various behaviors. By giving children the opportunity to experience both winning and losing conditions, future appropriate behaviors in similar contexts are facilitated (Samalot-Rivera, 2014). There are also some challenges that educators are facing during this process and were discussed with the participants during this unit. More specifically, the significance of the user content, the detailed explanation of the aims of the provided activities, and the way that educators will organize the reflection part at the end of the activities were the most highlighted parts.

One of the main explored areas in this unit was how to design intercultural education training programs. For that reason, the guidelines of Stephan and Stephan (2013) were presented. Researchers compiled this process in six stages, promoting an advising guide for instructors to:

1. Be aware of the characteristics of their culturally diverse groups.
2. Define specific goals in line with the needs of each group.
3. Select the most suited theories of cultural change according to the goals-setting.
4. Make decisions over the ways of achieving those goals, based on the psychological and communication approaches.
5. Choose the most convenient techniques, exercises, and materials, depending on the context in which the program will be operated.
6. Evaluate the outcomes and the processes of the program that drove its effectiveness.

A critical eye was attempted to be cultivated in this unit through the discussion of “teachable moments” in a session of PE or into a sport club. According to Walton-Fisette and her colleagues (2018), these moments are not related to the predetermined goals of an everyday teaching plan, instead, these are the moments that spontaneously arise any time during that. More interestingly, any situation that reveals a socioculturally just or unjust incident could be that kind of moment, while the desired outcome is to be transformed into an opportunity for reflection and learning for children themselves. However, the danger for these moments to be considered irrelevant by the children is always a challenge for the educators. Therefore, to avoid that, it is important to develop critical thinking and new perspectives for future PE teachers and coaches to both detect and create those moments effectively.

The theory of this unit includes also a part devoted to the concept of motivation and how educators or coaches could eventually generate self-determined reasons for discipline and participation of the children. Based on the self-determination theory of Deci and his partners (1991), participants were presented the three inner needs that individuals need to satisfy to be facilitated in motivation, and performance, known as relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Relatedness is about

the feeling of developing safe and delightful social relationships. Competence describes the steps of ones' achieving both internally and externally, while autonomy involves the ability of independence that drives someone to self-regulation. So, why is this important to be mentioned? Well, the fact is that when those needs are fulfilled through an educational context, then individuals are provided with inner motivation for learning, by valuing the educational process and improving their self-confidence. Undoubtedly, educators are the determinant personalities for shaping such an appropriate and supportive climate in class to alert the intrinsic motivation of children.

It is a common assumption for both PE and sports contexts that there are two main dimensions regarding the beliefs of what causes success. The first one, known as task-orientation, refers to self-improvement by conquering knowledge, working on understanding, and collaborating with others, while the second one, known as ego-orientation, sets the base of success in comparison to others and feelings of superiority (Duda & Nicholls, 1992). Previous research has separated the task learning-oriented climate, as encouraging for positive effects on individuals' motivation (Papaioannou et al., 2004), from the ego-oriented climate which has related to antisocial behaviors (Kavussanu, 2006). More interestingly, in multicultural contexts, a high task orientation climate has been reported to facilitate the pursuit of achievement goals, while ego-oriented climates have been connected to negative feelings (e.g., being in the fridge, feeling negatively for ones' ethnicity), thus emerging fewer opportunities for building cooperation (Kouli and Papaioannou, 2009).

The existing data on multicultural contexts both in PE (Kouli & Papaioannou, 2009) and sports (Morela et al., 2017; Morela et al., 2020) in Greece, arguing that teaching style is a crucial factor to promote respect and positive acculturation attitudes among individuals. In other words, a task-oriented climate or else an empowering motivational environment, to which the basic needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy are satisfied, is connected to favorable attitudes toward minorities' cultural maintenance and interaction among minorities and hosts, as opposed to an ego-oriented climate (Morela et al., 2017).

Digelidis and Papaioannou (1999) highlighted that as children growing from elementary to high school in Greece, they tend to become less task-oriented in PE with males defined as more ego-oriented than females. These findings might not be that recent, but they reveal a pessimistic reality that already pre-existed the refugee movement crisis to Greece of 2015. Thus, by gradually missing task-orientation climate in PE class, both lack of desire for interaction with members from diverse cultural backgrounds and feelings of marginalization are emerging (Kouli & Papaioannou, 2009). Therefore, inspired by the value that Schinke and his partners (2014) also provided to the construction of a well-organized task-oriented climate in the sports context, this kind of knowledge for future

educators, especially the ones who will be dealing with multicultural contexts, is considered of high importance to be included in this unit.

Finally, besides the teaching style, other factors that could be useful tools for the inclusion of all children, are the selected activities and games. Besides the advantages of emphasizing motivation, interest, participation, enjoyment, and maintenance of learning outcomes (Bredemeier & Greenblat, 1981), when multicultural/traditional games or appropriately structured activities are used in culturally diverse contexts, they can generate much more positive outcomes. Gaining understanding and appreciation of another culture through the experience of the sports and games that are part of it, as well as developing sensitivity and respect that reduce any existing distinctions (Banks et al., 2005) are encouraging examples. Furthermore, it has been referred that the experience of playing traditional games reflects the cultural heritage of the children and thus, they remain as useful tools to increase feelings of safety and pride for their cultural background (Sparks, 1994).

However, are there any steps that one educator could follow to present effectively traditional games in a multicultural class? The answer provided by Parker and Ninham (2002) is encouraging and helpful enough to share directions for this process. The researchers suggested the following steps for the presentation of traditional games and activities to a multicultural PE class:

- 1) Describing a relevant theme to a culturally sensitive issue.
- 2) Choosing keywords and emphasizing them during the lesson.
- 3) Referring to the origin of the game/activity, by keeping the traditional rules of playing.
- 4) Negotiating the equipment and the provided space that will be used.
- 5) Encouraging children's reflection on how this game/activity is related to cultural diversity issues and what is the message to take home.

Yet, games are not only helpful for children's education, but also for adults, especially the ones who are trained to interact with diverse populations in multicultural contexts. Speaking for our case, they are the pre-service PE teachers and coaches. Regarding educators' training, games are very helpful in increasing their cultural competencies on the dimensions of attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Following the directions of Kim and Lyons (2003), our participants were introduced with the purpose and the instructions of the games that were used during the practical part of the present course, as well as with the reasons for their use, and the meaning of avoiding competition and just focus on the process of the activity each time. Of course, participants are also informed about the fact that sometimes they might feel uncomfortable (e.g., dealing with self-awareness, stereotypical thinking), but this is a normal and integral part of the learning process.

Eventually, as sports education in multicultural contexts includes both the physical and the emotional part, it should not only focus on teaching sports or engaging children in games and activities

but also on the development of their social interactions. Intercultural dialogue is important in such a way so that the positive social outcomes are reassured. Hence, Gieß-Stüber (2010) suggested some principles that guide the teaching process. More interestingly, she called for teachers not to avoid new and unfamiliar activities or movement styles, but basically to let their pupils experience strangeness through those. Afterward, she proposed the use of challenging team tasks, including processes like rules negotiation, promoting cooperation, and sharing goals. She also underlined the significance of one' experiencing recognition and belonging, by developing critical thinking in various levels of communication (e.g., verbal, emotional, social). Finally, pupils' reflection on their experiences in the field is truly essential for them to complete their comprehension and link learning outcomes to action. Thus, it is concluded that group workshops, debating on various issues, and participating in sports activities that promote intercultural dialogue, could have a positive impact on intercultural understanding and skills development.

Table 3 _Main theoretical areas of Unit 3

| |
|--|
| Forms, causes, and results of conflicts |
| Collaborative problem solving |
| Positive reinforcement |
| Diversity management |
| Teachable moments |
| Self-determination theory and motivational climate |
| Design and implementation of intercultural learning sessions |

2.11.2 Practical part

The detailed templates that describe the practical activities of this Unit are presented in Appendix 3.

2.13 Unit 4 (*Teaching/coaching evaluation and self-assessment*)

Key elements: observation, evaluation, self-assessment, focal problem, theory of change, BID model

2.12.1 Theoretical part

The last unit is devoted to leading participants to observe and evaluate both themselves and others. It is considered to have a logical continuity based on the three previous units and starts by

summarizing what has been reported so far. During this unit, participants were engaged in the concepts and forms of observation, as the initial process to collect useful information. They were also involved in the evaluation of the program as well as in the assessment of their efforts throughout its' duration.

The first concept to be presented in this unit was “observation” or else “monitoring”. Participants were firstly negotiating on what is observation according to their aspects and whether all people observing in the same way. The concepts of planned and incidental observation were also discussed. After the initial discussing part, participants were presented the definition of observation given by Cowie (2009) as the way of collecting information by examining consciously and in detail, others' behavior in a natural environment. To this extent, the role of observers varies depending on the level of their engagement in this process. However, to secure effective information there is the need of preparing oneself for being an observer, while the leading factor for that is awareness. By that, Cowie (2009) is referred to the ability of someone to be aware of the environment he/she is observing and the reason this is happening. Of course, to become a skillful observer needs practice and guidance to learn how to collect information that will be helpful enough to make a certain conclusion and then, organize the response to any arising situation.

A complementary management tool of this unit is evaluation, which is attempting to improve current activities by organizing plans (UNICEF, 1991) and is directly related to observation. While evaluation can be aimed at a program, a predetermined goal, or even at other people, self-assessment is also an important process aimed to lead someone to assess him/herself. However, they are interconnected. For example, self-assessment may use the results that arise from the evaluation of others to further shape self-reflection and vice versa. Both are flexible and dynamic procedures, that require critical thinking and objectivity which usually remain hard to be achieved (Fetterman, 1996).

The combination of monitoring and evaluating processes is of high importance as they ensure the effectiveness of the implementation of a program through the investigation of its' aims and objectives (Coalter, 2008). The EDU:PACT Module (2020) presents the following steps to organize and guide monitoring and evaluation processes in a training program for PE and sport based on intercultural education:

- 1) Definition of the problem we need to focus on.
- 2) Mapping of specific aims and outcomes.
- 3) Promoting indicators related to the specific aims and outcomes.
- 4) Select the used methods to evaluate those indicators.

The first step refers to the definition of the focal problem to understand the basis where one should start from. An interesting and visual tool to map a certain problem, its' causes, and its' potential effects is the “problem tree”. This tool uses a tree as an analogy of the main problem, which is

represented by its' trunk, the causes of this problem which are represented by its' roots, and the effects that might arise from that problem, represented by its branches. It is an easy tool to use, which means that it saves time, especially during an online process. It also encourages participants' willingness to be involved by organizing the issue under discussion and its' impact clearly and understandably (SELA Advisory Group, 2009).

After the initial definition of the problem, the next step suggests an organized plan of addressing that. Theory of change is a common method to reach this goal (Elsemann et al., 2011). Although this theory is referred to sport organization plans, it can be used for personal or professional long-term goals by mapping backward to identify what is needed for success. More interestingly, this method provides a plan to address a focal problem (e.g., lack of pupils' collaboration), by setting a long-term goal (e.g., improve collaboration among participants in the group), mapping out the desired outcomes (e.g., more interaction and reducing stereotypes among participants), considering the possible outputs that could support the desired outcomes (e.g., more group activities and group discussions) and thinking about the inputs needed to provide the required outputs (e.g., training of PE teacher/coach on intercultural education, more attractive sports equipment, better organization of each session).

The third step includes the ways to assess the effectiveness of the plan provided in the previous step. Put differently, during this step one must select the appropriate clues or signs, called indicators, to examine if and how the organized plan is designed before a response to the long-term goal that needs to be achieved. As indicators are used to measure the effectiveness of the predetermined goal, they could be either quantitative (e.g., number of participants) or qualitative (e.g., feelings of inclusion), depending on the nature of the goal, however, it is suggested to be as simple and reliable as possible, following the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) directions (Coalter, 2008).

Finally, methods that will be used to measure indicators need to be also carefully selected and this is the fourth step. Methods could be enrolled in a quantitative basis measuring numbers and sizes through questionnaires or could be represented by a qualitative basis, measuring feelings and attitudes through observation and interviews (Tenenbaum & Driscoll, 2005). However, other creative methods are also existing, which could be convenient for sport settings and more attractive to young people. Such examples are photos, storytelling, diaries, and drawings (SELA Advisory Group, 2009). It was considered important to inform the participants about the different methodological choices they have so that they could be able to choose the ones that best fit their working environment and their goals each time.

Considering that this unit is dedicated to monitoring and evaluation, the feedback could not be missing from the structural elements of its format. Therefore, the theoretical part of this unit closes

by presenting a teaching style of providing feedback that focuses on behavior and positive reinforcement. This teaching style is unlocked by the BID (Behavior – Impact – Do) model that has been introduced from Right to Play (2008). It starts by illustrating an observed *behavior* (B), continues by describing the *impact* (I) that this behavior could have not only on the person who expresses it but also on others, to end up reaching into a mutual agreement regarding the actions that should be *done* (D) until the next time.

To sum up, monitoring and evaluation encourage the detection and analysis of the data arising from sessions, while being also the basis for self-reflection and personal development. Tools like *problem tree* or *theory of change model* could be the means to define long-term goals and organize relative plans. Setting the appropriate indicators and methods also helps the evaluation process. The components of the last unit play a determinant role, as they reveal to each participant the path of observing various situations, knowing how to evaluate them, shaping forms of self-assessment as well and ways to provide feedback.

Table 4 _Main theoretical areas of Unit 4

| |
|----------------------------------|
| Observation |
| Evaluation and self-assessment |
| Defining a focal problem |
| Theory of change |
| Providing feedback - (BID) model |

2.12.2 Practical part

The detailed templates that describe the practical activities of this Unit are presented in Appendix 4.

2.14 Developing responsibility and intercultural education

The TPSR model (Hellison, 1985) and the EDU:PACT project are sharing some common ground. Both are inspired by PE and could naturally be extended to the general educational context. Their vision is to help PE teachers and educators in general to build their teaching methods to provide their pupils with the values of respect, equality, responsibility and effort. Therefore, a similar

organizing mentality is followed both by the TPSR model and by the EDU:PACT project. That is not only the development of personal responsibility through cultivating self-awareness and the effort of understanding and collaborating with others, but also the transferring of learned life skills to everyday life. Another common characteristic of the TPSR model and the EDU:PACT project is the flexibility they both offer to the educators, so that they can adapt the suggested methods/strategies to their own context. Consequently, if a training program for educators could combine the elements offered from both the TPSR model and EDU:PACT project, the outcome would probably be an effective suggestion for the development of intercultural education.

2.15 Rationale of the present research

Given the fact of the recent turbulent past of Greece, with increasing flows of refugees (UNHCR, 2020), and based also on our research findings regarding the need of well-organized training in intercultural education through PE and sports (Papageorgiou et al., 2021), it is urgent to respond in that context. However, this is not only the case of Greece, if we consider the ongoing global mobility and the multicultural societies that are shaped in most of the countries worldwide. In these societies, diversity dominates, thus the way it is managed also plays an important role. Stereotypes, prejudices, and racism are usually seen towards people from different cultural backgrounds in all aspects of social life (e.g., working environment, school). That is why education and guidance are needed from a very young age towards a society of equality, justice and responsibility. Therefore, to prepare pupils with critical thinking for a world of diversity, we need to target the educational staff first (Ukpokodu, 2007).

PE and sports have been often mentioned as effective contexts to positively reply to social inclusion (Ley & Barrio, 2019; Whitley, Coble, & Jewell, 2016). Nonetheless, multidimensionally educated teaching and sports staff are also required to frame those contexts and address the needs of all pupils. During the era of the Covid-19 pandemic, there is one extra barrier to interfere with the goal of teachers' education and that is social distance. This barrier makes the need for careful organizing of teachers' education even more compelling. In light of the given situation, the present research aimed to initially eavesdrop on the needs and the suggestions of the educational/sports staff as well as of the native adolescents regarding the role of PE and sports for social inclusion and then, make a comprehensive suggestion for an online course on intercultural education through PE and sports for pre-service PE teachers.

3. Purpose of the research

The main goal of the present research was to design, implement and evaluate a training course based on intercultural education through PE and sports.

3.1 Research questions and the three steps process

The main research questions of the present study were:

- What is missing from the present curriculum in the field of intercultural education through PE and sports?
- Which are the facilitators and/or challenges of PE and sports regarding multicultural classes?
- What are the key points for a well-designed training program based on lifelong (pre-service and on-sight training) intercultural education?

To achieve these goals a three steps process was followed as presented below:

- 1) To gain a better understanding of the perspectives of the stakeholders (PE teachers, coaches, academics in the field of intercultural education) regarding the needs in the field of intercultural education (Study I).
- 2) To gain a better understanding of the attitudes of native adolescents regarding acculturation and the role of PE and sports as facilitators for inclusion (Study II).
- 3) To design and evaluate a 14-weeks course on intercultural education through PE and sports based on the previously collected data (Study III).

4. Methodology

4.1 Study (I)

The first study was based on a qualitative methodology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted during this study, with PE teachers, coaches, and academics working in the field of intercultural education. The participants of this study were 15 individuals (11 males and 4 females). Eight of them were PE teachers in primary ($n=6$) and secondary ($n=2$) schools, while the rest seven participants were academics researching the context of intercultural education in PE and sports. A list of schools attended by refugee children in Central Greece was used to randomly recruit the PE teachers. The academics were intentionally recruited from universities in central and northern Greece based on their involvement in research and projects regarding the sports' inclusion of minorities. All of the participants had prior coaching experience in at least one sport, and six of them (all PE teachers) were still working also as coaches in sport clubs (see Appendix 5).

The aim was to understand what is worth doing in PE and sports to meet the requirements of intercultural education when it comes to multicultural classes in general and refugee children in specific. The additional aims of this study were:

- To explore the opinions of stakeholders regarding the suitability of PE course for promoting intercultural education.
- To explore the aspects of stakeholders regarding the suitability of sports for promoting intercultural education.
- To investigate the factors that facilitate or impede the inclusion of refugees in the context of PE and sports.
- To examine the actions of authorities to support PE teachers and coaches with the inclusion of refugees.
- To discover the core characteristics of a well-designed training program on intercultural education.

4.2 Study (II)

The second study was also driven by a qualitative methodology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine (6 males and 3 females) native adolescents. The participants aged from 13 to 16 years and were living in the urban web, studying in public schools, to which they had recently experienced the introduction of refugee peers (see Appendix 6). The main aim of this study was to gain a better understanding of participants' attitudes towards refugees' acculturation and the role of PE and sports in this process. The additional aims of this study included:

- To explore the feelings of native adolescents concerning their interaction with their refugee peers.

- To investigate the attitudes of native adolescents concerning refugees' preservation of their cultural characteristics.
- To capture the perspectives of native adolescents when it comes to PE and sports as acculturation agents.
- To discover the core characteristics of a well-designed training program on intercultural education.

4.3 Study (III)

The third study followed a quantitative methodology. More specifically, this study was a controlled trial that examined the effectiveness of an online course based on intercultural education through PE and sports (see Table 5). The participants of this study were 129 pre-service PE teachers (59 males and 70 females) who voluntarily participated in. Forty-one of them preferred to select the optional course of intercultural education in sports and thus, they were allocated to the experimental group, while the rest 88 of them preferred to follow the ordinary educational curriculum, and thus, they were allocated to the control group (see Appendix 7).

Pre and post-questionnaires were used to measure the perceived attitudes, skills, and knowledge of the pre-service PE teachers who voluntarily attended the online course (experimental group), compared to other students who did not select the course (control group).

Regarding the measurement of the attitudes, the Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment (PADAA) developed by Stanley (1996) was employed. The PADAA consists of 19 items and is divided into four subscales, (i) Appreciate Cultural Pluralism (e.g., each student should have an equal opportunity to learn and succeed in physical education), (ii) Value Cultural Pluralism (e.g., all students should learn about cultural differences), (iii) Implement Cultural Pluralism (e.g., the perspectives of a wide range of ethnic groups should be included in the curriculum) and (iv) Uncomfortable with Cultural Diversity (e.g., Minority students are hard to work with in physical education activities).

As for the knowledge and skills measurements, the Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS) developed by Spanierman and her colleagues (2011) was used. The MTCS consists of 16 items and is divided into two subscales, (i) self-reported skills or behaviors in implementing culturally sensitive teaching practices (e.g., I make changes within the general school environment so that racial and ethnic minority students will have an equal opportunity for success) and (ii) self-reported knowledge of culturally responsive theories, resources, and classroom (e.g., I am knowledgeable about particular teaching strategies that affirm the racial and ethnic identities of all

students). Both questionnaires received participants' answers in a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

The reason for selecting those questionnaires was that they have been widely used in previous research in the PE context and are considered as pertinent measurements tools for this field (Columna et al., 2010; Domangue & Carson, 2008, Harrison, et al., 2010; Peralta et al., 2016). It is also important to mention that following the guidelines of Beaton and her colleagues (2000), a five-step back-to-back translation procedure was used to adapt the two scales (PADAA, MTCS) in Greek.

Table 5_A structure plan of 14 weeks course implementation

| Weeks | Units | Theoretical Part | Practical Activities |
|-----------------|-------|---|---|
| 1 st | 1 | <u>Introduction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Setting everyone's expectations of the program ✓ Globalization ✓ Clarification of key terms (immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, host country, incoming population, multiculturalism, interculturalism) ✓ Fundamentals and goals of intercultural education ✓ The current situation in the country and Europe ✓ Facilitators and barriers for PE as a tool in integration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions about: "What culture means to you?" and "What intercultural education means to you?" ➤ Group discussions about: "What are the changes that people who are forced to change their country of residence are experiencing and in which areas?" ➤ Group discussions on: "Which are the facilitators of PE course and sports-related to the needs of intercultural education?" and "Which are the barriers of PE course and sports-related to the needs of intercultural education?" |
| 2 nd | 1 | <u>The role of PE educators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Challenges that educators are facing ✓ Intercultural education models ✓ National/cultural identity ✓ Acculturation strategies ✓ Ice-breakers activities ✓ Group discussion strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions about: "What does a PE teacher need to know to teach in a multicultural class?" ➤ Ice breaker activities ➤ Me in focus |

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|--|
| 3 rd | 1 | <u>Understanding myself</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Knowing myself ✓ Learning to share my experiences ✓ Teachers as “important others” ✓ Professional self – personal self ✓ Interpersonal self ✓ R-C-A method ✓ Self-reflection questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Life mapping ➤ Case study – group discussions ➤ Hope is in the air |
| 4 th | 1 | <u>Effective instructor</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Characteristics of effective coaches/trainers ✓ Self-confidence ✓ Self-control ✓ Self-determination ✓ Adaptability ✓ Self-assessment questionnaire ✓ Presentation skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Am I an effective coach / PE teacher? ➤ Professional coaching with intercultural education |
| 5 th | 1 | <u>Stereotypes – prejudices</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ General information on Islam (religion, dress codes) ✓ Muslim girls in sports ✓ Mayor reforms in the country (intercultural schools) ✓ Traps for an intercultural way of thinking ✓ Stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions on: “Which are the barriers that Muslim women are facing during their participation in PE and sports?” ➤ Group discussions on: “Why do people tend to shape stereotypes?” ➤ Case study |
| 6 th | 2 | <u>Understanding others</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Communication - viewpoint issues ✓ Empathy ✓ Active hearing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elephant tag – role-playing ➤ Empathy blockers ➤ Listening with your body ➤ Listening for need |
| 7 th | 2 | <u>Behavior management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Factors that influence our judgment ✓ Ways to develop messages ✓ Ways to express our feelings ✓ Anxiety and behaviors associated with traumatic experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Message in a ball ➤ Sheet volleyball – group discussion |

| | | | |
|------------------|---|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Post-traumatic stress disorder ✓ Contribution of educators | |
| 8 th | 2 | <u>Leadership</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Typology of leadership behaviors ✓ Model of intercultural counseling competence ✓ A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) ✓ Monitoring interviewing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussion on: “What do you define as a leader?” and “Leaders are shaping or being shaped and why?” ➤ Helium pole - video ➤ Motivational interviewing |
| 9 th | 3 | <u>Conflict resolution</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cooperative learning ✓ Forms, causes, and effects of conflicts ✓ The range of conflict resolution ✓ Ways of responding during conflicts ✓ Collaborative problem solving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions on: “Which are the benefits for children when they experience collaborative learning?” ➤ Team up approach to building peace ➤ Flight-Fight-Unite ➤ Football field – group discussion ➤ Human knot - video |
| 10 th | 3 | <u>Competencies on practical issues</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Positive reinforcement ✓ Communication issues ✓ Spread messages ✓ Resilience ✓ Role games | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Problem-solving (a parable of two frogs) ➤ “Yes, and” versus “No, but” ➤ Rumor spread - video |
| 11 th | 3 | <u>Planning and developing intercultural learning sessions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teachable moments ✓ Achievement motivation theory ✓ Self-monitoring theory ✓ Mix-gender activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions about: “How can you organize a PE lesson in a multicultural class? What do you need to take care of?” ➤ Teachable moments ➤ Barnga – video |
| 12 th | 4 | <u>Observation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduction to observation skills ✓ Factors affecting observation ✓ Observations on students and teachers ✓ Forms of observation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussion about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “What do you think of the word observation?” - “Which elements would you observe in your students?” - “Which elements would you observe in a PE teacher or coach while he is |

| | | | |
|------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | <p>teaching or training respectively to collect information about them?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Which are the factors that affect the way we observe others?” <p>➤ Picture observation</p> |
| 13 th | 4 | <p><u>Monitoring and evaluating</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduction to the concept of evaluation ✓ Objectives and characteristics of student assessment ✓ Sources of evaluation ✓ Teacher evaluation form ✓ BID model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Problem tree ➤ Categories of observers |
| 14 th | 4 | <p><u>Self-assessment and evaluation of the program</u></p> <p>Group discussions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The evaluation of the impact of the program (expectations fulfilled). ✓ The core messages of every Unit. ✓ Self–reflection about attitudes, competencies, and skills. ✓ The changes, additions, or removals that should be done in the whole program. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Five fingers ➤ Living scale |

5. Results

Study (I) – Paper published in September 2021

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A needs assessment study on refugees' inclusion through physical education and sport. Are we ready for this challenge?

Authors' contribution:

- A) conception and design of the study
- B) acquisition of data
- C) analysis and interpretation of data
- D) manuscript preparation
- E) obtaining funding

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Abstract

In recent years, European countries have become hosting destinations for thousands of people who have been forced to leave their home countries. Greece is one of the main European hosting countries of refugees, especially children. Thus, the pupil population is gradually changing and the need for intercultural education is increasing. Physical education (PE) and sports have been recorded as suitable contexts for this process. However, there are still many challenges present in these contexts. The following study attempts to present the perceptions of PE teachers, coaches, and academics on the inclusion of refugees in PE and sports. Fifteen PE teachers/coaches and academics involved in the field of intercultural education participated in the study. A phenomenological approach was followed through semi-structured interviews. The method of thematic analysis was chosen to analyze the data. While all the participants considered PE and sports to be the most suitable contexts for the inclusion of refugees, they emphasized certain barriers to be overcome: the lack of training for PE teachers and coaches, prejudices of the parents of both natives and refugees, and refugees' socioeconomic status and gender issues. Participants also shared their ideas for an adequate training program to improve PE teachers' and coaches' attitudes and promote their knowledge and skills regarding the inclusion of refugees. The participants underlined the need for intercultural education and well-structured training programs to properly manage culturally diverse environments.

intercultural education, physical education, sports, inclusion of refugees

Keywords:

Introduction

Over the past few decades, many countries across the globe have faced challenges related to global mobility. More than one million people arrived in European countries (e.g., Greece, Spain, and Italy) from the Mediterranean Sea (UNHCR, 2015). Due to its extensive land and coastal borders, Greece has become the main entry point (Cheliotis, 2013) for 850,000 refugees and migrants (UNHCR, 2015). More specifically, in 2015 and 2018 more than 60% and 90% of the immigrants or refugees who arrived in Greece were Muslims from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq (IOM, 2018). Interestingly, 25% of these people were children (UNHCR, 2015).

Unlike other richer European countries, for most of the 19th and 20th centuries Greece was a country whose citizens moved abroad as economic migrants. Only very recently has the country been transformed into a host country for refugees and/or immigrants. The most recent waves of immigrants also coincided with the Greek financial crisis (2009-2020). Consequently, Greece has lacked the experience, facilities, and resources to support the inclusion of immigrants and refugees (Parthenis & Markou, 2015). This support is necessary, especially for refugees who have experienced traumatic events and are fleeing conflict zones by moving to Europe. Thus, new social challenges and emerging educational needs have been created (Neftci & Cetrez, 2017). Based on the findings of Huddleston, Niessen, and Tjaden (2013), the education of refugees and their acquisition of competence in the language of the host country, as well as the elimination of discrimination and racial behavior, play a pivotal role in their effective inclusion. A scientific committee has been established by the Greek Ministry of Education to include refugees in the Greek educational system. Many refugee camps have been created all over the country, and both teachers and NGOs have been invited by the Ministry of Education to act as the connecting link between the camps and schools (Nagy, 2018).

Over a limited amount of time, Greece has attempted to adopt the appropriate legislation and strategies to promote the inclusion of refugees and/or immigrants (Parthenis & Markou, 2015). According to UNICEF (2020), approximately 42,500 refugee and immigrant children are estimated to live in Greece. For the years 2019 and 2020, approximately 13,000 and 8,000 of them, respectively, were enrolled in formal education (Greek Council for Refugees, 2020). Arguably, the inclusion of refugee and/or immigrant children in formal education and social life is a challenge (Nagy, 2018) due to their cultural diversity and individual differences in skills, experiences, and backgrounds (Cerna, 2019). In addition to being a challenging process, inclusion also requires interculturally educated professionals (Grimminger, 2008).

Theoretical framework

The term “inclusion” has recently been introduced in a similar context as “integration” and “assimilation.” It refers to the process by which pupils fit into an educational environment and also takes into consideration the conditions of this environment (e.g., the efforts that are made by the authorities; Kipouropoulou, 2019). Nowadays, “intercultural education” depicts the most appropriate response to the challenges of globalization. It refers to encouraging the interaction of people from different cultural backgrounds not only by eliminating fear and prejudices towards the “others,” but also seeing this condition as an opportunity for learning and communication. This kind of education does not demand people to abandon their cultural identity and adopt the beliefs and values of other cultures. Rather, it encourages them to focus on their common characteristics instead of their differences (Portera, 2008). It is also a pedagogical perspective that includes goals, content, teaching methods, materials, and assessment in order to promote universal values (e.g., justice, freedom, and equality in schools and in society; Banks, 2002).

The ability of teachers to effectively deliver a course based on intercultural education requires the design, implementation, and evaluation of this process (Grimminger, 2008). These abilities drive intercultural competence, which refers to the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that physical education (PE) teachers and coaches should have in order to effectively interact with their students (Barrett, Byram, Lazar, Mompoin-Gaillard, & Phillipou, 2014). This kind of competence enables educators to interact, cooperate, and experience intercultural contact through the perspective of personal development (Portera, 2008). Additionally, children may cultivate their intercultural competence only if their educators encourage them to understand and value cultural diversity (Barrett et al., 2014). Consequently, this process leads to inclusive pedagogy (Florian & Hawkings, 2011), which promotes equal opportunities for all children in the society.

PE and sports as contexts of interest

According to the International Charter of PE, Physical Activity and Sport, participation in these fields is a fundamental right for all and should play an inclusive role in the

daily routine of youth and children (UNESCO, 2015). More specifically, physical activity plays a vital role in the inclusion of refugees (Ley & Barrio, 2019), both in the context of school (Culp, 2013) and in sport clubs (Whitley, Coble, & Jewell, 2016). Even though PE and sports are considered important contexts for social inclusion, mutual understanding, and respect of cultural diversity (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Culp, 2013), only limited studies have been conducted in these areas (Amara et al., 2005; Ley & Barrio, 2019). Some sport educators seem to recognize the importance of intercultural education and their own role in its delivery (Columna, Foley, & Lytle, 2010). However, several barriers to its implementation have been recorded in the literature (Dagkas, Benn, & Jawad, 2011; Agergaard, Cour, & Gregersen, 2015).

The increasing number of refugee/immigrant pupils, many of them being unaccompanied and psychologically traumatized children (Sirin, & Sirin, 2015), has made the promotion of interaction between different cultures through physical activity an urgent need in many Western countries (Bennet, 2003) and also in Greece (UNHCR, 2015). This research does not intend to fit the incoming population into categories of “refugees” or “immigrants,” as these distinctions are temporary and depend on the manipulations of the authorities (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018). The purpose of the current study is to shed light on how stakeholders (PE teachers, coaches, and researchers of sport psychology and education) perceive the extent to which PE and sports can facilitate the inclusion of refugees, the role of intercultural education in this inclusion, and the authorities’ contribution to this endeavor.

Cultural diversity in PE

PE represents a distinctive area within schools focusing on the development of physical skills and social relationships among peers (Hills, 2007). It has been recorded as a tool that opens new horizons to pupils’ cultural diversity and acts as a facilitator in the settlement of young refugees (Doherty & Taylor, 2007) by promoting equal and active participation and mutual acceptance (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005). PE curricula include physical and sport activities characterized by global rules and terminology, which break down cultural barriers and minimize the importance of linguistic communication (Amara et al., 2005; Ito, Nogawa, Kitamura, & Walker, 2010). The greatest advantage of PE over other school courses is that its practical and communicative character eliminates cultural differences as neither speaking nor reading are actually needed for participation (Rosenberg, Fejgin, & Talmor, 2003). However, contradictory results have been identified regarding the significance of language in the inclusion of refugees in this course (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Dundar, 2019).

The development of pupils’ interpersonal skills (e.g., communication and cooperation; Kaylene & Rosone, 2015) is strengthened by a teaching style that encourages a task-oriented climate (Kouli & Papaioannou, 2009) and the adoption of an inclusive approach among PE teachers (Derri, Kellis, Vernadakis, Albanidis, & Kioumourtzoglou, 2014). On the other hand, an overemphasis on competition and social comparison in PE might not facilitate the inclusion of refugees since this

reinforces prejudices (Gugutzer, 2008) and creates tension among participants (Krouwel, Boostra, Duyvendak, & Veldboer, 2006). PE teachers have also reported that limited resources, a lack of training (Chepyator-Thomson, You, & Russell, 2000; Flory & McCaughtry, 2011; Grimminger, 2011), and a lack of confidence in their intercultural competence (Gasparini & Cometti, 2010) diminish their effectiveness with regard to the inclusion of refugees. Furthermore, dress codes, mixed-gender groups (Dagkas & Benn, 2006), physical contact issues (Caldeborg, 2020), and parental influence (Dagkas, Benn, & Jawad, 2011) have been recorded as factors that impact the participation of female Muslim refugees in PE. However, researchers (Dagkas et al., 2011) have argued that the adoption of tolerance, flexible teaching approaches, and the involvement of pupils in decision-making could facilitate Muslim girls' participation in PE.

Authorities should undertake actions and provide resources that promote refugees' access to formal education (Bourgonje, 2010), including PE. Therefore, on-site training related to refugee inclusion should be provided for PE teachers so that they may better cope with the diversity of their pupils (Bourgonje, 2010). PE teachers' intercultural competence could be reinforced through their participation in courses/programs that promote intercultural knowledge and skills (Grimminger-Seidensticker & Möhwald, 2016). Additionally, the aforementioned programs could encourage in-service teachers to change their attitudes and practices, adopt intercultural education in practice (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005), and recognize the relational aspect of cultural diversity in PE (Leseth & Engelsrud, 2019).

Cultural diversity in sports

The participation of youth in sports is mainly a personal choice (Eitzen & Sage, 2003) and has been positively associated with social behavior, well-being (Bradley, Keane, & Crawford, 2013; Super, Hermens, Verkooijen, & Koelen, 2018), and the inclusion of refugees (Spaaij, 2015). Since sports speak a language without words (Schinke, Stambulova, Lidor, Papaioannou, & Ryba, 2016; Stone, 2018), they can positively contribute to the inclusion of vulnerable populations (e.g., refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants; Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Whitley, Coble, & Jewell, 2016), racial equality (Green & Hardman, 2000), and understanding and respect of cultural diversity (Culp, 2013; Rosenberg, Fejgin, & Talmor, 2003). Although sports have been described as "well-suited arenas" for promoting social interaction among culturally diverse individuals (Putnam, 2000), young refugees continue to represent a relatively marginalized population in this context (Jae-Pil & Lyras, 2013) for a variety of reasons. Refugees' socioeconomic background (Walseth, 2007; Agergaard, Cour, & Gregersen, 2015), natives' prejudices towards refugees (Kunz & Hanvey, 2000), unfamiliarity with the sport context of the host country (Forde, Lee, Mills, & Frisby, 2015), and the rules that natives adopt in sports (Kunz & Hanvey, 2000) have often been recorded as barriers to the inclusion of refugees in sports.

Furthermore, it has been recorded that sports that prioritize competition may exacerbate ethnic tensions and trigger cultural differences (Krouwel, Boostra, Duyvendak, & Veldboer, 2006). Coaches who create an empowering motivational climate foster children's entertainment and social interaction, effectively promote the inclusion of refugees (Doidge, Keech, & Sandri, 2020), and show empathy and altruism to host populations (Morela, Hatzigeorgiadis, Theodorakis, Goudas, & Elbe, 2020). However, coaches in many countries have reported that they lack the training, strategies, and appropriate teaching materials to effectively promote the inclusion of refugees (Gasparini & Cometti, 2010; Forde, Lee, Mills, & Frisby, 2015).

Research questions

This study attempts to answer a crucial question: "What needs to be done or what is worth doing for PE and sports to meet the requirements of intercultural education?" We focused on investigating the perceptions of professionals (e.g., PE teachers, coaches, and academics) concerning the following questions:

1. Is the PE context suitable for promoting intercultural education? If so, why?
2. Are sports suitable contexts for promoting intercultural education? If so, why?
3. Which factors facilitate or impede the inclusion of refugees in the context of PE and sports?
4. Do the authorities support PE teachers and coaches with the inclusion of refugees? What additional actions need to be taken in this regard?

Methodology

The participants in this study were 15 individuals (11 males and 4 females). Eight of them were PE teachers in primary ($n=6$) and secondary ($n=2$) schools, and their teaching experience varied between 15 and 25 years. Seven participants were academics and researchers dealing with intercultural education in PE and sports. Their level of experience in this field varied between 2 and 30 years. The PE teachers were randomly recruited from a list of schools attended by refugee children in Central Greece. The academics were intentionally recruited from two universities (Central and North Greece) due to their involvement in projects regarding the inclusion of minorities. All participants had prior coaching experience in one or more sports, and six of them (all PE teachers) were still working as coaches in sport clubs when the interviews took place. The researchers do not seek to separate the participants into groups (PE teachers, coaches, and academics), but rather to highlight the views of professionals involved in the field of organized physical activity (PE and sports) about the phenomenon under investigation. Consequently, the interviews were based on phenomenological narratives in which participants' perspectives of the inclusion of refugees were elicited. Data collection was conducted after receiving approval from the University Institutional

Research Ethics Committee. Participants were fully informed of the nature of the study; their participation was voluntary, and written consent was obtained from all participants. Data collection was conducted through face-to-face interviews ($n=13$) and over Skype ($n=2$). Skype was used when participants were located far from the researchers, and interpersonal contact was activated remotely in these instances (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The interviews were conducted from October to November 2018 and ranged from 20 to 45 minutes long. They were recorded using a voice recorder instrument and were then transcribed by the first author.

Interview design

In order to fulfill the goals of the present study, a semi-structured interview guide was developed that contained a series of predetermined questions. The content of the questionnaire was identical for the PE teachers/coaches and academics, and adjustments were made as needed depending on the interviewee's characteristics. Both open-ended and closed-ended questions were included so that participants could freely provide all the information they desired (Turner, 2010). Additionally, open-ended questions were used with the intention of exploring interviewees' perspectives related to their knowledge and experiences in this specific field (Patton, 2002). A short thread of descriptive questions (e.g., years of teaching/research experience with refugees, sport background) was included in the semi-structured interview guide. Individuals were encouraged to share their stories so that their perspectives could be explored and the dimensions of the subject under investigation could be understood (Creswell, 2013). Their anonymity and confidentiality were also declared (Kvale, 1996). Participants' names were replaced by pseudonyms, and correlating acronyms were used ("AR" for the academic researchers, "PET" for the PE teachers, and "PET-C" for the PE teachers/coaches). For example, Agamemnon (AR), Pagona (PET), and Ariadni (PET-C).

The semi-structured interview guide consisted of questions related to participants' perceptions of (a) the inclusion of refugees in PE (e.g., "Which factors do you think act as facilitators of the inclusion of refugees in PE?"), (b) the inclusion of refugees in sports (e.g., "Which factors do you think act as barriers to refugees' inclusion in sports?"), and (c) the authorities' support for the inclusion of refugees (e.g., "Do you think that teachers and/or coaches have the appropriate knowledge and skills to facilitate the inclusion of refugees?" and "Have they received training on intercultural education?").

Data analysis

A qualitative approach using phenomenology was adopted (Sokolowski, 2000) to investigate the lived experiences of professionals (PE teachers, coaches, and academics) regarding the inclusion of refugees in PE and sports in Greece. By employing a qualitative approach, it was possible to include an array of strategies that guaranteed a well-structured study. However, these strategies are not a panacea. Rather,

they are helpful for presenting participants' perspectives on a specific subject matter ethically and respectfully (Sparkes & Smith, 2009). The current study was framed within a relativist ontological framework (Sparkes & Smith, 2009), and the adopted methods reflect participants' experiences and the researchers' subsequent interpretations (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011).

Hence, the researchers developed the "generating themes" exploring the information related to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2019). More specifically, a total of 122 single-spaced pages of interview transcripts were created by the first author. Then, the first and third author engaged in a collaborative process to produce a thematic analysis of the interview transcripts. According to the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2012), the present study's coding and analysis combined inductive (Thomas, 2006) and deductive approaches. As the first step, the authors reread the transcripts to become familiar with them and develop independent parallel coding. Then, they temporarily coded the data and generated interpretative labels as initial categories. The coding data were reviewed by the two authors and merged into a compared and overlapped set. When the overlap between categories was low, they conducted further analysis and engaged in discussion to reach a mutual agreement for the creation of potential themes. The potential themes were reviewed in relation to the coding data and the entire data set to ensure they made sense as parts of the broader narrative. After examining the data, all the authors engaged in a retrospective process for the development of the themes. Through discussion and by taking into consideration the specific characteristics of each potential theme, they reached a consensual agreement about the most appropriate themes capturing the essence of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes were thoroughly examined, formally named, and singularly focused. In this phase, quotes were deductively selected from the participants' interviews, and the authors attempted to extract and present the most representative and vivid quotes in relation to the research questions and the literature. The final report emerged from the integrated writing and analysis process with the intention of creating a coherent narrative.

Data trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the present study's data was established through (a) well-established research methods; (b) the background, qualifications, and experience of the interviewers; (c) tactics to ensure interviewees answered honestly (Shenton, 2004); (d) the second and fourth author acting in a critical way during the finalization of the themes' development and the selection of the quotes, encouraging dialogue and critical reflection (Sparkes & Smith, 2009); and (e) "information power" (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Similarly, the external reliability of the study was ensured by having the interviews take place (a) in offices or school classrooms so interviewees could feel comfortable, (b) after arranging an appointment with each interviewee and collecting data during formal discussions (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982), and (c) giving participants the option to withdraw from the interview at any time (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

Results

The participants' reports revealed that they shared several common perceptions of the inclusion of refugees as well as some differing perceptions. Five major themes were generated from the thematic analysis of the data: (1) vehicles for intercultural education in PE and sports; (2) key obstacles to the inclusion of refugees in PE and sports; (3) sport clubs: two sides of the same coin; (4) the absence of the authorities; and (5) hints for training programs.

Vehicles for intercultural education in PE and sports

The responses of the participants indicated that PE and sports can promote intercultural education. More specifically, Aristotelis, Maximos, Themistoklis, Evgenia, Neftonas, Ourania, George, Manolis, Gerasimos, Achilleas, Agamemnon, and Nestoras argued that “the nature and structure of PE and sports encourage social interaction among peers, regardless of their cultural identity,” as was highlighted by George (AR). Additionally, Neftonas (PET-C) stated that “...there is, in fact, a connection between intercultural education, PE, and sports because pupils feel free to express themselves through rhythmic activities... body language, and motion... to get familiar with cultural diversity... and have fun.”

Moreover, Themistoklis, Maximos, Evgenia, Agamemnon, Nestoras, Gerasimos, and Manolis stressed the universal character of the rules governing most sports as an advantage in both contexts, eliminating the difficulties that may arise from speaking different languages. More specifically, Nestoras (AR) claimed that “...children participate more easily in PE or sports, the rules are clear and universally common, allowing children to feel part of a team without needing verbal communication or numerous analyses and explanations.” Similarly, Evgenia (PET) claimed, “...rules are the same, balls are the same and that makes it easier for PE and sports to include refugee pupils... There is also the advantage of language, where you need to say nothing but the basics, in order to communicate with others...”

Furthermore, some of the participants (Pagona, Ariadni, and Aris) stated that PE and sports can easily adapt activities from various cultural contexts in order to facilitate the inclusion of refugees. More specifically, Pagona (PET) stated, “The introduction of games, sports, or activities that come from refugees' backgrounds and/or modifications of games and activities that combine elements from diverse cultural backgrounds may help Greek children become more tolerant of and familiar with their diverse peers.”

Interestingly, some of the respondents (Themistoklis, Aris, Evgenia, Neftonas, and Agamemnon) argued that well-structured lessons can promote the inclusion of refugees more effectively as, according to Agamemnon (AR), “...games and activities may help pupils to have a specific role, promoting their teamwork and helping both PE teachers and coaches to create a context that urges participants' mutual respect and reflection on their behaviors ...” In conclusion, the respondents argued that respect, responsibility,

and cooperation could be developed through PE and sports regardless of the individual's cultural background, naturally promoting the goals of intercultural education.

Key obstacles to the inclusion of refugees in PE and sports

Although the interviewees reported that PE and sports could effectively promote the inclusion of refugees, there are several barriers that impede this process. The vast majority of the respondents (Aristotelis, Maximos, Ariadni, Aris, Evgenia, Agamemnon, Nestoras, Achilleas, and George) argued that "...there is no official training on intercultural education... the effectiveness of lessons depends enormously on their [teachers'] initiation to learn information relevant to the inclusion of refugees," as Evgenia (PET) pointed out. Additionally, Agamemnon (AR) highlighted that "neither PE teachers nor coaches have received any particular training in this area."

Alternatively, some of the participants (Maximos, Aristotelis, Ariadni, and Manolis) highlighted that PE has a weak influence on pupils' perceptions due to the limited amount of time allocated to PE. As Manolis (AR) stressed, "...Arguably two hours [per week] have a limited effect on the inclusion of refugees..." Some of the interviewees (Aristotelis, Themistoklis, Maximos, Aris, Gerasimos, Agamemnon, and George) reported the involvement of refugees' parents as another barrier to the inclusion of refugees in both PE and sports. For example, Maximos (PET-C) stated, "Parents are the main problem and not children. A lot of parents have prejudices, and they insist on limiting their children's interaction with native children." Some of the participants (Aristotelis, Themistoklis, Maximos, Aris, and Agamemnon) also mentioned that this is a result of the parents perceiving Greece as a temporary residence and thus not choosing to integrate into Greek society. For example, Aristotelis (PET-C) highlighted that "Some of the refugees' parents are trying to leave the country, so they do not really care about their children's inclusion in the educational system. Therefore, this decision has an impact on their children's intention to get involved in PE and sport as well."

Two of the participants (Maximos and Achilleas) highlighted the prejudices of pupils with Greek parents as a barrier to the inclusion of refugees. Achilleas (AR) stated the following:

Parents display huge resistance, and that resistance is conveyed to their children... for example, when you often introduce native pupils to foreign ones, with their parents being absent, native children are likely to be friendly... on the contrary when their parents are present, these children are not friendly anymore... I assume that their parents influence their behavior.

Furthermore, one of the participants also focused on teachers' and coaches' attitudes towards diversity, which affect the behavior of their pupils. Achilleas (AR) argued that "Many times, even teachers or coaches treat people of different cultural backgrounds with suspicion. As a result, their attitudes have an impact on their teaching style and also on pupils' behavior."

Additionally, some of the participants (Aris, Ariadni, Neftonas, and George) mentioned that even if linguistic communication is not necessary, it is useful for approaching refugees and promoting their inclusion both in PE and in sports. More specifically, Ariadni (PET-C) reported, “the lack of a common language is an issue... we make efforts to approach refugee pupils, to talk to them... but we cannot communicate.”

A few of the participants (Neftonas, Ariadni, and Aris) also revealed the lack of proper facilities and equipment as a barrier. For example, Neftonas (PET-C) emphasized, “... the lack of facilities to meet refugee pupils’ needs. For example, both in our school and in the sport club there are no locker rooms, and native children come to school or the sport club already wearing their sportswear. However, this is not possible for Muslim girls since they need to wear their special sportswear...”

Sport clubs: Two sides of the same coin

Focusing specifically on sport clubs, most of the participants (Aristotelis, Maximos, Pagona, Ariadni, Themistoklis, Aris, Evgenia, and Ourania) stated that sports facilitate the inclusion of refugee children. Their main argument is that children are guided towards a well-structured sport context that fosters interaction with their peers. Sharing is also a common goal that requires teamwork, regardless of cultural background. More specifically, Themistoklis (PET-C) stated, “Every child has the opportunity to choose the sport they like and therefore enjoy it and actively participate while sharing common goals. Thus, children can smoothly be socialized and included into society.” Ourania (AR) also added that “Sports are organized contexts, and as a result, they can provide a specific direction suitable for every child, also supporting the inclusion of refugees.”

Some of the participants (Neftonas, Manolis, Gerasimos, Achilleas, Agamemnon, Nestoras, and George) mentioned specific barriers that impede the inclusion of refugees in sports. For example, Achilleas (AR) underlined the competitive quality of sports, identifying that it “may lead to tensions and disagreements between opposing team members ... This creates a negative mood for the team’s members, especially when there are individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.” Furthermore, Neftonas (PET-C) revealed that “...the participation of refugees in sports is not that common, mainly due to financial reasons or transportation problems, both of which make it even more difficult for them to join such settings.” Additionally, George (AR) stated the following:

Refugees coming from a cultural context that differs from the Western cultural context may find it difficult to interact within the context of sports. For example, Muslim refugees are likely to be reluctant, and they might feel awkward due to gender issues or dress codes. Thus, they come up with excuses or do not participate, and this situation automatically marginalizes them... and makes them adopt a negative attitude towards the others, affecting the others’ attitudes as well...

Some of the participants (Neftonas, Manolis, Gerasimos, and George) also highlighted that sports may help the inclusion of refugees “only in the case that coaches have

received the appropriate training to promote mutual interaction, understanding, and support between refugee and native athletes... then the insecurity that foreign pupils may initially feel will be eliminated,” as Manolis (AR) pointed out.

The absence of the authorities

The majority of the participants (Aristotelis, Maximos, Ariadni, Evgenia, Aris, Nestoras, Achilleas, George, Agamemnon, Gerasimos, and Manolis) argued that the state did not provide any on-site training, educational materials, or supporting facilities. More interestingly, Nestoras (AR) stated, “...if I could describe the situation using one phrase that would be authorities’ unpreparedness to cope with this challenge... no one could put the blame on teachers or coaches... they could not anticipate that one day they would have to face this emergency situation [a large influx of refugee pupils].” Additionally, Aristotelis (PET-C) stressed that “the state does not organize free seminars or workshops related to the inclusion of refugees... we are trying to cope with their needs based on our knowledge, but this is not enough ... we also need in-service education in order to develop the skills to help these children.” Similarly, Maximos (PET-C) stated the following:

I have not received any training to cope with refugees’ diversity. For example, I tried to shake hands with refugees, and I noticed that they were reluctant to respond to my gesture. So, I searched online how to deal with this situation. I read about their customs and religious issues to adjust my behavior, but this is not enough. This was the result of my own initiative and not an organized state effort... that is how I... managed last school year...

Interestingly, some of the participants (Maximos, Evgenia, Ariadni, Nestoras, Achilleas, and George) stressed that all educators within the school should be trained to be able to cope with pupils’ cultural diversity and facilitate the inclusion of refugees. For example, Ariadni (PET-C) stated, “...it is of high importance for every teacher to receive on-site training on intercultural education because we have not attended any course during our undergraduate studies, not even a well-organized seminar. Thus, it is difficult for educators to support the inclusion of refugees.”

Although some of the participants (Pagona, Themistoklis, Neftonas, and Ourania) argued that, in the words of Themistoklis (PET-C), “Schools in the given circumstances have supported the inclusion of refugees as well as possible...,” Themistoklis (PET-C) also pointed out that “...the years of experience of PE teachers and their knowledge in the pedagogical context helped them to cope with this unexpected situation.” Furthermore, Ourania (AR) articulated that PE teachers have open access to knowledge for intercultural education, and it actually depends on their professionalism. More specifically, she stressed the following:

... I believe they [PE teachers and coaches] have it [the necessary educational level] ... after all, there is a variety of books related to intercultural games... there

is so much material available... if someone wants to discover the knowledge then they can just read the books.

Hints for training programs

Participants' perceptions of a well-structured intercultural training program are categorized as promoting *attitudes* such as "knowledge of ways to eliminate stereotypes," as Evgenia (PET) highlighted, *knowledge* about "different cultural customs and various games from different cultures," as Agamemnon (AR) pointed out, and *skills*, referring to "methods or strategies for approaching and including refugee children from a psychological aspect," as Ariadni (PET) mentioned. Gerasimos (AR) also focused on the "...urgent need of training in religious issues such as body contact or nutrition issues that might affect refugees' participation in PE and sports."

The expectations of the aforementioned interviewees are summarized in the following suggestion. An educational system that takes into consideration pupils' heterogeneity, minority diversity, religious diversity, gender relations, and sports culture may facilitate the inclusion of refugees. Additionally, the interviewees proposed that an educational program focused on the aforementioned characteristics should be developed and delivered to every educator and professional working in the context of sport.

Discussion and conclusions

This study attempted to provide a basis for understanding the implementation of intercultural education and the inclusion of refugees in both PE and sports in Greece. The findings revealed that the vast majority of participants perceived PE and sports as important settings for implementing intercultural education and promoting the inclusion of refugees for a variety of reasons. More specifically, they suggested that the context and curriculum goals of PE promote children's social interaction. Furthermore, they suggested that children can familiarize themselves with refugees' backgrounds through games and sport activities and practice teamwork skills and mutual respect in the process. These findings are aligned with previous studies that have implied the very nature of PE eliminates cultural differences and promotes equal opportunities for all pupils (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Kaylene & Rosone, 2015). Similarly, participants of the present study reported that sport clubs support the inclusion of refugees, fostering children's communication, satisfaction, and mutual respect through social interaction. These reports are in line with recent studies (Hatzigeorgiadis, Morela, Elbe, Kouli, & Sanchez, 2013; Ito et al., 2010; Doidge et al., 2020; Morela et al., 2020). Finally, the emerging results of the present study highlight that both PE and sports can promote mutual interaction (Rosenberg, Fejgin, & Talmor, 2003; Amara et al., 2005) and have a positive impact on the inclusion of refugees depending on teachers'/coaches' delivery style (Kouli & Papaioannou, 2009; Morela et al., 2020) and training (Columba, Foley, & Lytle, 2010).

Additionally, participants stressed that PE and sports share common characteristics (e.g., games and activities supported by universal rules), and thus linguistic communication is not necessarily needed in these contexts. Previous studies have had similar findings (Amara et al., 2005; Ito, Nogawa, Kitamura, & Walker, 2010; Scinke et al., 2016). Participants also argued that PE teachers and coaches can adapt games and activities from refugees' backgrounds to facilitate communication and interaction between refugees and native pupils. A similar conclusion stems from previous reports that the sports context provides coaches with the opportunity to easily adapt cross-cultural activities that may facilitate pupils' familiarization and interaction with their teammates (Amara et al., 2005) and create an enjoyable and welcoming environment (Doidge et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the findings of the present study are similar to those of Olliff (2008), implying that although sports can "provide universal language," the lack of communication between PE teachers/coaches and refugee children may act as a barrier to their inclusion (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Dundar, 2019). Additionally, as in a previous study (Dagkas et al., 2011), several participants of the present study highlighted parents' prejudices as a barrier to refugees' participation in PE and sports. It was also reported that the lack of equipment and the limited time allocated for PE are factors that could make the inclusion of refugees in PE ineffective; this is also supported by the literature (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011). Furthermore, some of the participants questioned refugees' ability to access sports facilities due to socioeconomic factors. This issue has also been underlined by other researchers (Walseth, 2007; Flory & McCaughtry, 2011; Agergaard et al., 2015) arguing that the socioeconomic status of refugees is a significant factor that acts as a barrier to their participation in physical activities. Finally, similarly to another study (Dagkas & Benn, 2006), participants of this study reported that gender issues such as dress codes, mixed-gender activities, and physical contact issues (Caldeborg, 2020) may impede refugees' participation in sports. However, some of the participants asserted that sports are not the ideal context for promoting the inclusion of refugees due to the competitive nature of these activities. This perspective echoes the findings of previous studies (Walseth, 2006; Spaaij, 2015) suggesting that sports may lead refugees to become competitive and even increase ethnic tensions (Krouwel, Boostra, Duyvendak, & Veldboer, 2006). Additionally, Amara et al. (2005) questioned the effectiveness of competitive sports for the inclusion of refugees due to the rules of sports and coaches' lack of awareness of refugees' needs. Interestingly, only one of the participants of the present study reported that teachers' prejudices may influence the inclusion of refugees. However, the fact that all the other participants did not report the prejudices of teachers or coaches may imply the need for more in-depth self-awareness. It also highlights the importance of the development of specific programs for the intercultural preparation of these professionals (Columna et al., 2010). Such programs could increase both the awareness and the improvement of their attitudes towards diversity (Banks, Suárez-Orozco, & Ben-Peretz, 2016). Participants of the present study also argued that their lack of training (Chepyator-Thomson et al., 2000; Flory & McCaughtry, 2011; Grimminger, 2011; Gasparini &

Cometti, 2010) and professional development of intercultural competence (Forde, Lee, Mills, & Frisby, 2015) influenced their ability to cope with refugees' cultural diversity. The participants' suggestion for the inclusion of intercultural education both in undergraduate studies and in the training of in-service PE teachers is in line with the implications of a previous study (Young, 2010). More interestingly, participants of the present study suggested that the training program include knowledge related to critical awareness, skill development, and strategies for building competence, which is in line with past literature (Chepyator-Thomson et al., 2000; Wyant, Tsuda, & Yeats, 2020), as is their suggestion that various games and activities from around the world could be effective tools for the development of intercultural competence (Puente-Maxera et al., 2020). An on-site training program with these features could help PE teachers and coaches improve their ability to promote the inclusion of refugees (Derri et al., 2014) and also increase their self-efficacy as professionals (Hermans, 2002). Finally, such a program could be very useful in an educational system where the implementation of intercultural education relies on teachers' initiative and skills (Gropas & Triantafyllidou, 2011).

Although the general sense captured from the data of the present study was that participants have accepted no official training on intercultural education, they are seeking organized training programs including methods and strategies for the development of the appropriate attitudes, knowledge, and skills to facilitate their role in the inclusion of refugees. Thus, training in intercultural education and also curricula changes are necessary for the elimination of stereotypical behaviors. These changes would also lead to a more inclusive pedagogy through a collective endeavor including every aspect of society. This is still missing not only from PE curriculum, but also from several Greek educational programs and curricula, according to the participants of the study.

Ethics approval and informed consent

The study was approved by the University Institutional Research Ethics Committee. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Competing interests

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

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Study (II) – Paper (under submission)

**Exploring the experiences of host adolescents with refugee peers, attitudes
towards acculturation and the potential of physical education**

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Abstract

In the last decade, refugee mobility evolved as a crucial matter for Europe, surfacing the importance of the acculturation process towards a functional coexistence. Considering that acculturation is the product of the cultural exchange between two populations, the perspective of the host population is of great importance. The present study aimed to explore the acculturation attitudes of host adolescents regarding refugees' acculturation with a focus on the role of physical education and sport as potential acculturation agents. A phenomenological approach informed the research; data was collected with semi-structured interviews with nine adolescents and analysed thematically. Overall, the results revealed attitudes favouring the ideas of multiculturalism and identified some challenges. Moreover, the findings supported the important role of physical education as a context nurturing the ideas of integration. Nonetheless, difficulty in communication, lack of cultural awareness, and knowledge/skills held by physical teachers emerged as important challenges towards integration.

Keywords: acculturation expectations, multiculturalism, integration, social sport, physical activity

Mobility of populations is a world-wide phenomenon concerning millions of people and majority of countries and poses significant challenges for both the incoming and the host populations (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001) who need to learn how to live together and adapt within a multicultural context (Berry et al., 2006). While mobility can be an opportunity for the development of individuals and societies it is also a source of societal and financial complications (Baubock, Heller, & Zolberg, 1996). The recent mobility of refugees towards Europe gave rise to an urgent need to receive and accommodate the incoming populations. The growing inflow of refugees into Europe has been identified as the largest refugee “crisis” since the World War II, making the reception and hosting of refugees a necessity more compelling than ever (UNHCR, 2015).

Expectedly, receiving countries were not prepared to deal with the extreme volume of incoming populations. For instance, Greece with a geographical location at the crossroad of Europe, Asia and Africa, became one of the most preferred entry points to Europe for the refugees from the Middle East. In Greece, the lack of appropriate structures and financial capacity to deal with the sudden influx of refugees resulted in poor living conditions, hygiene problems, lack of food for the incoming populations, and subsequently to conflict between the refugees and local populations (Eliassen & Malichudis, 2020). Having spent prolonged periods characterized as “asylum seekers” in refugee camps, refugees in the community are looking for ways to settle, find security and seek opportunities to improve their life (Baban, Ilcan, & Rygiel, 2016).

Among them, the most vulnerable group of refugees is youth, who represent a considerable percentage of displaced populations (UNHCR, 2015). Young refugees have to build social networks with peers and adults (Olliff, 2008), learn a new language (Shakya et al., 2012), and adapt to a new school system (Prior & Niesz, 2013). Hence,

the process of cultural adaptation depends also on the reception circumstances of each country as well as on the attitudes of the host population (Erten, van den Berg & Weissing, 2018).

Acculturation

Intercultural contact brings about cultural and psychological changes in values, routines, and identities of all involved cultural groups; this process has been termed acculturation (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936). It is a continuous process that determines social adjustment and involves both the incoming and the host populations (Berry & Sam, 2013). In the last decades, Berry's (1997) acculturation model has attracted significant research attention. The model posits that in cases of multicultural contact people should negotiate their behavior across two dimensions, cultural maintenance, and cultural interaction contact. The first dimension refers to the preservation of cultural heritage while the second one describes the participation of the incoming population to the host culture and the interaction of diverse populations. The way that people act in these two dimensions determines their general attitudes to a multicultural society and leads to four potential acculturation strategies for both the incoming and the host populations (Berry, 2006).

The acculturation pursuits of the incoming population are imprinted to the following strategies: (a) *integration*, when individuals wish to maintain the cultural characteristics of their own culture but they also wish to be involved in the wider cultural context of the dominant culture; (b) *assimilation*, when individuals are exclusively participating in the dominant culture, without maintaining their own cultural characteristics; (c) *separation*, when individuals prefer to maintain their cultural identity and do not wish to associate with the dominant culture; (d)

marginalization, when individuals are reluctant to both the maintenance of their cultural identity and to the involvement with the dominant culture (Berry, 2006).

Accordingly, for the host population, acculturation expectations, are reflected in: (a) *multiculturalism*, when the dominant culture encourages both the preservation of the incoming population identity and their active participation in the host society; (b) *melting pot*, when the dominant culture does not favor the preservation of the incoming population identity but seek their full assimilation into the dominant culture; (c) *segregation*, when the dominant culture allows the incoming populations to maintain their cultural characteristics but not encourage their interaction with the dominant culture; (d) *exclusion*, when the dominant culture neither favors the preservation of the incomings' cultural characteristics nor encourages interaction (Berry, 2008).

Bourhis et al. (1997), considering the Berry's dual perspective, suggested that acculturation expectations of the host population can influence the acculturation orientations adopted by incoming groups and highlighted the importance of the fit between the goals of the two populations. They further argued that when the cultural pursuits of the incoming population coincide with the cultural expectations of the host population, communication between groups improves and incidents of discriminations decrease. Otherwise, group relationships tend to be doubtful, negative stereotypes arise, individuals experience more intensive intercultural stress and there is a potential of conflicts and discriminations (Bourhis et al., 1997). From the above it becomes obvious that contexts like school, social life, sport clubs within which acculturation takes place have a key role towards the goals of integration.

The case for physical education and sport

Physical Education (PE) and sport have been considered as effective socializing agents (Grove & Dodder, 1982), especially for youth, because of the large numbers of

adolescents that are involved, the diversity of socio-economic background of participants, and the highly interactive nature of the involved activities. In addition, for sport, its importance as a volitional behavior has also been stressed, whereas for PE its greater pedagogical scope and its distinct nature within school, with regard to its focus on the body and physical skills and its unique opportunities for social interactions between peers, have been acknowledged (Hills, 2007). In recent years, the interest on the social mission of sport, described as actions that aim to improve aspects of individuals' and groups' life, such as youth development and intercultural exchange (Schinke et al., 2016), has been receiving increased attention. Subsequently, PE and sport have been identified as ideal settings for enhancing positive contact across culturally diverse individuals and groups (Ley & Barrio, 2019), in particular, under conditions of both equality and the pursuit of shared goals among members (Kaylene & Rosone, 2016).

Nevertheless, research on the integrative role of PE and sport is rather limited and has mostly focused on immigrant populations (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2013), while recent studies with refugee children have mainly conducted in the field of education, focusing on second language learning (Delaney, 2014) and teachers' knowledge, values, and attitudes (Lunneblad, 2017). Within the PE and the sport context, encouraging learning and facilitating cooperation has been linked to increased desire of host students to get acquainted with the cultural characteristics of others and reinforced mutual respect and multiculturalism attitudes (Elbe et al., 2016; Kouli & Papaioannou, 2009). In addition, within these contexts the important role of the PE teacher or the sport coach has been particularly stressed (Schinke et al, 2013). Such findings have been further supported through field interventions aiming at developing life skills

(Ryom, Andersen, & Stelter, 2017) and fostering cooperation and personal development (Agergaard et al, 2018).

In the era of the recent refugee crisis, Farello et al. (2019) explored sport and PE experiences of young female refugees. Their findings showed that participants may benefit from opportunities to be autonomous, learn sports in a supportive environment, and connect with their host counterparts, thus facilitating the integration process. Furthermore, Dundar (2019) explored the integration of Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Turkey, through PE teachers' perspectives. The teachers identified the lack of language skills and low financial level of the refugees as barriers for their participation, however, they stated that the interest of refugee students to participate in PE was very high; this was attributed to the low stress of PE classes and the need for socialization. Most PE teachers also reported that the PE had a considerable effect to the integration of refugee children and suggested that enhancing young refugees' participation in PE class could enhance cultural adaptation.

Context and purpose of the study

The present study was conducted in the Greek cultural context. Since 2014 Greece has received more than one million migrants and refugees, the large majority of whom are Muslims from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. More interestingly, among them, approximately 25% are children (UNHCR, 2020), though numbers are constantly changing. In addition, during this period, since 2010, Greece has experienced a severe financial crisis, which resulted in serious cuts regarding social welfare. Consequently, considering the lack of preparedness across Europe to handle the refugee crisis (De Haene, Neumann, & Pataki, 2018), the Greek state has been in a difficult position welcoming and hosting the large numbers of refugees entering the territory.

The legislative framework of the country for education offers schooling for every child (regardless of legal residence status) until the age of 15. For some schools, depending on the size of the population of the refugees, reception classes have been created. These classes, which provide host language lessons, operate in support of and in parallel with the typical classes for minorities (Paroutsas, 2013). Nevertheless, the large number of adolescent refugees in the country, which has resulted also from the reluctance of Europeans to accept refugees in their countries (Dempster & Hargrave, 2017), in combination with the lack of preparedness, structures, and resources for schools to receive and address the educational needs of refugees, has led to important dysfunctions (e.g., struggle for surviving, xenophobia) (UNHCR, 2015). Such dysfunctions interrupt typical school processes for the refugee but also the host students. As a result, dissatisfaction has surfaced among the host population of students and parents and in cases it has led to instances of xenophobia and racism (Kalogeraki, 2019), which can be attributed to economic and cultural concerns (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). Interestingly, Greeks seem to be in significant high levels of prejudice and hostility towards minorities (e.g., Muslims, refugees) (Bruneau, Kteily, & Laustsen, 2018).

The aim of the study was to explore the essences of host adolescents' perspectives regarding refugees' acculturation. Hence, we inquired into the experiences of host country adolescents towards building perspective for peer-refugee acculturation. We were interested to understand how the lived experience of the arrival of and interaction with refugees within the school, sport, and social life contexts might shape their host adolescents' perspective towards the refugees and the acculturation of the refugees. As Berry's work informed this study, we were interested to unveil the parameters and context(s) that may shape host adolescents' acculturation attitudes.

Method

Research approach

Considering the objective of this study to seek out primary material from the populations of interest based on their experiences, personal stories and explanations involved in the acculturation, a qualitative methodology was selected (Ryba et al., 2018). Additionally, considering the multiple versions of truth arising within interactions, our approach was accompanied by interpretation based on a relativist sense of reality as produced by the researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). More specifically, the approach of phenomenology was selected, as it provides the chance for detailed analysis of participants' lived experiences of a phenomenon, by exploring at the same time the way the world, their views and their bodies were interconnected. Yet, an attempt was made to account participants as co-researchers, so that their own experiential perspective allows us to analyse and interpret the phenomenon under consideration, thus makes us tending to empirical phenomenography (Allen-Collinson, 2016).

Participants

Participants of the present study were nine Greek adolescents (6 males and 3 females), aged from 13 to 16 years. The present sample is convenient and intent as it includes participants who: (a) are born and raised in Greece, (b) have recently received refugee adolescents to their schools, (c) were co-students with refugee peers for more than one year and (d) have been participating in organized sport and recreation clubs for the last two years. Participants were seven first generation and two second generation Greek adolescents who declared to be Christians; they were living in a medium size urban area, and were involved for at least two years in football, basketball, volley, track and field, and dancing.

Procedures

The study was approved from the institution's Research Ethics Committee (re: 1671). In addition, written consent was signed by the parents of participants before the onset of the study. All interviewees were informed of the purpose and the nature of the study, and they all participated voluntarily. The interviews, emerged from participants' perspectives on acculturation, lasted from 30 to 45 minutes and were recorded. Finally, they were transcribed and a total of 56 single-spaced pages was created by the first author. In the manuscript, pseudonyms were used to replace participants' real names, in order to protect their anonymity and help us treat the data with confidentiality (Kvale, 1996).

Data collection

Following previous research examining acculturation experiences of migrants and/or refugees regarding acculturation (Blodgett et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2016; Nilson-Grip & Liljedahl, 2021; Whitley et al., 2016) and considering the limited efforts in the investigation of the host population perspectives on the same issue (Tran & Birman, 2019), semi-structured interviews including open-ended questions were used to provide space for the participants to share their insights (Turner, 2010). The interviews served as tools for the exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences (Patton, 2014) regarding peer refugee acculturation and the role of PE and sports in this process.

The interview guide for the present study was developed based on: (i) the theoretical model of Berry (1997), (ii) the recent Greek context and (iii) the need to fill in the gap regarding the existing knowledge on hosts' perspectives concerning the peer-refugee acculturation. In the introductory part of the interview participants were asked about their age, their religion, their participation in organized sports and their feelings of associating with refugee peers in their schools. During the interviews, participants

were asked to discuss their experiences with refugee adolescents in various settings including school, social life and recreation, and sport; their feelings and attitudes regarding the acculturation of refugees, with references to their beliefs regarding cultural maintenance and cultural interaction; their perceptions concerning significant others' beliefs on refugee acculturation, and finally, their thoughts for the potential of PE and sport as integration agents.

Data analysis

Following the suggestions of Braun and Clarke (2006), Braun, Clarke and Weate (2016) and Braun and Clarke (2019), a collaborative-reflexive data analytic approach was adopted to enrich the nuanced reading of the data. Accordingly, the first, the second, and the last author participated in a collaborative process to thematically analyse the transcribed data. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analyzing, and referring to issues arising from the data collected which reflect participants' experiences (Braun, Clarke, & Weate, 2016). This is considered to be the most useful method for recording the complexity of concepts within a set of written data (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). We generated a number of themes employed an inductive approach, as we explored the information related to the subject under investigation (Braun & Clarke, 2012), following the next steps:

- (i) we engaged in repeated reading of the transcripts for initial familiarization, encoded the data in a parallel and independent process;
- (ii) we coded the data, providing interpretative labels to initial categories;
- (iii) we reviewed the data and merged them into a compared and overlapped set; if there was a low overlap between the categories, further analysis was conducted through discussions and a mutual agreement on the creation of contingent themes was reached;

- (iv) we reviewed the contingent themes in relation to the entire data set, to ensure that they make sense as part of the wider narrative;
- (v) we thoroughly examined and named the themes; in addition, we selected the quotes to be presented in the results section attempting to extract the most vivid one's in relation to the research questions and the literature; and
- (vi) we compiled the final report interweaving the writing and analysis process, aiming at a coherent essay.

Rigor ensurance

Being sceptical about the variety of discussions questioning qualitative criteria to ensure rigour during research (Braun and Clarke, 2016; Tracy, 2010), we decided to follow the practices suggested by Smith and McGannon (2018). More specifically, the tactic of “member checking” was used, in which participants had the chance to check themselves whether the recorded content really depicted their views (Creswell, 2013). Participants were also informed of being free to withdraw from the interview process at any time (Shenton, 2004). The research team included researchers from different fields of interest (sport psychology, sport sociology, intercultural education), thus providing a variety of experiences and ideas during the reflection and the discussion of the data. Therefore, the second and the sixth authors acted as “critical friends” in such a way to enrich the other authors’ interpretations of the data and encourage reflexivity (Smith and McGannon, 2018). In sustaining rigour and establishing a reliable thematic analysis of the data, we also followed the list of criteria highlighted by Braun and Clarke (2016). Using the practices mentioned above, we secured rigour in the present research, while acknowledging the different meanings and numerous perspectives.

Results

The participants provided us with both common and different views on refugees' acculturation. Six key themes were identified through the thematic analysis of the data: (i) *stereotypical views and formed expectations keep them apart*, (ii) *the tripartite approach of cultural practices*, (iii) *genuine contact vs. basic interaction: 0-1*, (iv) *parents are not helping their children find a path forward*, (v) *the PE teacher has a role*, and (vi) *PE is a connecting point, a safe and inclusive place where all students co-exist and cooperate*. The thematic map with the codes, subthemes and themes is illustrated in Table 1.

Stereotypical views and formed expectations keep them apart

In the data, we identified certain views that unveiled a distance among host and refugee peers based on stereotypes and formed expectations of the former. We created five subthemes that illustrate those kinds of views that keep host and refugee peers apart: a) discomfort of hosts to co-exist and relate with refugee peers, b) hosts justifying their refugee peers' distance, c) conditions for levels of comfort and discomfort, d) staying with the "known" and e) fighting stereotypical views.

The first subtheme was built on the codes of refugees' troublesome behaviors inside the class, the expectation of refugee peers to take the first step, refugee peers' responsiveness to hosts' ridicule, lack of knowledge for the sport rules and the differences that can nurture hostile behaviors. These codes feed the discomfort of hosts to co-exist and relate with their refugee peers. The next quotes are clarifying the landscape even more. *"I would not like to hang out with them[refugees], because ... they do not seem willing to approach us or learn our language"* (Jonathan), *"When we play volleyball, they also come, and we play together. We cooperate but sometimes we argue, as they do not know the rules so well..."* (Pavlos) and *"My host peers are fighting with the*

refugees and make fun of them... about the different language, skin color, dress code and religion” (Vasilis).

The subtheme of hosts justifying their refugee peers’ distance was relied on the codes of non-optimal past experiences, refugee girls hold to culturally learned gender appropriate interactions and refugees holding racist views over hosts. *“They seem willing to approach us, but they are afraid of our reactions, because they would probably have gone through a lot of difficulties” (Vicky) and “[In PE] they play separately from the Greeks either because we have quarreled or because they [refugee peers] have racist views towards us” (Vasilis).*

A sense of both host and refugee peers to follow the comfort of intimacy emerged according to our interpretation of participants’ sharings. Thus, we constructed the third subtheme on the codes of feeling uncomfortable to relate with “the different”, but comfortable to greet them, to hear their stories or to share the same desk, the consideration of refugee peers as undesirable, non-existent, or fortunate to have the hosts as classmates and the acceptance of their cultural maintenance if it does not bother. *“I would like to know what happened in their [refugee peers] country and why they had to move out, but I would not like to hang out with them...” (Jonathan), “I offered to sit at the same desk with one of the refugee girls who came to my class, but during the school breaks we do not hang out, because she hangs out with the girls from her country, and I also hang out with my own friends” (Stacey) and “[refugees should keep their customs]...only in the case that they do not bother the hosts” (Vasilis).*

The need of refugee peers to feel safe and familiar was apparent from participants’ words and led us to create the subtheme of staying with the “known” based on the codes of language barrier, avoiding contact with hosts either by not joining classes and PE as well as rationalization of separation (assumed needs of intimacy).

Jonathan shared some information about his refugee peers' habits at the school "*they [refugee peers] all sit together, most of them do not enter the lessons and do not even participate in PE...I do not know why*", and Stacey added her experience saying that "*They [refugee peers] seem like they need their space to talk together [during breaks], and they do not wish to approach us... It seems logical to me*".

Fighting stereotypical views was the last identified subtheme under this theme. We experienced the spoken words of some of the participants as hidden stereotypes based on social impacts and thus, this subtheme was relied on the code of effort to avoid discriminations based on stereotypes and generalizations for refugees. Alexia's distributions provided the most characteristic example, "*...I do not want to think that some of them [refugee peers] could steal something, because, okay... I do not think they are bad kids... they are just kids. But, if such a thing ever happens, I will be angry, with this child...*".

Drawing the links, participants' perspectives of hidden stereotypes, expectations from their refugee peers to approach them or a sense of understanding their need to feel intimidated, provided answers to the questions of how you get involved with your refugee peers and what are your experiences of host and refugee peers' social interaction.

The tripartite approach of cultural practices

Participants' words revealed a strong connection of culture and participation in cultural practices to everyday life. Three subthemes describe participants' approaches according to our interpretations, which also reflect three paths of mindsets among them. The human right of participation, the need of finding a balance between the new and the old culture and avoiding learning, understanding, and accepting. We built the first subtheme on the codes of participation is a human right, maintaining cultural identity

and adapting to the new culture it's ok, where it appears that one fills the other and all together drive to the human right of participation. *"We all have this right [to participate in cultural practices], regardless of religion or nation or culture, we all have the right to know and participate in all activities/customs that take place in another region"* (Babis). *"I see some of these girls taking off their headscarves and being out more often than in the past...which is fine"* (Vicky).

Further, according to our understanding, the need of refugees to find a balance between the new and the old culture emerged from some of the participants' sharings. That drove us to generate it as a second subtheme which was based on four codes: refugees are expected to learn about their new country, obliged to seek for cultural balance, free to find cultural balance and opportunity for mutual learning. *"They [refugees] will have to preserve every part which contributes to their culture, as Greeks did when they migrated abroad. It is important that they keep their customs but also get to know ours ... they need to find this balance between the two cultures"* (Alexia) and *"Since they [refugee peers] have come to this country they are obliged, I believe, to... not so much to adopt the cultural elements, as to... learn more, that is, to have an idea of what is happening here, what customs do we have... why..."* (Babis).

Finally, a sense of avoiding learning, understanding, and accepting was captured from some of the participants' distributions. Three codes equally inspired us to shape this subtheme: imposing our own as the norm, keeping the unknown away from our traditions and refugees' fear of racism in practicing to their own traditions. *"...they [refugee peers] should respect hosts' culture and follow this way of life, wearing no hijabs and changing their religion.....they should not wear hijabs when they come to school"* (Jonathan), *"I believe that in specific events such as the parade is for Greeks...I see it wrong for them to parade, because we celebrate the liberation of*

Greece, for which Greeks fought and not foreigners” (Vasilis) and “They [refugee peers] want to keep them [their traditions], but they are afraid of the reactions of the Greeks. Because, often, racist phenomena have been observed towards them” (Vicky).

Seeing the big picture, the tripartite approach of culture and cultural practices provides answers to the question of what you think of refugees maintaining their own cultural traditions and participating in the ones of the hosts.

Genuine contact vs. basic interaction: 0-1

We experienced the spoken words of participants as a chance for showing understanding and gaining information about other cultures, while at the same time no deeper connection was pursued. Thus, we built this theme on six codes: (a) mind opening experiences to which host kids feel grateful; (b) living together is not that strange; (c) finding normalcy under new conditions; (d) reception with love and understanding; (e) welcoming behaviours by the hosts; (f) epidermic interaction - lack of pursuit of closer contact.

We shaped the first code on Babis’ words *“I feel blessed to meet them [refugees] because they have taught me so much both about myself and the society. My perception of the world has changed because of them. They have made me think more that we are not the only ones in this world, there are people who have bigger problems than us...and yet they maintain their smile”*. We also interpreted Stephan’s sharings of *“I believe that even if they live with us, this is not a big deal, because they are not much different from us and most of them are already working and offering in the country”* to the code of living together is not that strange. The same participant also provided lights for the third code of finding normalcy under new conditions by saying that *“I treat them as normally as I can because they are in a difficult situation, and we need to show understanding”*.

The fourth code was developed according to what Vicky confessed “*My classmates and our school in general received all the refugee children with love and understanding*”, while the fifth code was based on the words of Niarchos “*They [host peers] welcomed them [refugee peers] and helped them with whatever they needed*”. Regarding the last code that was our interpretation of an epidermic interaction based on learning purposes and the lack of pursuit of real interaction that emerged from some of the participants. “*...I would learn a lot about the culture, the customs of their country and how they celebrate them, the history, and the language of this country, so there are a lot of advantages through interaction*” (Niarchos) and “*I do not have the phone from any child, nor a name from social media and such, so we had no chance to arrange to go out*” (Alexia).

Parents are not helping their children to find a path forward

Participants’ words revealed a noticeable absence of their parents’ willingness to have a positive impact on their attitudes regarding the refugee peers. This theme was also identified in the data and was built on three codes: a) not trusting the unknown, b) absence of interest and c) accepting the unknown after having interaction. Analysing participants’ aspects, we experienced that their parents do not seem willing to trust the unknown influence that new arrivals might have on their children because either of not being aware of this “*different and strange culture*”, according to Jonathan or “*... they would react more cautiously than seeing me hanging out with a Greek because they do not know if they can trust refugee people or not*”, as Vasilis pointed out.

We also captured the absence of interest for this sensitive issue to be discussed at hosts’ homes, since most of the participants shared that their parents had never pursued to gain some knowledge on refugees’ culture or else on that part of the story. Pavlos claimed that “*...I have no idea [information about refugees’ culture] because*

we never happened to discuss on this at home” and this aspect is the most representative one that was encountered.

With regard to the code of accepting the unknown after having interaction, one participant brought up the acknowledging from his parents of refugees’ traumatic experiences and provided an encouraging tone. More specifically, Niarchos referred that “...*they [parents] believe that everyone should have a chance and since they [refugees] have gone through so much, it would be better to treat them the same as the others*”. Still, that was the only case of approaching the unknown and this might be because the parents of this participant are both teachers in reception classes and have also worked as teachers abroad, according to his sharings.

Bringing it all together, the fear of trusting the “different”, the absence of interest and accepting the unknown after having interaction, appeared to provide answers to the question of how your family approach the issue of refugees’ arrivals to the school. Yet, we realized a lot from those adolescents by identifying the impact of their families on how themselves also approaching this issue. For example, the lack of discussions about refugee peers at home drives us to think either of host families being indifferent or being negative on further contact and as a result, their children to be aware of the lack of their parents’ approval for interaction. Thus, children themselves might form respective kind of aspects on this issue.

The PE teacher has a role

Participants’ experiences regarding the way that the PE teachers in their classes deal with the whole group after the arrivals of their refugee peers to the school, drove us to highlight the fact that PE teachers have a role and an impact on their pupils. The present theme was revealed based on three subthemes: taking the easy way out, the

good intention but lack of knowledge and skills to support change and the active facilitation of inclusion and interaction.

Taking PE teachers, the easy way out is supported by five codes: a) using of hostile behaviors in refugees' presence and racist behaviors in their absence, b) avoiding working with refugees, c) avoiding having conflicts with them at the expense of being unfair with the hosts, d) avoiding working to learn, understand, accept the new and imposing their views and e) justifying distance of host kids with refugee kids. Alexia highlighted that her refugee peers "...prefer to sit on the benches doing nothing and the PE teacher does not say anything about it", while Vasilis referred that "...the PE teacher would just give refugees a ball to play separately from the rest of the class". Vicky shared her experience "...they [PE teachers] were much more lenient with refugee children, being also unfair with us in recording absences and they gave us more punishments than refugees...". In contrast, hostile behaviors on refugees were expressed and disapproved by some of the participants. For example, Babis highlighted that "...he [PE teacher] kept pressuring a girl with everyone being present to take off her hijab and after her refusal, he shouted at her...", reproving the teacher's reaction of imposing his view. Similarly, Stephan reported that "...if one of them [refugees] made a mistake or had a question, he [PE teacher] shouted at him/her and when they [refugees] were not present, he [PE teacher] spoke badly of them".

The subtheme of good intention but lack of knowledge to support change is revealed based on some of the participants who detected the initial willingness of their PE teachers to be inclusive, however, the lack of the appropriate knowledge and skills kept them to the level of good intention. Accordingly, Stacey concluded that "...the PE teacher was friendly and willing to include refugee children...even though he [PE teacher] did not have the appropriate knowledge to do so, for example... being aware

of some religious restrictions... ” and Niarchos shared that “...he [PE teacher] does not separate us [Greeks] from them [refugees]”, but he also referred that “...he does not use any specific teamwork activities or activities based on cultural traditions of different countries...he does not seem to be really organized”.

Regarding the subtheme of active facilitation of inclusion and interaction that was based on the code of co-existing and cooperation is made possible. This code was supported by Vicky’s sharings of “...our PE teacher formed a group of all of us together and we played various games. We worked together as a group, there was absolutely no problem”.

Overall, despite the variety of attitudes and behaviours perceived by participants through their PE teachers, among their observations and experiences, they mostly stressed the indifferent or unfavourable ones. To this extent, lack of understanding, knowledge, and skills, seemed to be a recurring issue concerning PE teachers’ portraits affecting also their role.

PE is a connecting point, a safe and inclusive place for interaction

This was the last theme identified in the data. It was shaped based on our interpretations of participants’ sharings that entail a positive nuance for this course to provide the way of inclusiveness and deeper interaction among hosts and refugees. Three codes describe this encouraging tone for PE. The common interest and point of connecting, co-existing and cooperation is made possible and equal space. According to our understanding, Niarchos sharings channeled a sense of connection among hosts and refugees and a common interest during the PE class, as he expressed that “...we talk about PE, because it is the most common lesson we have... in the rest of the lessons they [refugees] do not talk much. They like PE and they feel the same way as for their own school in Iraq”.

Participants draw satisfaction from cooperating in mix-groups with their refugee peers during the PE class and provide the possibility of its evolution, *“I’m glad to see that refugees and Greeks work together. For example, today, I saw refugees with many Greeks playing volleyball during PE lesson. That shows that we all can hang out”* (Pavlos). Further, participants highlight the aura of equality through the space of the PE course, comparing it with other courses. *“...in PE there are no differences, there is always a way to communicate... in class things are different”* (Jonathan).

To connect the dots, despite participants’ different experiences, we captured their common ground on the fact that PE is a safe and inclusive place to provide cooperation for all and when refugees are participating in this course, that could help them to better integrate into school and social life.

Discussion

In the present study we analysed interview-based data from nine host adolescents that had recently experienced the incoming of refugees into school, sport and social life, to investigate their aspects on the peer-refugee acculturation and explore the potential of PE and sport as integration agents. Although several perspectives were voiced reflecting to some degree the diversity of hosts’ perspectives on their peers’ acculturation, five key words represent our interpretations of participants’ aspects: hidden stereotypes, basic interaction, parental indifference, PE teachers’ deficiencies and PE has a positive role. Findings are discussed under the perspective of Berry’s (2006) theoretical model and suggestions for future research are also provided.

Looking at our findings, it seems that participants’ attitudes towards their refugee peers and the relationship between them are affected by personal characteristics (e.g., experiences, living environment) and country’s conditions (e.g., income, media).

Similar findings were presented by Paas and Halapuu (2012), though they examined adult populations.

In the present study, whereas participants empathized for refugees' need to adhere to their cultural heritage attitudes and expressed welcome attitude towards them, feelings of discomfort were detected, related with their refugee peers, that reveal some hidden stereotypes which tend to keep them apart. Those stereotypical views are mostly based on economic and cultural concerns as was also reported in previous research (Hainmueller & Hopkins. 2014). For example, aspects of changing cultural patterns to fit to the host country's context were acknowledged. Several factors that act as barriers for participants to accept their refugee peers were also detected. These findings seem to align with previous studies reporting functional barriers like language (Beißert, Gönültaş, & Mulvey, 2020), but also personal 'blockers' like dressing code, skin color, religious issues, and refugees' cultural differentiation to the host country (Schwartz et al., 2010). Such blockers seem to partly explain findings that Greek adolescents in previous studies have shown negative attitudes towards minorities (Bruneau et al., 2018).

In a recent preliminary study addressing the topic from the perspective of refugee adolescents within the same context, integration and assimilation were identified as the favoured acculturation strategies (Filippou et al., 2020). This evidence in relation to the present findings seems to suggest a relative fit between acculturation strategies of refugees and acculturation expectations of host youth.

An aspect that emerged from the present data and should be considered with caution is the role of outgroup perceptions, which are of primary importance for the acculturation processes (Bouhris et al., 1997). Some participants in our study reported that refugees showed little interest interacting with them or participating in group

activities; thus, they thought that their refugee peers, for personal, social or religious reasons, would not be favourable of contact. Such an interpretation, which can be seen as threatening by hosts (Brown & Zagefka, 2011), may be erroneous because people when away from familiar contexts (in this case refugees) are often reserved and, in cases, scared to seek interaction, especially when they feel uninvited or disliked (Esses, Hamilton, & Gaucher, 2017). This is possibly the case here, thus refugee peers might avoid initiating interaction to protect themselves (Leary, 2001). In such cases, even though their reservations are justified because people prefer to interact when they feel welcome, these may be based on misinterpretation and possibly prejudice towards the lack of acceptance from others, due to prior experiences. Such a loop of mistaken interpretations may conceal a true desire for contact and interaction from both sides, thus having detrimental effects on acculturation. Towards this direction, it is crucial that, when desired, host youth show their interest and seek genuine and deep contact compared to basic interaction.

Based on the present findings, participants' reports regarding their parents appeared to match their personal attitudes, either positive or negative towards refugees, thus it could be assumed that parental influence was expectedly evident. Regarding PE teachers and peers however, it is noticeable that participants mostly stressed indifferent or negative aspects, even when these opposed their own personal beliefs. For those favouring multicultural attitudes such reports seemed to include criticism, whereas for those not endorsing multiculturalism, these seemed to be used as justification of their own attitudes.

Apart from criticism to PE teachers for indifferent or hostile treatment to refugees, several participants acknowledged their efforts to help the refugee students, but also brought up the lack of awareness, cultural knowledge and training or skills to

deal with multicultural classes. Such deficits, that can be attributed to the extremity of the situation, the lack of appropriate structures or training on intercultural education have been also evidenced in the relevant literature (Grimminger, 2011; Papageorgiou et al., 2021).

Unanimously, and in accordance with the relevant assumptions (Kaylene & Rosone, 2016), participants identified the appropriateness of PE as an ideal setting for initiate contact, develop interaction, and build relationships among youngsters from different cultural backgrounds. The difficulty of communication was once more discussed; however, it was also countered when compared to other settings due to the potential of non-verbal, or at least not linguistically structured communication, sport provides (Adcroft & Teckman, 2009).

An interesting aspect that emerged through peers in relation to the PE class was that of sport competence. Participants reported that peers would not like refugees on their side because they lacked sport skills. This crucial point comes to highlight the value of the motivational environment within which sport activities take place (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2013). Empirical evidence has supported that an environment that places emphasis on learning and personal improvement, fosters cooperation, and satisfy the psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness has been consistently linked with attitudes towards integration in PE (Kouli & Papaioannou, 2009) and sport among migrants (Morela et al. 2019) and host (Morela et al. 2020) populations. Interestingly, participants highlighted the significance of the knowledge that PE teachers should have to create a fair and welcoming environment for everyone, an aspect has also been identified by PE teachers themselves (Columna, Foley, & Lytle, 2010; Papageorgiou et al., 2021).

Thinking of organized sport, the absence of refugees was spotted by participants. In general, such issues have been attributed to numerous reasons like socioeconomic factors (Dundar, 2019). In the context of Greece however, the lack of knowledge among refugee kids and parents regarding access and information regarding organized sport has also been identified (Filippou et al., 2019). The formation of ethnic clubs has been recognized as a solution for minorities to get physically active but also to get together and maintain their cultural identity (Elbe et al., 2016), however, in the case of Greece where contact and interaction are sought, structures to facilitate access to sport clubs for refugees are warranted.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to explore the experiences of Greek adolescents regarding their coexistence with refugee adolescents in different contexts, unveil their attitudes towards refugee acculturation, and inquire regarding the potential of PE as a context for the promotion of integration. The findings, despite the identified obstacles, showed mostly positive perspectives regarding the contact and the interaction of native and refugee adolescents, but also acceptance towards refugees' cultural maintenance, thus supporting the idea of refugee fruitful integration into society. Furthermore, physical education was widely recognized as a suitable context for cultural and personal exchange. The findings suggest that the PE should be exploited as an integrative agent that will further nurture the ideas of refugee's integration; nevertheless, for this idea to realize educational programmes to improve PE teachers' skills towards this particular direction are warranted.

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Ethical approval

The study was approved from the institution’s Research Ethics Committee.

Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants included in the study.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Table 1. The thematic map

| Codes | Sub-themes | Themes |
|---|---|--|
| Refugees' troublesome behaviors inside class | Discomfort of hosts to coexist and relate with refugee peers | (i) Stereotypical views and formed expectations keep them apart |
| Expectation for refugees to take the first step | | |
| Refugee kids response to hosts' ridicule | | |
| Lack of knowledge for the sport rules | | |
| Differences can nurture hostile behaviours | | |
| Non-optimal past experiences | Hosts justifying their refugee peers' distance | |
| Refugee girls hold to culturally learned gender appropriate interactions | | |
| Refugees holding racist views over hosts | | |
| Discomfortable to relate with "the different", but comfortable to greet them | Conditions for levels of comfort and discomfort | |
| Discomfortable to relate with "the different", but comfortable to hear their stories | | |
| Discomfortable to get close with "the different", but comfortable to share a desk | | |
| Refugee peers are considered as undesirable, non-existent, or fortunate to have the hosts as classmates | | |
| Acceptance of their cultural maintenance if it does not bother | | |
| Language barrier | Staying with "the known" | |
| Avoiding contact with hosts either by not joining classes and PE | | |
| Rationalization of separation (assumed needs of intimacy) | | |
| Effort to avoid discriminations based on stereotypes and generalizations for refugees | Fighting stereotypical views | |
| Imposing our known as the norm | Avoiding learning, understanding, and accepting | (ii) The tripartite approach of cultural practices |
| Keeping the unknown away from our traditions | | |
| Refugees' fear of racism in practicing to their own traditions | | |
| Participation is a human right | The human right of participation | |
| Maintaining cultural identity | | |
| Adapting with the new culture it's ok | | |
| Refugees are expected to learn about their new country | The need of finding a balance between the new and the old culture | |
| Obligated to seek for cultural balance | | |
| Free to find cultural balance | | |
| Opportunity for mutual learning | | |
| Mind opening experiences for which hosts feel grateful | | (iii) Genuine contact vs. basic interaction: 0-1 |
| Similarities and social offer – space for all | | |
| Living together is not that strange | | |
| Finding normalcy under new conditions | | |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Reception with love and understanding Peers' positive behaviors | | |
| Welcoming behavior by the hosts | | |
| Epidermic interaction – lack of pursuit of closer contact | | |
| Parents not trusting unknown influence on their children | | (iv) Parents are not helping their children find a path forward |
| Absence of interest about refugees at hosts' homes – avoidance to touch the sensitive topic of refugees | | |
| Parents accepting the unknown (based on equal opportunities for all while also acknowledging refugees' trauma – after having interaction) | | |
| Refugee kids staying with the known and PE teachers taking the easy way out (avoiding work with refugees) | Taking the easy way out by avoiding conflicts and their share of work | (v) The PE teacher has a role |
| Avoiding working with refugees | | |
| Avoiding conflicts with refugees at the expense of being unfair with the hosts | | |
| Avoiding working to learn, understand and accept the new and imposing his view | | |
| Uses hostile behaviors in their presence and racist behaviors in their absence | | |
| Justifying distance of host kids with refugee kids | | |
| PE teachers willing to be inclusive but lack knowledge and skills | Good intentions, but lack of knowledge to support change | |
| Co-existing and cooperation is made possible | PE teachers actively facilitating inclusion and interaction | |
| A common interest and point of connecting | | (vi) PE is a connecting point, a safe and inclusive place where all students co-exist and cooperate |
| Coexisting and cooperation is made possible | | |
| An equal space | | |

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An online PETE course on intercultural education for pre-service physical education teachers: A non-randomized controlled trial

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Disclosure statement

We have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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Abstract

Multicultural societies require educators' intercultural competence. This trial examined if attitudes and perceived competences of pre-service Physical Education (PE) teachers could be improved by an online, teacher education course structured upon the findings of the intercultural education through physical activity, coaching, and training (EDU:PACT) project. Following individual preferences, participants ($N = 129$) were allocated to this course or control condition of the usual University curriculum. The intervention vs. control group scored better in outcomes of skills, knowledge, and one attitude dimension post-intervention. This teacher education course may effectively train pre-service PE teachers on intercultural education.

Keywords: Controlled trial, Online course, Intercultural education, Pre-service PE teachers, Intercultural competence

1. Introduction

Many European countries have been experiencing a large influx of new migrants because of the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ of 2015 (UNHCR, 2015). For example, Greece welcomed large numbers of refugees, processing over 45,000 asylum requests between 2015 and 2017 (UNHCR, 2021). Subsequent changes in the demographic composition of European societies provide opportunities, challenges and potential for disruption across all spheres of society. Physical Education (PE) and sport are valuable tools to manage these opportunities and challenges. Sports represent an inherently social and interactive activity that promotes tolerance and fosters intercultural skills across groups (Cardenas, 2013; Puente-Maxera et al., 2020). Policymakers acknowledge the potential of sport to contribute to social integration and the development of diverse social groups (European Commission, 2011).

School-based PE encourages social inclusion by inherently connecting motor, emotional, cognitive, and social skills (Smith et al., 2021). The role of PE is vital, as schools can prepare future citizens for peaceful co-existence in an increasingly diverse and changing society (Grimminger-Seidensticker & Möhwald, 2017). For example, the Skaramagas project has shown that sports interventions delivered by adequately trained physical activity professionals support mental and physical health and school readiness of adolescent refugees living in a refugee camp in Greece (Adamakis, 2022).

Yet, numerous challenges impede the inclusive potential of PE. Multicultural school classes are often characterized by differences in habits, beliefs and norms within or between staff and pupils, which may create a “cultural gap” (Wyant et al., 2020, p. 526). Notably, many PE teachers do not feel confident about dealing with multicultural classes and may often receive inappropriate training (Papageorgiou et al., 2021). In particular, developing cultural understanding, using appropriate activities, guiding reflection processes (Abelson et al., 2017; Forde et al., 2015), managing physical

contact issues (Caldeborg, 2020), and handling stereotypes (Harrison, 2001) represent prominent challenges for PE teachers in multicultural settings.

Thus, PE teachers are in educational need to effectively respond to multicultural classes. Teachers' training needs to focus on the improvement of intercultural competence and sensitivity through a form of "intercultural education" (Portera, 2008) or "culturally responsive pedagogy" (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Indeed, PE teachers trained in intercultural education carry better knowledge and competences to teach in multicultural settings (Grimminger-Seidensticker & Möhwald, 2017, Wyant, 2020, Papageorgiou, et al., 2021). However, there is a need for continued, context-specific design and evaluation of Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programs/courses/trainings. Relevant outputs may enhance our ability to develop and improve training across various cultural and social contexts.

In light of the challenges of multiculturalism, this study aimed to respond to the emerging needs of intercultural education by evaluating the implementation of a European intercultural curriculum (EDU:PACT), which is designed to train sport and PE professionals. Specifically, this trial examined if an online PETE course designed and delivered for pre-service PE teachers could improve perceived intercultural educational competences and attitudes.

2. Literature review

2.1. Intercultural competence

Intercultural competence echoes the understanding of oneself and individual culture and facilitates social interaction or attempts to build positive relationships (Barrett et al., 2014). Investigating intercultural competence is a complex process as it is continuously evolving (Deardorff, 2006). The landmark tripartite model of Sue and colleagues (1982) entailing psychological grounds, conceptualizes how professionals build cross-cultural skilled counselling through three competence domains: a) *beliefs/attitudes* (e.g., cultural awareness of personal values, biases, and influences), b)

knowledge (e.g., information and understanding of sociopolitical systems and possible restrictions that other people are facing) and c) *skills* (e.g., various strategies of verbal and non-verbal responses).

The model of Sue and colleagues (1982) has been extended by Deardorff's (2006) theoretical model, which suggests how intercultural competence could be developed. In particular, Deardorff (2006) explains that intercultural competence is formed and influenced through a circular process of mutual interaction among three inherent components; (1) "attitudes" that are formed by cultivating ones' values, beliefs, open-mindedness, respect, and self-awareness; (2) "knowledge" that is shaped by realizing the process of understanding various cultural systems, considering restrictions others may face, and acknowledging sociolinguistic contexts; and (3) "skills" that are enforced through the ability to listen carefully and to observe and filter the received information. The circular process of developing these intercultural competences is achieved through an ongoing and lifelong interaction that vacillates between internal (e.g., adaptability, empathy) and external (e.g., interaction, communication) outcomes to lead to the desired effects. The three components must be adapted into a context-appropriate curriculum and plan of action. For instance, the component of "knowledge" may focus on specific socio-cultural backgrounds and how these influence learning behaviors. Importantly, educators should not solely develop new competencies, but also reinforce the existing ones under the intercultural perspective (Grimminger, 2011).

2.2. Components of PETE training on intercultural education

In Greece, schools PE teachers have previously obtained a 4-year bachelor's degree (European Commission, 2013) based on the Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and in line to the Dublin descriptors (Bologna Working Group, 2004). Particularly, Greek PE Departments organize their own curricula, which mostly include mandatory courses on sports coaching, pedagogy, psychology, and sport and exercise sciences. Apart from such "mainstream" courses, Greek pre-service PE teachers may also attend pedagogical practices including socio-

cultural development courses, however, they tend to prefer fitness and sport courses instead (Adamakis & Dania, 2020). Despite the lack of interest and training with respect to PE teaching in socio-cultural grounds, it is noteworthy that socio-cultural competence development is not a prerequisite to teach in multicultural educational settings. To this end, there is an urgent need to develop intercultural education for PE teachers in Greece.

To better respond to multicultural settings, curricula need to develop a cluster of competences for teachers. Gay (2002) prioritizes the development of knowledge on cultural diversity and on how involved values and beliefs may affect learning behaviors. Grimminger (2012) suggests that PE teachers should acquire strategies to challenge their personal beliefs and teaching abilities. Effective training should thus transform a typical intercultural class experience into learning. This learning process lies upon the credentials of the transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 2003) including decision-making, arguments support, reflection, and emotional change through self-analysis. In this vein, intercultural competences could be strengthened, especially if PE teachers focus on the reasons (why), the objects (what), and the ways (how) of an ongoing/flexible teaching, favoring the PE pedagogical character (Quennerstedt, 2019).

A successful response of pre-service PE teachers to multicultural classes may also rely on the instructors' qualities (Burden et al., 2004) including appraisal of the structure, dynamics, and contents of intercultural training (Gainer & Larrotta, 2010). To this extent, instructors' intercultural training strategy may comprise emotional and political engagement, criticism, social justice (Flintoff, 2014), diversity issues (e.g., race, religion, culture), teachable moments, psychological transformation (Gainer & Larrotta, 2010), decision-making (MacPherson, 2010) and reflection (Tarozzi, 2014). Such training strategies incorporate the ability to understand PE movements, express respect on cultural issues, and detect opportunities for critical thinking arising from the teaching process (Leseth & Engelsrud, 2019).

Focusing further on PETE training, Burden and colleagues (2004) report that a training program for intercultural competence development should lead PE teachers to develop self-reflection, understand how personal biases/perspectives are constructed, and consider the impact of sociocultural issues on building knowledge. Notably, Wyant and colleagues (2018, 2020) suggest reshaping current curricula into more inclusive and anti-biased formats for intercultural competence development. Moreover, they highlight the “hidden curriculum” that addresses stereotypes, and focuses on the value of the implicit social/cultural messages that emerge during a lesson. Further intercultural competence development is enforced if training includes critical group discussions on real narratives/stories to help participants exploring their identities. However, group discussions should have “perspective talking” or role-playing. In this vein, cultural gaps are offset and individual attitudes/understanding towards diversity are improved (Wyant et al., 2018).

Instructors need to enable PETE participants to adopt a lifelong procedure of self-regulation and self-assessment. This procedure is called “cultural humility” and helps instructors advance the design and delivery of PETE curricula so that beneficiaries work towards a just society (Cervantes & Clark, 2020, p. 59). Significant support to the PETE instructors could also be given through technological use. Technology can trigger participants’ teaching interest and critical awareness (Wyant et al., 2020), and provide PE teachers with instructional practices including teaching and feedback strategies (Daum et al., 2021). The use of technology appears to be important in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic, in which social distance is a structural barrier.

2.3. Previous research

To our best knowledge, there are six available intervention studies for intercultural education competences in pre-service PE teachers. Used strategies for improving intercultural competence were self-reflection (Anttila et al., 2018; Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021), ethical dilemmas, problem-solving (Culp et al., 2009; Meaney et al., 2008), non-verbal communication and positive affirmation (Anttila

et al., 2018), learning experiences focusing on social justice (Peralta et al., 2016), and how to design and implement teaching plans (Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021). All studies employed a valuable period of practicums in various settings, such as camps (Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021), housing communities for vulnerable populations (Domangue & Carson, 2008), reception centers (Anttila et al., 2018), schools (Culp et al., 2009; Peralta et al., 2016) or summer schools (Meaney et al., 2008).

Four of the studies mentioned above employed qualitative methods (e.g., focus groups, reflective journals) to assess post-intervention outcomes and found improvements in stereotypes, communication/linguistic skills, teaching expectations (Meaney et al., 2008), and personal (Culp et al., 2009) or learning experiences (Anttila et al., 2018; Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021). In the two studies adopting a quantitative methodology, outcomes recorded improved cultural skills, knowledge (Domangue & Carson, 2008; Peralta et al., 2016), and learning (Peralta et al., 2016).

Noteworthy, only one study that employed online intervention aiming to improve intercultural competence of in-service PE and sport teachers (Ko et al., 2015) was detected. The intervention was based on critical discussions among participants for experiences related to self-reflection on intercultural competence. Outcome assessments pre-/post-intervention included qualitative/quantitative methods and recorded improved attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors for multicultural contexts, despite the lack of practicum or face-to-face contacts. However, the study employed no theory-driven intervention, the sample size was small ($N = 14$), no psychometrics were reported for the adopted measures, and no control group was employed to facilitate a firmer conclusion based on a cause-and-effect relationship.

Nonetheless, previous research has shown methodological weaknesses concerning interventions. In particular, some studies were based on broader theoretical components, thus they lack a prior theoretical part focused on intercultural education (Culp et al., 2009; Meaney et al., 2008). Other studies tend to highlight the service-learning program with poorly reported (Anttila et al., 2018;

Domangue & Carson, 2008) or insufficient (Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021; Peralta et al., 2016) interculturally relevant theoretical components to support it.

Small sample sizes are an additional methodological limitation in previous research, with samples ranging from 14 (Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021) to 55 participants (Peralta et al., 2016). No power analysis has been reported justifying these small sample sizes. Only one study (Domangue & Carson, 2008) included a control group, but its total sample size was very small (N=16). Hence, available findings are inconclusive regarding causality, and thus, no firm implications can be drawn based on the available training programs/courses for PETE intercultural education. Given the increased risk of bias across available studies, further research needs to be conducted considering the above attributes in the literature. Moreover, further research needs to consider online interventions given their valuable characteristics (e.g., time and cost-effectiveness) and the increased needs for a deep understanding of support, design and delivery strategies that today's society for distance learning requires (Daum et al., 2021), especially when situations like Covid-19 lockdown measures are imposed and lead to increased social distance.

2.4. Purpose

This study aimed to examine whether the EDU:PACT program designed for pre-service PE teachers could improve their attitudes, skills, and knowledge on intercultural education. In particular, we hypothesized that the EDU:PACT program could bring about positive effects on pre-service PE teachers' intercultural attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Hence, the current non-randomized controlled trial was conducted to examine if an online PETE interventional course on intercultural education, based on the EDU:PACT program, could improve the intercultural competence of the pre-service PE teachers, compared to the control condition of the usual University curriculum.

3. Methodology

3.1. Intercultural education through the EDU:PACT module

As it has been reported in the literature review, training in intercultural education through PE and sports lacks theory-driven interventions. A promising tool to fill this gap is the module developed through the Erasmus+ funded project “Intercultural Education through Physical Activity, Coaching and Training” (EDU:PACT). The EDU:PACT project gathered academics and practitioners specialized in inclusion through sports from European Universities and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Comprehensive literature reviews, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in each country partner. Based on the EDU:PACT project findings, the EDU:PACT team developed a module on inclusive intercultural education through sport to improve the quality of pre-and in-service PE teachers and sports coaches (for a review of the project’s development and research outcomes, see Moustakas et al., 2021). The module is divided into four core units with both theoretical and practical components aiming to develop critical thinking, problem-solving (Meaney et al., 2008), self-reflection (Culp, 2009), and role-playing activities (Wyant et al., 2018).

Although intercultural education often focuses on understanding the foreign “other” (Grimminger, 2012), the starting point of the EDU:PACT module is oriented to cultural self-awareness or “learning about myself” (Bennett, 2009, p. S4). Therefore, unit 1 of the EDU:PACT module includes a theoretical package for individuals to explore: (a) their own cultural background and (b) how their cultural background mechanisms may affect personal perspectives and actions. This process takes time to be achieved. Thus, more hours were devoted to this unit. Unit 2 prioritizes building communication skills (e.g., active listening) and positive relationships (e.g., empathy, leadership managing) with others. Afterwards, the theoretical background of unit 3 aims to provide individuals with intercultural education tools to design and adjust activities effectively. For this purpose, specific knowledge and skills are essential prerequisites. These include understanding sub-cultures and relationships within a group, establishing clear and adjustable goals to the existing

context, and using strategies tailored to the group's needs (Kreuter et al., 2003). To effectively design and adjust intercultural sessions, the experiential learning model of Kolb (1984) and the intercultural education model of Gieß-Stüber (2010) were employed. Finally, the theoretical part of unit 4 refers to monitoring and evaluation. The key points of this unit aim to give feedback and guide individuals to self-reflection. In particular, in order to help individuals organize appropriate plans and address emerging focal problems, the theory of change tool (see Elseman et al., 2011) was presented. This method maps all the necessary changes (e.g., focal problems, needs, inputs, means) and helps achieve long-term goals. The structure of the EDU:PACT module is presented in Table 1.

The practical part of each unit includes individual or group activities of reflection, role-playing, brainstorming, and sport-related activities with shared goals. Group discussions then follow these activities. These discussions are framed by the R(reflect) – C(connect) – A(apply) method of Right to Play (2012). According to this method, the *R* refers to what participants observed or experienced during the activity, the *C* includes questions leading to the connection of the subsequent experience to real life, while the *A* mirrors the benefits gained from the activity and relevant usefulness in practice. The RCA method guides participants to group discussions and triggers their self-reflection process. Importantly, this module is flexible and can be adjusted to the target group, context, and time availability. For a detailed description of the EDU:PACT module, see Reynard and colleagues (2020).

Consequently, the current study presents the implementation of the EDU:PACT module described above in the Greek context, by designing and implementing a PETE course on intercultural education. The course was adjusted to be conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Still, it contained the individual- and group-based activities suggested by the EDU:PACT module. Activities were adjusted to the online circumstances where needed (e.g., sport-related activities or discussions, for instance, watching and discussing relevant videos).

3.2. Participants and procedures

Participants were recruited on a University campus located in Greece in a city of 80,000 residents. This specific city has hosted a large amount of both refugees and migrants since 2017. The present study consists of two phases. In the first phase, an invitation was sent to the 3rd year students to inform them of the new optional course “Intercultural Education through Physical Education” and the pre-and post-intervention measurements that would be forwarded to the participants through an online battery of questionnaires. Three hundred twenty-seven (174 males and 153 females) pre-service PE teachers (M_{age} : 20.71±4.34 years old) voluntarily participated in the pre-intervention measurement. The EDU:PACT Module was designed to be delivered through the aforementioned optional online course due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This course was addressed to the 3rd year students as it was considered important for the participants to have already attended some courses of the basic curriculum and have experienced at least one practicum in schools.

One hundred twenty-nine (59 males and 70 females) of them (M_{age} : 22.57±5.85 years old) accepted to participate as volunteers also in the 2nd phase of this trial that included pre-and post-intervention measurements. The pre-service PE teachers who preferred to select the optional course were allocated to the experimental group ($N = 41$; 14 males and 27 females), whereas those students who did not prefer to select the optional course were allocated to the control group and continued their routine educational curriculum ($N = 88$; 45 males and 43 females). A 2x2 quasi-experimental design with repeated measures was followed.

Importantly, based on an a priori power analysis (G*Power program version 3.1; Faul et al., 2007) for repeated measures ANOVA, a sample size of 34 participants was proposed. This was based on an expected medium effect size of .25, a power of .80, and $p < .05$ (e.g., Cohen, 1992; Uttley, 2019), and an acceptable power of .81 for repeated measures ANOVA. Accordingly, the sample size of this trial ($N = 129$ for both measurements) exceeded the number of participants required to have sufficiently acceptable statistical power. It is important to mention here that the selected effect size

(.25) was based on previous intervention programs, implemented on secondary school students or PE graduate students, that found medium to large effect sizes on their participants' intercultural education and competence (Grimminger-Seidensticker & Möhwald, 2017; Ko et al., 2015).

The course was implemented for 14 weeks (spring semester) in 2020-2021 for a total of 42 hours. The instructor was a member of the EDU-PACT consortium that practiced all activities across several meetings before the present implementation. The delivery of the course was conducted through the MS Teams platform. The opportunity of "breakout rooms" provided by this platform was exploited to engage participants in group discussions and reflective processes. Powerpoint presentations were used for delivering the theoretical part of the sessions (see Table 1), while the practical part included activities such as brainstorming, storytelling, personal reflections-sharings, video watching-commenting of sports activities, and group discussions (see Flow Diagram of Research Design). Participants also had the chance to present the ideas of their group discussions online. To ensure implementation fidelity, the trained instructor carried out careful time-management in each presentation to assure that all activities would be properly delivered. Moreover, immediately after each activity the instructor completed a checklist ensuring that each of the activities show in Table 1 had been appropriately implemented. Due to university policy about personal data protection, the online seminars were not recorded, although another Greek researcher participating in the EDU-PACT consortium attended 20% of the classes and confirmed that all activities were delivered in line with expectations.

At the end of the semester, participants were evaluated in written and oral exams, and they had the chance to provide and justify their self-assessment. The study was approved by the Bioethics Committee of the School of PE and Sport Science, university of Thessaly, (Ref. Number: 3-1/4-12-2019). The participants also signed a consent form before data collection.

3.3. Measures

Two prominent, validated questionnaires were used to measure participants' attitudes, skills, and knowledge. First, Stanley's (1996) Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment (PADAA) was used. The PADAA consists of 19 items and is divided into four subscales, (i) Appreciate Cultural Pluralism (e.g., "students should be taught to respect those who are different from themselves"), (ii) Value Cultural Pluralism (e.g., "students should feel pride in their heritage"), (iii) Implement Cultural Pluralism (e.g., "physical educators should plan activities that meet the diverse needs and develop the unique abilities of students from different ethnic backgrounds") and (iv) Uncomfortable with Cultural Diversity (e.g., "I am uncomfortable around students whose ethnic heritage is different from my own").

Second, the Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS) developed by Spanierman and colleagues (2011) was also employed. This survey features 16 items and two subscales, (i) self-reported skills or behaviors in implementing culturally sensitive teaching practices (e.g., "I integrate the cultural values and lifestyles of racial and ethnic minority groups into my teaching") and (ii) self-reported knowledge of culturally responsive theories, resources, and classroom (e.g., "I am knowledgeable about racial and ethnic identity theories"). Participants responded to statements from each questionnaire on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). In the present study, due to high correlations between the two factors (ranged from .83 at pre-intervention measure to .91 at post-intervention measure), a single factor model was created incorporating both sub-scales into one (Skill and Knowledge scale).

These two surveys were chosen as they measure crucial attitudes, knowledge, and skills associated with intercultural competence (see Deardorff, 2006). Furthermore, these specific questionnaires have been widely used in the PE context and are seen as pertinent measurement tools for this field (e.g., Columna et al., 2010; Domangue & Carson, 2008, Harrison et al., 2010; Lucas, 2011, Peralta et al., 2016; Rukavina et al., 2019). Finally, a five-step back-to-back translation

procedure was used to adapt the two scales (PADAA, MTCS) for the Greek language based on the guidelines proposed by Beaton and colleagues (2000). This procedure was selected since: (a) no study has previously examined the factor structure of PADAA using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and (b) this is the first time that both questionnaires have been used in Greece.

3.4. Data Analysis

All data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 and IBM SPSS Amos 20. The level of significance was set at $p < .05$. Initially, the construct validity of the two scales (PADAA, MTCS) was evaluated via CFA in both measures (pre, post). More specifically, chi-square (χ^2), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were used for the evaluation of each model (e.g., Cheung & Rensvold, 2002; Hu & Bentler, 1999). We mainly focused on TLI because it is less affected by sample size (Marsh et al., 1988). Maximum Likelihood Estimation was used, and no correlated residuals were permitted. Cronbach's α index (Cronbach, 1951) was also employed to assess the internal consistency of the two scales. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were calculated for all the examined variables. The normality of data distribution was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. All the examined variables followed normal distribution in both (pre and post) measurements ($p > .05$). Thus, two-way repeated measures ANCOVA (2x2) were used to examine possible differences between time (pre vs post measure), group (experimental vs control), and interaction between time and group on pre-service PE teachers' attitudes, skills, and knowledge, after controlling for gender effects.

4. Results

4.1. Confirmatory factor analysis, reliability analysis, and descriptive statistics

Four separate CFAs were conducted to confirm the construct validity of the two instruments (PADAA, MCTS) in both measurements (pre, post). After removing five items from PADAA (items

6 and 10 of Value Cultural Pluralism, item 11 loading of Implement Cultural Pluralism, and items 13 and 17 loading of Appreciate Cultural Pluralism) and three items from MTCS (items 4, 7 and 12, due to high covariation with other variables, the results of the CFAs showed acceptable goodness-of-fit indices (see Table 2). These items were excluded from subsequent analyses, including the calculation of scale scores.

Reliability analysis at pre-and post-intervention measurements showed very high internal consistency for the skills and knowledge scale, marginally acceptable values for the attitudinal scales except for the variable uncomfortable diversity and cultural pluralism that showed low reliability at the post-intervention measure ($\alpha = .44$), implying that results based on this scale should be interpreted with caution. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) and Cronbach's α reliability index for all participants at pre-and post-intervention measures are presented below in Table 3.

4.2. Differences between time (pre- vs post-intervention) and groups (experimental vs control)

Two-way ANCOVAs (2x2) with repeated measures were used to examine possible differences between time (pre- vs post-intervention measure), group (experimental vs control), and interaction between time and group on pre-service PE teachers' examined variables after controlling for gender effects. No significant intervention effects emerged in appreciate cultural pluralism ($F_{1,126} = 3.477$, $p = .07$, $\eta_p^2 = .027$), value cultural pluralism ($F_{1,125} = 2.282$, $p = .133$, $\eta_p^2 = .018$), and implement cultural pluralism ($F_{1,124} = .415$, $p = .521$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$) after controlling for gender. The covariate gender had no significant effects in any of these analyses.

In contrast, there was a significant interaction between the effects of time (pre, post) and group (experimental, control) on pre-service PE teachers' uncomfortable with cultural diversity scale, ($F_{1,126} = 6.840$, $p < .015$, $\eta_p^2 = .051$) after controlling for gender effects ($F_{1,126} = .341$, $p = .560$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$). Analyzing this interaction in terms of time (pre, post), simple main effects analysis revealed significant differences in pre-service PE teachers' uncomfortable with cultural diversity

scale only at the experimental group between pre and post measures, $F(1,126) = 4.620, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .035$. Pre-service PE teachers reported lower scores on uncomfortable with cultural diversity scale at the post-intervention measure compared to the pre-measure (Figure 1). No significant differences emerged at the control group between pre and post measures, $F(1,126) = 2.298, p = .132, \eta_p^2 = .018$. Furthermore, analyzing this interaction in terms of groups (experimental, control), simple main effects analysis unveiled significant differences at the post-intervention measure between the experimental and control group, $F(1,126) = 7.903, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .059$. Experimental group participants reported lower scores on uncomfortable with cultural diversity compared to the control group after EDU:PACT course implementation (Figure 1).

Finally, there was a significant interaction between the effects of time (pre, post) and group (experimental, control) on pre-service PE teachers' skills and knowledge scale ($F(1,125) = 166.606, p < .001$), indicating very high effects size ($\eta_p^2 = .571$) after controlling for gender ($F(1,125) = .144, p = .705, \eta_p^2 = .001$). Analyzing this interaction in terms of time (pre, post), simple main effects analysis revealed significant differences in pre-service PE teachers' skills and knowledge scale only at the experimental group between pre and post measures, $F(1,125) = 245.656, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .63$. Pre-service PE teachers reported higher scores on skills and knowledge scale at the post-intervention measure compared to the pre-measure (Figure 2). No significant differences emerged at the control group between pre and post measures, $F(1,125) = .0064, p = .940, \eta_p^2 = .000$. Furthermore, analyzing this interaction in terms of groups (experimental, control), simple main effects analysis unveiled significant differences at the pre-intervention measure between the experimental and control group, $F(1,125) = 8.844, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .066$. More specifically, the control group reported higher skill and knowledge compared to the experimental group at the pre-intervention measure. Similarly, simple main effects analysis unveiled significant differences at the post-intervention measure between experimental and control group, $F(1,125) = 91.096, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .422$. More specifically, the experimental group reported higher skills and knowledge compared to the control group after the

implementation of the EDU:PACT course (Figure 2). Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) of all the examined variables are presented in Table 3.

5. Discussion

This study delivered the EDU:PACT program based on intercultural education through PE and sports as an optional course for pre-service PE teachers in an online format due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The EDU:PACT structure aligns with Stanley's suggestion (1995) that teachers first need to reflect on personal biases and understand others' perspectives before any response to multicultural classes. In line with this aspect, we did not focus on the way that participants could deal with multicultural classes, but on the prior steps of self-exploration (attitudes), obtaining cultural knowledge (knowledge), developing communication skills, as well as designing and assessing appropriate sessions (skills). Overall, critical elements of the present course were encouragement for critical thinking in designing sessions on intercultural education based on sport activities, development of self-evaluation (Right to Play, 2012), and critical self-reflection (Romijn et al., 2021).

This PETE course proved effective in helping participants develop their perceived knowledge and skills to teach within multicultural contexts. Spanierman and colleagues (2011) suggested that perceived knowledge and skills are important indicators of teachers' intercultural competence, probably more so than intercultural attitudes. Concerning attitudes on cultural diversity, the course participants demonstrated a statistically significant improvement only in one dimension.

5.1. *Impact after the implementation of the PETE course on skills and knowledge*

Post-intervention analysis revealed that the experimental group demonstrated statistically significant improvement in perceived skills and knowledge compared to pre-intervention. This finding is consistent with intervention outcomes of studies adopting a qualitative methodology

(Domangue & Carson, 2008; Ko et al., 2015; Meaney et al., 2008), even though different approaches were followed in the latter (e.g., housing communities or school practicums, online partnerships with another country). In this study the two scales, skills and knowledge were combined to one due to their high correlation, however separate analyses that are not reported here revealed similar intervention effects on either skills or knowledge subscale to the reported effects for the single scale.

In light of the improved perceived knowledge and skills, it is noteworthy that the present intervention embedded no practicum in multicultural contexts, despite opposite suggestions by other researchers (e.g., Anttila et al., 2018; Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021; Culp et al., 2009; Meaney et al., 2008; Peralta et al., 2016). However, the improvement of perceived skills and knowledge is justified by the fact that the intervention included certain characteristics. In particular, the present intervention included a continuous discussion as to how knowledge is constructed through various cultures, ethnicities, genders, and social status differences (DeSensi, 1995). Further, sharing experiences, challenging personal assumptions, organizing reflection processes, and setting group discussions (Domangue & Carson, 2008; Right to Play, 2012) might have affected perceived knowledge and skills improvement. It should be highlighted that even though these pre-service PE teachers did not actively participate in sport activities due to the online delivery of the course, they watched, reflected, and discussed videos concerning ways of improving teaching quality. Thus, through ongoing discussions and feedback, participants had the chance to hear and question others' perspectives, negotiate their own, and broaden their way of thinking when it comes to sport activities in multicultural contexts.

The large size effect in the improvement of perceived skills and knowledge is noteworthy. Ko and colleagues (2015) found a similar large size effect in one of their variables (behavioral cultural intelligence), while the effect sizes in the studies of Peralta and colleagues (2016) and Domangue and Carson (2008) were considerably lower. Beyond the aforementioned characteristics of EDU:PACT, it should also be noted that this was a 42-hour course lasting an entire university

semester (14 weeks) embedded within the typical university program. Hence, potentially in the eyes of participants, this course had the quality, quantity and prestige of a good university course plus the prestige of a European program developed by a multinational group of experts in the field of intercultural teaching. All these features of this course might explain its large impact on the development of pre-service teachers' perceived skills and knowledge in a novel field for themselves.

Future research might examine whether a replication of the present study might lead to similarly high levels of perceived skills and knowledge due to participation in EDU:PACT training and whether these levels would be sustained after teaching in multicultural classes. These high levels of perceived skills and knowledge might decrease after facing challenges in teaching multicultural classes. On the other hand, high perceived skills and knowledge increase researchers' intrinsic motivation and correspondingly adaptive teaching behaviors (Bandura, 1986; Ryan & Deci, 2017), which might lead to a virtuous circle through further reinforcement of pre-service teachers' high perceptions of skills and knowledge. Hence, future studies might compare the effects of an EDU:PACT training group with other intercultural program training groups, all of them followed by a practicum in multicultural classes. In these designs, teachers' intrinsic motivation and motivational outcomes should be assessed (e.g., Gorozidis & Papaioannou, 2014) to understand the underlying dynamics affecting teacher effectiveness in multicultural settings.

5.2. Impact after the implementation of the PETE course on attitudes

The experimental vs the control group showed a non-significant improvement in the intercultural attitudes concerning appreciation and value of cultural diversity and pluralism and willingness to implement cultural pluralism into a class. These findings are similar to others' who examined intervention effects on PE teachers' intercultural attitudes assessed via PADAA (Lucas, 2011). These intercultural attitude indices are stable and in-depth beliefs that do not change easily (Garmon, 2005).

Although certain strategies to reduce participants' biases were used during the program (e.g., identifying the self with the outgroup, exposure to stereotypical examples, inducing emotions, self-discovery), only one of the attitudes dimensions had a statistically significant improvement. A possible explanation for teachers' attitudes towards diversity could be the specific cultural context of the country that the intervention takes place each time (Van Steen & Wilson, 2020). To this extent, Greek society has recently experienced incoming flows of large numbers of refugees (UNHCR, 2021). As a result, various social factors might have played a critical role in shaping values and beliefs concerning cultural diversity. According to FitzGerald and colleagues (2019), it remains blurred why during some interventions, attitudes change, while in others, not, even when longer periods of training and repeated exposure are present. Future interventions could also enrich EDU:PACT with features suggested by Addleman and colleagues (2014). According to these researchers, a more focused intervention on empathy, developing respect for cultural differences, and organized cross-cultural experiences could create more positive results concerning pre-service teachers' attitudes towards diversity.

Still, the intervention had a positive effect on decreasing the attitude "feeling uncomfortable to be in contact with culturally diverse populations". This positive finding seems encouraging considering that the present participants had no chance to be involved in practice within multicultural contexts and thus build up experiences that could eventually minimize relevant uncomfortable feelings. For example, Domangue and Carson (2008) reported that participation in activities involving practice within multicultural contexts helps participants to feel more comfortable. On the other hand, the lack of practical experience in the present intervention study might explain why the other three attitudinal variables did not change. A potential explanation is that participants were constantly encouraged to interact through brainstorming, workshops, and group discussions in small and in larger groups, as also suggested by Ko and colleagues (2015). Further, our trial participants were provided with the required time to think, discuss, and reflect on the direction of a lifespan self-

critique, which according to Cervantes and Clark (2020), is valuable for cultural consciousness. The same researchers noted that for PE teachers, feelings of being comfortable in multicultural classes might be affected by their self-efficacy to interact with culturally diverse students. To this extent, participants in the experimental group experienced an improvement in perceived skills and knowledge to teach to culturally diverse students, which made them feel more comfortable with these students after their training.

Although changing participants' beliefs and attitudes does not mean that their behaviors or teaching styles will directly change (Romijn et al., 2021), a partial improvement in attitudes could be promising for a progressive behavioral enhancement in the future.

5.3. Limitations

This trial has various limitations. First, the PETE course was delivered online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This delivery mode did not provide trial participants with opportunities to put learning outputs into action. Second, outcome measures were self-reports; hence, various confounding variables (e.g., social desirability) may have biased our findings. Third, the PADAA sub-scales showed marginally acceptable or low internal consistency, which might be due to the small number of items in each sub-scale (three to four items in each factor). According to Drost (2011; p. 111) "*coefficients of internal consistency increase as the number of items goes up, to a certain point*". Hence, results related to PADAA sub-scales should be interpreted with caution. Fourth, group allocation was based on individual preferences. Thus, the nature of our trial design is prone to such risk of bias given that no randomization was implemented and our participants were volunteers. Consequently, outcome expectations may have influenced our findings. However, it should be noted, that, although the intervention vs the control group showed significantly lower levels of intercultural skills pre-intervention, the former group showed a larger improvement in the relevant outcome post-intervention.

5.4. Further implications

Many PE teachers show a lack of intercultural competence (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011; Grimminger, 2011; Papageorgiou et al., 2021) and thus deficient teaching process, low expectations towards culturally diverse groups, and negative stereotypes about academic/social success (Harrison, 2001; Townsend, 2002). Therefore, the design and delivery of PETE programs/courses aiming to develop intercultural competence may represent an important step forward.

Echoing the findings of Phelps and colleagues (2021), PETE courses need to provide clear strategies when technological content is used. This is especially the case in the era of widespread on-line education worldwide, or in the era of Covid-19 pandemic when the lockdown measures are imposed, and social distance affects teaching courses. To this extent, it is promising that the delivery of individual and grouped online strategies involving commenting of images, watching videos, or sharing experiences, enabled our participants to reflect on interventional experiences, and discuss the desired outcomes. Also, participants watched, collected, filtered, and debated through sport activities, thought of possible modifications, and, thus, examined their teaching strategies in detail. It is encouraging that despite the on-line delivery of the intervention, participants were involved in teaching scenarios of “case studies”. To this extent, focused discussions were conducted, feedback was specific, and participants' perceptions of learning increased. Similar findings have been presented by Ryan and Scott (2008). However, our intention is not to idealize the online course, since online physical education options in training were present and popular pre-pandemic and are likely to be expanded post-pandemic (Daum et al, 2021). Our main goal is to make the best use of the online form of teaching, following the requirements of the twenty-first century, and to broaden the available options for organized trainings, especially in contexts such as that of intercultural education. Collectively, PETE online interventional courses on intercultural education through sports appears to be a promising strategy. Such an approach could be also considered for other teaching courses.

6. Conclusion

In light of global population mobility, multicultural societies need to provide educational staff with sufficient training to serve multicultural groups of pupils' best. Thus, a controlled trial with PETE training based on the EDU:PACT program was delivered as an online, 14-week course to improve intercultural educational competences in pre-service PE teachers. Findings demonstrated that the intervention vs the control group showed increases in “skills” and “knowledge” on cultural diversity and decreases in the attitudinal variable “feeling uncomfortable with cultural diversity” but not in three other attitudinal variables. Additional merit to our findings concerns the fact that the PETE course was delivered online considering the social distance measures of the Covid-19 pandemic. Accordingly, the current online PETE course could support intercultural training endeavors, especially since it is adjustable to various delivery forms/contexts. However, future trials with a randomized control design and follow-up practicums are welcome for firmer conclusions.

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Table 1. Description of the online course, based on the EDU:PACT program.

| Unit 1 - Understanding yourself | | | |
|---|-------|---|--|
| <u>Aims:</u> to process the idea of “self” and provide directions towards critical thinking and self-awareness, so that the novice PE teacher can gain a better understanding not only of their personal biases but also of broader socio-cultural forces. [15 hours] | | | |
| Weeks | Units | Theoretical Part | Practical Activities |
| 1 st | 1 | <u>Introduction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Globalization ✓ Clarification of key terms (immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, host country, incoming population, multiculturalism, interculturalism) ✓ Fundamentals and goals of intercultural education ✓ Current situation in the country and Europe ✓ Facilitators and barriers for PE as a tool in integration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions about: “What culture means to you?” and “What intercultural education means to you?” ➤ Group discussions about: “Which are the facilitators of PE lesson related to the needs of intercultural education?” ➤ Group discussions about: “Which are the barriers of physical education lesson related to the needs of intercultural education?” |
| 2 nd | 1 | <u>The role of PE educators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Challenges that PE educators are facing ✓ Intercultural education models ✓ National/cultural identity ✓ Acculturation strategies ✓ Ice-breakers activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions about: “What does a PE teacher need to know in order to teach in a multicultural class?” ➤ Group discussions about: “What changes that people who are forced to change their country of residence are experiencing and in which areas?” |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Group discussion strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ball and adjective (group discussion of this activity) (Edu-Pact handbook, p.-27) |
| 3 rd | 1 | <u>Understanding myself</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teachers as “important others” ✓ Professional self – personal self ✓ Interpersonal self ✓ R-C-A method ✓ Self-reflection questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Life mapping (Edu-Pact handbook, p.-29) ➤ Case study (group discussion of children’s profiles based on real stories) from “Right to Play”. ➤ Hope is in the air (group discussion of this activity) (Edu-Pact, p.-33) |
| 4 th | 1 | <u>Effective PE teacher</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self-confidence ✓ Self-control ✓ Self-determination ✓ Adaptability ✓ Presentation skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions and presentation of drawings of “good” and “bad” PE teachers by highlighting their special characteristics on the paper. ➤ Professional coaching with intercultural education (group discussions of PE teachers’ behaviors towards minorities). |
| 5 th | 1 | <u>Stereotypes – prejudices</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ General information on Islam (religion, dress codes, nutrition habits) ✓ Muslim females in sports ✓ Intercultural schools in Greece ✓ “Traps” on intercultural way of thinking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Brainstorming on: “Which are the keywords that are coming up when you hear the word Muslims?”. ➤ Group discussions on: “Do you think that there are any challenges or difficulties for Muslim girls in PE lesson in Greece? If yes, which are those?” |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stereotypes, prejudices and racism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bursting stereotypes (group discussions on ideas about how to design activities that could combine motor skills and reflection among our future pupils on stereotypes). Based on Arigatou International, 2014. |
| <p><u>Sources of practical activities:</u></p> <p>Arigatou International (2014). Learning to live together. https://jliflc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Arigatou-GPS-No2-Learning-to-Play-Together-EN.pdf</p> <p>Reynard, S., Moustakas, L., & Petry, K. (eds.) (2020). <i>EDU:PACT Module Handbook: Teaching and Learning Guidelines on Intercultural Education through Physical Activity, Coaching Training</i>. Vienna. Available at: http://edupact.sporteducation.eu/</p> <p>Right to Play https://www.righttoplay.ca/en-ca/stories/</p> | | | |
| Unit 2 - Understanding others | | | |
| <p><u>Aims:</u> to develop concepts of empathy, active listening, leadership management and cooperation, to cultivate communication skills and to promote respectful and mutual understanding. [9 hours]</p> | | | |
| 6 th | 2 | <p><u>Understanding others</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Communication - viewpoint issues ✓ Empathy ✓ Active listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elephant tag (storytelling and role-playing activity. Story of an elephant that was seen in different ways from five people, e.g., huge as a wall, smooth as a snake). ➤ Empathy blockers (activity of role-playing in pairs in which one should think of a real or an imaginary problem to share with the other who had to respond according to the predetermined roles, e.g., ordering, advising, reassuring, babbling. Group discussion as a whole followed). |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Listening for need (group discussions on certain statements, e.g., “Wait until my turn comes to act as unfairly as they did”, and cooperation to find the arising need from each statement). |
| 7 th | 2 | <u>Behavior management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developing messages ✓ Anxiety and behaviors associated with traumatic experiences ✓ Post-traumatic stress disorder ✓ Contribution of educators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Message in a ball (group discussions and cooperation among participants to convert “I messages” e.g., “You are unfair, you should not push this player back”, to “You messages” e.g., “Pushing back other players is unfair”). ➤ Mimes – communication in diverse ways (group discussions on designing activities for children combining cooperation and mimic patters e.g., representation of an unfair behavior on a basketball match and leading discussions afterwards). ➤ Sheet volley (group discussion - activity from the Edu-Pact handbook p.-67). |
| 8 th | 2 | <u>Leadership</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Leadership behaviors ✓ Model of intercultural counseling competence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussion on: “What leadership means to you and which skills a leader should have?” ➤ Helium pole (watching a video with this activity and having a |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) ✓ Monitoring interviewing | <p>group discussion on its further use)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Motivational interviewing (group discussions based on this method according to a predetermined scenario) ➤ Grow (activity from the Edu-Pact handbook p.-51). |
| <p><u>Sources of practical activities:</u></p> <p>Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2012). <i>Motivational interviewing: Helping people change</i>. Guilford press.</p> <p>Reynard, S., Moustakas, L., & Petry, K. (eds.) (2020). <i>EDU:PACT Module Handbook: Teaching and Learning Guidelines on Intercultural Education through Physical Activity, Coaching Training</i>. Vienna. Available at: http://edupact.sporteducation.eu/</p> <p>Video (Activity “Helium pole”) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWAlOfnhCKI</p> | | | |
| <p>Unit 3 - Planning and delivering sessions</p> | | | |
| <p><u>Aims:</u> to focus on components of the didactical approach of intercultural education (e.g., methods, activities, session design, conflict resolution) through the Gieß-Stüber’s (2010) sport directions. [9 hours]</p> | | | |
| 9 th | 3 | <p><u>Conflict resolution</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cooperative learning ✓ Forms, causes and effects of conflicts ✓ Conflict resolution ✓ Ways of responding during conflicts ✓ Collaborative problem solving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions on: “Which are the benefits for children when they experience collaborative learning?” ➤ Team up approach to building peace (brainstorming on the word “conflict” and then participants were asked to separate their ideas into forms, causes and effects of conflicts in groups). ➤ Flight-Fight-Unite (group discussions on how one could |

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| | | | <p>combine this tripartite of reactions during a conflict with a motor pattern to enable children in a reflection process of how people react during a conflict).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Football field (group discussion on this activity of the Edu-Pact handbook p.-73). ➤ Human knot (video watching of this activity and group discussions). |
| 10 th | 3 | <p><u>Competencies on practical issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Positive reinforcement ✓ Communication issues ✓ Spread messages ✓ Resilience ✓ Role games | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Problem solving (storytelling of the parable of two frogs – group discussions on positive reinforcement). ➤ “Yes, and” versus “No, but” (role playing activity as the instructor asked participants an open question and responded on purpose positively using the phrase “yes, and” to some of the participants who voluntarily answered, while responded negatively to others using the phrase “no, but”. Group discussion on positive reinforcement and communication issues followed). ➤ Rumor spread (video watching and group discussion on rumor spreading and its’ possible implications). |

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| 11 th | 3 | <u>Planning and developing intercultural learning sessions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teachable moments ✓ Achievement motivation theory ✓ Self – monitoring theory ✓ Cultural sensitivity ✓ Mix-gender activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions about: “How can you organize a PE lesson in a multicultural class? What are the key points to take care of?” ➤ Teachable moments (group discussions on how to create those kinds of moments during the lesson e.g., creating role-playing conditions to then enable children to carry out reflection processes). ➤ Five tricks (watching video – Barnga and group discussions followed). |
| <p><u>Sources of practical activities:</u></p> <p>Reynard, S., Moustakas, L., & Petry, K. (eds.) (2020). <i>EDU:PACT Module Handbook: Teaching and Learning Guidelines on Intercultural Education through Physical Activity, Coaching Training</i>. Vienna. Available at: http://edupact.sporteducation.eu/</p> <p>Video (Activity “Human knot”) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbCPau5YL0g&t=2s&fbclid=IwAR1cTIzZ2SRTm795sOuA1dYEWGxcPxQBfNREnROKzg1</p> <p>Video (Activity “Rumor spread”) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnbfhCyHPaA&t=232s</p> <p>Video (Activity “Barnga”) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9KMksUIH2Q&t=101s</p> | | | |
| <p>Unit 4 - Monitoring and evaluation</p> <p><u>Aims:</u> to deal with self-assessment and process evaluation, giving feedback as an opportunity to engage participants in a reflective mindset. Concepts of self-improvement (e.g., the definition of a focal problem, effects, causes, ways of dealing with it) are also negotiated during this unit. [9 hours]</p> | | | |
| 12 th | 4 | <u>Observation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduction to observation skills ✓ Factors affecting observation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group discussion about: “What do you think of the word observation?” - “Which elements would you observe in your students?” |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Observations on students and teachers ✓ Forms of observation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Which elements would you observe in a PE teacher during the lesson?” - “Which are the factors that affect the way we observe others?” ➤ Picture observation (participants were asked to observe a picture for 30” and then they were asked some questions about details of this picture with the aim of reflecting on the accidental and the organized observation and value both depending on the circumstances). |
| 13 th | 4 | <p><u>Monitoring and evaluating</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduction to the concept of evaluation ✓ Objectives and characteristics of students’ assessment ✓ Sources of evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Problem tree (activity based on the Edu-Pact handbook p.-79). ➤ Group discussions on the activity “Find the words” and possible adaptation using motor skills (Edu-Pact handbook p.-92). |
| 14 th | 4 | <p><u>Self - assessment and evaluation of the program</u></p> <p>Group discussions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Highlighting of the core messages of every Unit ✓ Self – reflection about attitudes, competencies and skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Five fingers (group discussions based on the activity of the Edu-Pact handbook p.-90). ➤ Living scale (group discussions based on the activity of the Edu-Pact handbook p.-88). ➤ Group discussions on what changes, additions or removals |

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| | | | should be done in the whole course. |
| <p><u>Sources of practical activities:</u></p> <p>Moustakas, L. & Petry, K. (2020). EDU:PACT Module Handbook – Teaching and learning guidelines on intercultural education through physical activity, coaching and training.</p> <p>https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349493390_EDUPACT_Module_Handbook_-_Teaching_and_Learning_Guidelines_on_Intercultural_Education_through_Physical_Activity_Coaching_and_Training</p> | | | |

Table 2. CFAs goodness-of-fit indexes.

| Instruments | Number of factors | Measure | <i>N</i> | χ^2 | df | χ^2/df | TLI | CFI | SRMR | RMSEA (90% CI) |
|-------------|-------------------|---------|----------|----------|----|-------------|-----|-----|------|-----------------|
| PADAA | 4 | Pre | 313 | 150.71 | 71 | 2.12 | .91 | .93 | .05 | .07 (.05 - .07) |
| PADAA | 4 | Post | 129 | 101.0 | 71 | 1.42 | .93 | .94 | .07 | .06 (.03 - .08) |
| MTCS | 2 | Pre | 323 | 206.90 | 65 | 3.18 | .92 | .93 | .05 | .08 (.07 - .09) |
| MTCS | 2 | Post | 129 | 148.88 | 65 | 2.29 | .92 | .93 | .05 | .10 (.08 - .12) |

Notes. PADAA: Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment; MTCS: Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale; *N*: number of participants; χ^2 : chi-square; *df*: degrees of freedom; TLI: Tucker-Lewis Index; CFI: Comparative Fit Index; SRMR: Standardized root mean squared residual; RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; 90% CI: 90% Confidence interval.

Table 3. Cronbach's α reliability index and descriptive statistics on the examined variables between time (pre, post) and group (experimental, control).

| Variables | Total | | Experimental Group | | | | Control Group | | | |
|---|-------|------|--------------------|-----|------|-----|---------------|-----|------|-----|
| | Pre | Post | Pre | SD | Post | SD | Pre | SD | Post | SD |
| Appreciate diversity and cultural pluralism | .64 | .69 | 5.85 | .30 | 5.90 | .17 | 5.75 | .43 | 5.66 | .46 |
| Value diversity and cultural pluralism | .69 | .67 | 5.13 | .62 | 5.29 | .59 | 4.99 | .68 | 4.98 | .63 |
| Implement diversity and cultural pluralism | .65 | .82 | 5.18 | .57 | 5.33 | .58 | 4.99 | .67 | 5.03 | .74 |
| Uncomfortable diversity and cultural pluralism* | .68 | .44 | 1.96 | .88 | 1.75 | .60 | 1.99 | .64 | 2.09 | .59 |
| Skills and Knowledge *** | .92 | .95 | 3.78 | .75 | 5.33 | .50 | 4.18 | .70 | 4.17 | .68 |

Notes. *M* = Mean; *SD* = Standard Deviation; α = Cronbach's α reliability index; Pre = Pre-intervention measure; Post = Post-intervention measure.

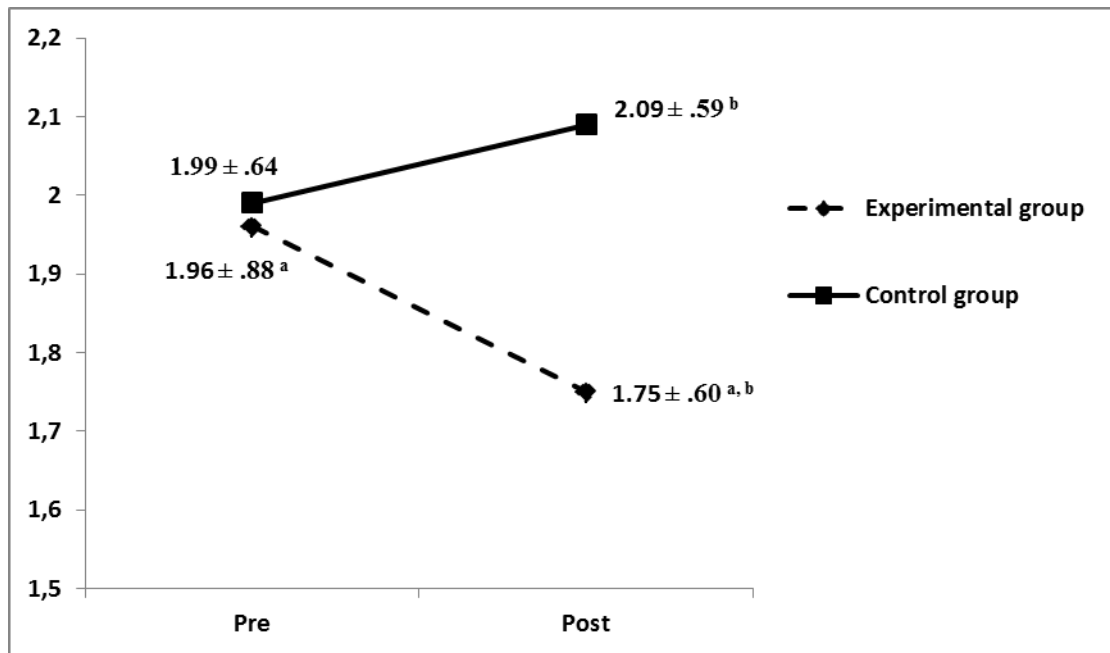


Figure 1. Uncomfortable with cultural diversity variable. ^a Significant within-subjects effects on the experimental group (pre, post) at $p < .05$; ^b Significant differences between experimental and control groups at post-intervention measurement at $p < .01$.

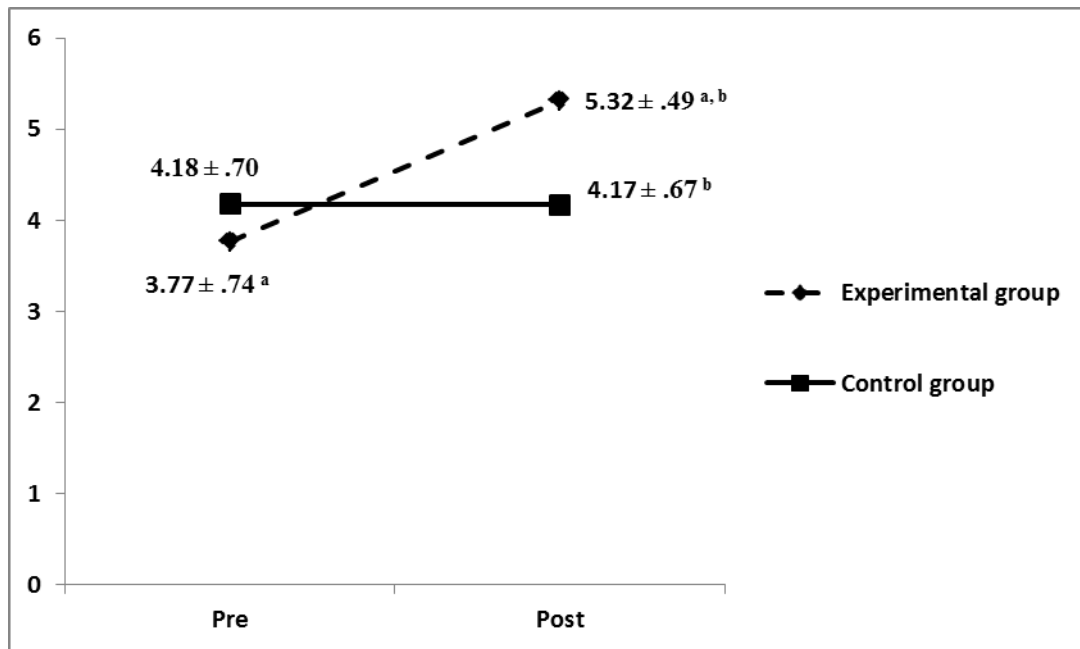
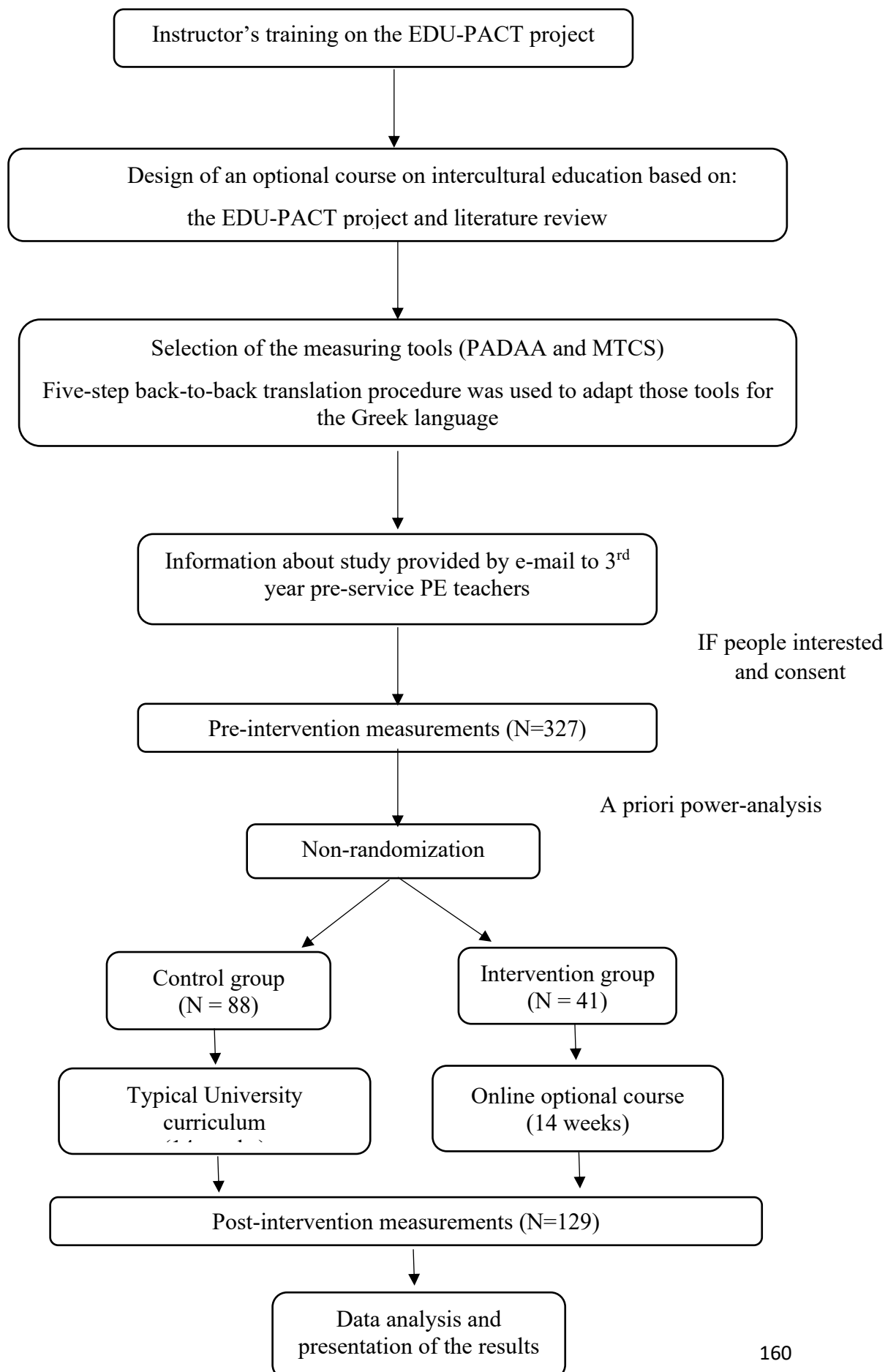


Figure 2. Skill and Knowledge variable. ^a Significant within-subjects effects on the experimental group (pre, post) at $p < .001$; ^b Significant differences between experimental and control groups at pre-intervention measurement at $p < .01$; ^c Significant differences between experimental and control groups at post-intervention measurement at $p < .001$.

Flow Diagram of Research Design



6. Discussion

Education is considered as the basis for all democratic growth and facilitates people to be engaged in all aspects of daily life by interacting with others in a more advanced aspect. Indeed, the way that education is delivered is one of the main factors that affect its outcomes. The role of education in school systems is highly determined by the Universities (Harkavy, 2006), which are responsible for the link between scientific research and society. In modern societies, where multiculturalism is flourishing, Universities should provide realistic scenarios to support social inclusion for all, especially through PE and sports that enrich interaction with body movements and shared goals.

What has recently been recognized is the urgent need for updating the curricula regarding sport education and focusing on investing more on the design and the evaluation of relevant trainings (Gasparini & Cometti, 2010). Today, although respectable efforts have been made in this direction, the situation has not significantly changed. There is still lack of focusing on what is missing regarding effective trainings on intercultural education through PE and sports and how it could be addressed. Additionally, there are certain domains that should be carefully included in sport educators' training on intercultural education and the development of responsibility. For example, helping participants to better realize their inner reflections, to lead group discussions as well as plan, deliver and evaluate intercultural sessions are concepts of high importance to be included on an organized training based on intercultural education. Of course, the tricky point here is to approach those concepts not only theoretically but also as practically as possible. In a more holistic framework, what is still blurry is an organized suggestion of mixing both the theoretical background and the practical/interactive activities on a sport educators' training regarding intercultural education through PE and sports.

Accordingly, the present research aimed initially to discover the needs of those directly involved (e.g., PE teachers, coaches, host pupils) and then based on the relevant findings to design, deliver and evaluate such a training on intercultural education. Therefore, the present research was divided into three studies. The first study had a qualitative methodological character, since semi-structured interviews were used to explore the perspectives of PE teachers, coaches and academics on the field of minorities' inclusion through PE and sports. Fifteen participants took voluntarily place in this study. The main idea here was to gain some knowledge regarding the facilitators and barriers of PE and sports when it comes to the inclusion of all and the key points of an effective training on intercultural education for sport professionals. Participants highlighted the lack of training for PE teachers and coaches, prejudices of both natives and refugees, the latter's socioeconomic status and gender issues as important barriers that need to be overcome. Participants also shared their ideas for

an effective training to improve PE teachers' and coaches' attitudes while also to extend their knowledge and skills regarding the inclusion of minorities. More specifically, they suggested for such a training to include methods that could possibly eliminate teachers' stereotypes, organize the delivery of knowledge on various cultural aspects that could be useful to respond to a multicultural class and finally cultivate teachers' inclusive and interactive skills.

The second study was also qualitative and semi-structured interviews were used again to investigate the attitudes of host adolescents towards their refugee peers that they had recently received in their schools. Nine host adolescents were voluntarily participated in this study. The goal here was to gain a better understanding on the host adolescents' attitudes towards their refugee peers, the role of PE and sports in their interaction and the social inclusion of all. The results of this study revealed attitudes favouring the multicultural ideas, while hidden stereotypes and feelings of discomfort were also identified. Difficulties in communication, lack of PE teachers' intercultural competence to address multicultural groups most of the times and cultural differences that participants do not understand were recognized as the main challenges to help them embrace diversity. One of the most important findings is that participants of both studies mentioned above were referred to the need for intercultural education and well-structured trainings to help sport professionals to effectively respond to culturally diverse environments. Thus, this seemed to be a common concern of teaching staff, academics and also adolescents of the host country, who all recognized the lack of organized trainings that are required to help sport professionals and teaching staff to better interpret themselves and others while also to reduce stereotypes and racist phenomena into school and by extension into society.

The third study firstly was about to take into consideration the results of the two previous studies to design, deliver and evaluate a training on intercultural education for sport professionals that could merge both theoretical background and practical activities. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, this training was formed as an online optional University course and was delivered to pre-service PE teachers and coaches. This training course was based on the guidelines of a European Erasmus⁺ project, called EDU:PACT, to which the researcher was initially trained.

The participation to the training course was voluntarily for the students and finally 129 of them were allocated to attend this course (experimental group - N=41) or following the usual University curriculum (control group - N=88). The concept here was to compare the attitudes, skills and knowledge on intercultural education of both control and experimental group in the beginning and at the end of the semester. Thus, to examine whether this certain course is effective and could possibly help participants to improve their intercultural competencies. The outcomes unveiled the effectiveness of this course, as the participants of the experimental group scored higher in skills and knowledge and only in one dimension of attitudes, compared to the ones of the control group. Of course, attitudes

remain the most complicated factor of intercultural competence, since they cannot always provide simple answers on the questions of cultural influence. Thus, it becomes difficult enough to be investigated. As Schudson (1989) highlighted, there are no cultural concepts that work and affect everyone in the same way or even be interpreted in the same way by everyone.

Overall, the present research attempted to uniquely take advantage of the needs that are expressed by some representative parts of the host population (e.g., PE teachers, coaches, academics, adolescents) regarding the missing points for better achieving social inclusion for all through PE and sports. There was also an effort to create some next steps for improving intercultural education through PE and sports. Since the frequent exploration of various strategies that could be effectively applied is an experience of enrichment and motivation for continuous cognitive effort (Bender-Szymanski, 2000), hopefully some useful guidelines were presented through this research and could act as valuable patterns for the later efforts.

7. Limitations and strengths

The present research had some limitations that should be referred. Firstly, regarding the two qualitative studies, most of the interviewees are residents of one urban region of central Greece and therefore the findings are not generalizable. However, participants are members of various groups (e.g., PE teachers, academics, host adolescents). Thus, getting an insight of those distinct groups that are directly connected with the educational system from different perspectives is a strength of this research.

Focusing on the third study with the quantitative methodological background, it seems that the outcomes from the self reported measures/questionnaires are considered as limitations, since factors such as social desirability could have biased our findings. Another limitation of this study is the fact that the course delivered online, because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This condition was a barrier for the participants to get in contact with multicultural groups and experience themselves in action. From another sight, the online delivery of the course could also be considered as a strength since an organized intercultural course for pre-service PE teachers and coaches is being delivered for the first time. Therefore, it could provide useful information and suggestions for future online educational endeavors which could involve not only target groups of sport professionals but teaching staff in general. Finally, an important strength of this study is about the number of participants (N=129) that were allocated to the control or experimental group based on their individual preferences.

Future research should reproduce this work by exploring the aspects of people with refugee/immigrant backgrounds and maybe compare those with the ones of the hosts. A cross-national study would also be of great interest in order to gain an overview of various national responses to the delivery of organized intercultural trainings not only regarding sports University students, but also to students that are related to the broader educational branch.

8. Conclusions

The accelerated increase of cultural diversity worldwide, is affecting all aspects of life as well as education. Schools and social life are the most important aspects through which young people with a refugee or immigrant background could be included into the society. Therefore, the aim of the present research was firstly to explore the aspects of Greek professionals (e.g., PE teachers, coaches and academics) and host adolescents on refugees' inclusion and intercultural education through PE and sports and then, to design, deliver and evaluate a relevant training – as an optional University online course -. The main idea of this training was to combine both theoretical background and practical interactive activities among the participants and improve their intercultural competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes). The results revealed that both sports professionals and host adolescents considered organized training on intercultural education as very important for the Greek society and also a missing point at that moment which although is needed for everyone and especially the teaching staff. The online course based on intercultural education seemed to have positive impact on participants' intercultural knowledge and skills, while also on their attitudes, but in a lower level, comparing to the control group. Despite these promising findings, intercultural education remains a field which needs further investigation regarding the design, the delivery and the evaluation of relevant trainings internationally, not only on PE but also on the educational field in general.

9. References

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10. Appendixes

Appendix 1_ Templates describing the practical activities of Unit 1

Unit 1_Activity 1

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussion |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Main goals | To drive participants, think about cultures, diversity and try to define what intercultural education could offer. An additional goal was to motivate them and lay the foundation of the team. |
| Description | Participants were discussing in small groups: <i>“What culture means to you?”</i> and <i>“What intercultural education means to you?”</i> . After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion. |
| Time needed | 10 minutes |

Unit 1_Activity 2

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussion |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To identify the changes are experienced by people who have been forced to move. |
| Description | Participants were discussing in small groups: <i>“What are the changes that people who are forced to change their country of residence are experiencing and in which areas?”</i> . After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion. |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |

Unit 1_Activity 3

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussion |
| Main goals | To identify facilitators and barriers for PE and sports during intercultural education. |
| Description | <p>Participants were discussing in small groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Which are the facilitators of PE course and sports-related to the needs of intercultural education?” - “Which are the barriers of PE course and sports-related to the needs of intercultural education?” <p>After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion.</p> |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |

Unit 1_Activity 4

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussion |
| Main goals | To reflect on the needs of PE teachers and coaches on teaching multicultural groups. |
| Description | <p>Participants were discussing in small groups:</p> <p>“What does a PE teacher or coach need to know to teach in a multicultural class?”</p> <p>After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion.</p> |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |

Unit 1_Activity 5

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| Name-identity of the activity | Ice breaker activity (images-description) |
| Main goals | To make participants feel comfortable as members of the group, get to know each other by encouraging their interaction. |

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Description</p> | <p>1st) <u>Circle of names</u>: Participants were shown an image of some people being in a circle and passing the ball to someone else. It was explained that people in this activity should shout their names so that everyone gets to know them.</p> <p>2nd) <u>Names and adjectives</u>: An extent of this activity was discussed, when people also throw a ball, speaking out loud one word that starts from the same letter of their names and characterizes them (e.g., Funny – Francesca). The case of mentioning a word from each language spoken by people who participate in the circle was also discussed.</p> <p>3rd) <u>Domino of people</u>: The instructor by showing her hands, shared two personal information (e.g., right hand - I have one brother, left hand – I like jazz music). So, whoever “fits”, answered fast and was related to the appropriate hand (e.g., saying I have also one brother), and then he/she is the one who should continue by mentioning one personal information for the other-free hand. The next one does the same until everyone is connected in a circle. Further, a group discussion followed this activity on how it could be conducted live (e.g., catching hand, sharing a piece of fabric, or a ball).</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Time needed</p> | <p>8 minutes</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Origin</p> | <p>Right to Play (2008) – (modified)</p> |

Unit 1_ Activity 6

| Name-identity of the activity | <i>Me in focus</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To encourage critical thinking, personal contact, coordination, and self-reflection. |
| Description | <p>Participants were asked to reflect on issues regarding interculturalism, but first, they were randomly divided into pairs through the opportunity of “Breakout rooms” offered my MS Teams platform:</p> <p><u>Phase one:</u> They were asked to count in turn to 3 (3 times) and they were asked to have a short discussion on: “<i>Where do you meet multiculturalism?</i>”.</p> <p><u>Phase two:</u> Divided into different pairs they were asked to count again in turn to 3 (3 times) but instead of “2”, they clapped. When the counting stopped, they were asked to have a short discussion on: “<i>Which are the intercultural skills that someone should possess?</i>”.</p> <p><u>Phase three:</u> Divided into different pairs again, they were asked to repeat the counting in turn to 3 (3 times), following the previous “2-clap” scheme, but instead of “3”, they were asked to jump. When the counting stopped, they were asked to have a short discussion on: “<i>Which are the challenges that someone has to face within a multicultural context?</i>”.</p> |
| R-C-A method for discussion | <p>After these small groups’ discussions, participants were engaged in a whole group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → What is intercultural within you? How did you feel about sharing your perspectives?</p> <p>C → Did you share situations in which you were experiencing or affected by multiculturalism? If yes, which are those?</p> <p>A → What should we do to engage with people from different cultural backgrounds?</p> |

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| Time needed | 10 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) - (modified) |

Unit 1_ Activity 7

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| Name-identity of the activity | <i>Life mapping (individually)</i> |
| Main goals | To encourage self-awareness, self-reflection, emotional awareness, and sharing self-perspectives. |
| Description | <p>Participants were asked to draw a horizontal line on a piece of paper. At the left edge of this line, they should mark their birth and at the right edge they should mark “today”. They continued as follows:</p> <p><u>Along the line:</u> Participants marked the events or the experiences which they think had an impact on who they are today.</p> <p><u>On the top of the line:</u> Participants marked their values (those systems in their lives that they count as more important).</p> <p><u>Underneath the line:</u> Participants marked some features of their personality which they think that characterize them the most (e.g., responsible, nervous, kind)</p> |
| R-C-A method for discussion | <p>Participants were engaged in a group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → How did you feel designing your life mapping? How did you feel about sharing that with the others?</p> <p>C → Which are your characteristics that facilitate you to adjust to a multicultural context and which are the ones that do not? Why?</p> <p>A → Could you share your action plan for change? Is this an easy process?</p> |
| Time needed | 10 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) |

Unit 1_Activity 8

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions – case study |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <p>Main goals</p> | <p>To develop critical thinking and identify the challenges that children might face when they need to adjust to a new cultural and educational environment.</p> |
| <p>Description</p> | <p>Participants were divided into four groups. The following scenario was shared with all of them:</p> <p><i>Sarah is a shy and organized 12-years-old girl who came to the country as a refugee from Syria. She is trying very hard to get into a row at school and has already made some progress. She is used to spending the breaks inside her classroom and has one female friend with who spend time together. During PE, Sarah participates very timidly and does not take initiative. Her parents are quite strict and do not allow her to take part in school competitions.</i></p> <p>After each group read the scenario, participants were asked to discuss the subject proposed for their group as follows:</p> <p><u>Group 1</u>: Which are the skills that you think Sarah already has?</p> <p><u>Group 2</u>: Which are the skills that Sarah should work on more?</p> <p><u>Group 3</u>: If you were the PE teacher of her class what actions would you do to help her further participate?</p> <p><u>Group 4</u>: What are the reasons for Sarah’s parents not to let her participate in school games?</p> |

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| | After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion. |
| Time needed | 10 minutes |

Unit 1_ Activity 9

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| Name-identity of the activity | <i>Hope is in the air</i> |
| Main goals | To energize, develop creativity, and identify issues related to intercultural education. |
| Description | <p>Participants were described and asked to participate in some phases of activity as follows:</p> <p><u>Phase one:</u> Participants were asked to brainstorm their ideas regarding the issues that are important for intercultural education. All the related ideas were written in an open shared word file (used as a flipchart).</p> <p><u>Phase two:</u> Participants were presented the activity as it would be conducted live. During this activity, some people would be asked to blow up balloons and after reviewing the ideas that we produced before, choose one and write it on a balloon (one idea for each balloon).</p> <p><u>Phase three:</u> A certain space would have been given to participants to play with the balloons while they should try to keep all of those in the air. To achieve that, all the participants would have been suggested to hit the balloons in any possible way. Every 10 seconds the instructor would add one more balloon. After three times that a balloon would touch the ground, the whole group stops the effort. After that, the instructor should ask participants to think of ways to improve the time needed to keep the balloons in the air longer.</p> |

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| | The activity could be continued until the number of efforts is satisfying. |
| R-C-A method for discussion | <p>Participants were asked to reflect on the aims of the activity and on the possible impact of this activity on people who could have the chance to experience it and. They were also asked to reflect on the discussion that could follow this activity. After sharing their aspects, the instructor shared feedback regarding a suggested form of the discussion as follows:</p> <p>R → How did you feel when new balloons were added? Which strategies did you use to improve your time?</p> <p>C → In real life how does it feel when we have a lot of issues to manage? Do we always have the time needed to deal with those problems?</p> <p>A → In everyday life what do we do to improve ourselves and develop our self-awareness?</p> |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Unit 1_ Activity 10

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name-identity of the activity | <i>Am I an effective coach/PE teacher?</i> |
| Main goals | To develop self-awareness and professional self-improvement by identifying the knowledge and the values of a good PE teacher/coach. |
| Description | Participants were randomly divided into groups of 3 or 4 people and were asked to discuss their own experiences from PE teachers and coaches they had at schools or sport clubs respectively. After that, they were asked to reflect and draw “a good PE teacher/coach” and “a bad PE teacher/coach” by trying to highlight the characteristics they perceive as “good” and “bad” |

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| | respectively. Each group presented their work to the others. |
| R-C-A method for discussion | <p>Participants were engaged in a group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → Which are the “good” and the “bad” characteristics that your group focused on?</p> <p>C → How can we detect these characteristics in others? How can we detect them on ourselves?</p> <p>A → Do you think you have any of those characteristics? Are there any of those you would like to improve and why?</p> |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) - (modified) |

Unit 1_ Activity 11

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name-identity of the activity | <i>Professional coaching with intercultural education</i> |
| Main goals | To understand the key characteristics of good coaching. |
| Description | <p><u>Phase one</u>: Participants were asked to share their ideas on the three key characteristics of a good coach (brainstorming).</p> <p><u>Phase two</u>: Feedback was shared by the instructor regarding those key characteristics as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong developmental bias • Extensive personal contact • Caring <p><u>Phase three – case study</u>: Participants were randomly divided into groups of 3 and received a scenario in which each one of them had to choose one of the following roles: student, coach 1, and coach 2.</p> <p><u>Scenario</u>: A student from Lebanon (who is already living 7 months in Greece) is trying to learn the strategy</p> |

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| | <p>of the long jump. He wishes to take part in games in one month, so he is practicing with 2 coaches. After his effort, he receives feedback from the two coaches as follows:</p> <p><u>Coach 1</u>: <i>“In fact, I see that you are disappointed. Learning a new skill takes time and practice. Do not worry about the performance of others, you are in the right direction. Try to propel your hands more, from back to front. Keep trying and if you need extra help just let me know.”</i></p> <p><u>Coach 2</u>: <i>“I see...I see... (shakes his head). I speak Greek, don't you understand? All wrong! Your legs and your arms are wrong. Where do you look when you make the jump? I do not even know from which part to start for corrections. You need a lot of practice, and I am sure that you will not see the race even with binoculars.”</i></p> |
| <p>R-C-A method for discussion</p> | <p>Participants were engaged in group discussions about the three characteristics that we talked about earlier sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → How do you think that the student might felt in these 2 cases? What are your thoughts regarding the three characteristics we talked about earlier? In which part of the scenario can you detect them?</p> <p>C → Do these characteristics seem important to you? Why? Have you ever experienced similar cases?</p> <p>A → In which ways could you use these characteristics in your professional life?</p> |
| <p>Time needed</p> | <p>10 minutes</p> |
| <p>Origin</p> | <p>Right to Play (2008) - (modified)</p> |

Unit 1_Activity 12

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions – case study |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <p>Main goals</p> | <p>To develop critical thinking, emotional awareness, and touch stereotypical thinking.</p> |
| <p>Description</p> | <p>Participants were randomly divided into two groups and received the following scenario:</p> <p><i>... swimming during Ramadan ... my father had to go to the school again to ask for me to be excluded*/it was a struggle. I did think sometimes ‘why am I battling with them? They are going to think I am a troublemaker with a problem with everything ... but I am not like that, I just want to have what the others have, as well as being Muslim. [part of an interview from an adolescent Muslim girl who lived in England, Dagkas & Benn, 2006].</i></p> <p>After reading the scenario participants of each group were asked to discuss the subject proposed for their group as follows:</p> <p><u>Group 1:</u> What does this girl seem to express through her words? How does she feel?</p> <p><u>Group 2:</u> What would you do as a PE teacher in her class?</p> <p>After their small group discussions participants were returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion.</p> |
| <p>Time needed</p> | <p>10 minutes</p> |

Unit 1_Activity 13

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To develop critical thinking and touch on stereotypical thinking. |
| Description | Participants as a whole were brainstorming and discussing according to the following question: <i>“Why do people tend to shape stereotypes?”</i> |
| Time needed | 6 minutes |

Unit 1_Activity 14

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To develop critical thinking and discussion on stereotypes in sports. |
| Description | Participants were randomly divided into groups of three or four and were asked to discuss according to the following question: <i>“Which are the barriers that Muslim women are facing during their participation in PE and sports?”</i> After the initial discussion in small groups, participants were presenting their reflections to others and discuss with the whole group. |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |

Appendix 2_ Templates describing the practical activities of Unit 2

Unit 2_Activity 1

| Name-identity of the activity | Elephant tag – role-playing |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Main goals | To activate communication skills, active listening, empathy, and understanding of various perspectives. |
| Description | <p>Six of the participants were asked to dramatize a story speaking about an elephant and the way that five blind people perceive its' appearance. The roles were on purpose "problematic" in terms of communication and the way that everyone criticized others' perceives of the elephant. After the dramatization, participants were divided into three groups to discuss the following:</p> <p><u>Group 1:</u> <i>What is this story about?</i> <i>Which are the communication skills that are missing from the people describing the elephant?</i></p> <p><u>Group 2:</u> <i>Which skills would help them to communicate on a better basis?</i></p> <p><u>Group 3:</u> <i>Do you have any similar examples of your everyday or professional life to report?</i></p> <p>After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion on communication skills.</p> |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) |

Unit 2_Activity 2

| Name-identity of the activity | Empathy blockers – role playing |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Main goals | To practice empathetic listening and explore behaviors that block empathy. |
| Description | Participants were initially asked to brainstorm on: |

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| | <p><i>“How do people usually respond when others are sharing a personal problem?”</i></p> <p>After that, participants were randomly divided into two groups (Group 1 and Group 2). Participants of group 1 were asked to think of a “problem” they are facing and share it within 2 minutes with one of the participants of group 2. Participants of the second group shared some roles, they were asked to randomly create pairs with participants of group 1 and respond to their “problems” according to the roles they have received”:</p> <p><i>Ordering</i> → “You should do that....”</p> <p><i>Warning</i> → “If you act like this, you will feel....”</p> <p><i>Advising</i> → “If I were you...”</p> <p><i>Logical arguing</i> → “Look at the facts, you will see that...”</p> <p><i>Characterizing</i> → “This is wrong, foolish, useless...”</p> <p><i>Diagnosing</i> → “What you mean is that...”</p> <p><i>Reassuring</i> → “Everything is going to be ok...”</p> <p><i>Questioning</i> → “Why did you feel that way?”</p> <p><i>Distracting</i> → “That reminds me of another personal story... let me tell you...”</p> <p>After the “change” sign, each participant of group 1 changes pair to have a short conversation with another participant of group 2. The activity is over until all participants of group 1 have discussed with the participants of group 2.</p> |
| <p>R-C-A method</p> | <p>After that, all the participants were engaged in a whole group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> |

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| | <p>R → Which kind of responses did you make feel comfortable to keep sharing your problem and which did not? Why?</p> <p>C → What are the blockers that are common in our everyday communication? In which conditions do you think that empathetic listening is important? Why?</p> <p>A → How could you develop those skills for the children?</p> |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Unit 2_Activity 3

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Name-identity of the activity | Listening with your body |
| Main goals | To identify the value of body language during communication. |
| Description | <p>Three participants were engaged voluntarily to think of an athlete model in their lives and describe to the others the reason they chose that person. All the speakers were disconnected until they spend some time thinking of what their athlete model and the rest of the participants were asked to provide pre-deigned behaviors as listeners:</p> <p><i>Speaker 1</i> → The listeners avoid eye contact, focus on one of his/her clothes, and make some noise.</p> <p><i>Speaker 2</i> → The listeners avoid eye contact, listen to what he/she is talking about, nod heads.</p> <p><i>Speaker 3</i> → The listeners keep eye contact, listen carefully, make some questions at the end showing their interest.</p> <p>None of the three speakers did know what other speakers experienced, and in the end, all the group members were engaged in an open discussion.</p> |

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| R-C-A method | <p>R → How did you feel as a speaker? How did you feel as a listener? Are you aware of how do you seem when you are interested in what others say in your culture?</p> <p>C → In your everyday life when is this time that you feel someone is listening to what you are saying and when it is not happening?</p> <p>A → How can you show your interest in others' speaking? How can you promote behaviors of active listening to the children?</p> |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) - (modified) |

Unit 2_Activity 4

| Name-identity of the activity | Listening for need |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Main goals | To identify the hidden needs and practice active listening. |
| Description | <p>Participants were randomly divided into groups of 4 and were given the same card with some statements to read. They were asked to discuss their groups and decide which are the needs hidden behind each statement. Some examples of the statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everyone here knows more about cultural diversity than I do. [need for acceptance]</i> • <i>This activity has nothing to do with sports. It is just a waste of time. [need for understanding the purpose]</i> • <i>Wait until it is my turn to score. I will not share the ball as he did. [need for justice, empathy, support]</i> • <i>This group of people is hostile and sharp. [need for attention, communication, inclusion]</i> |

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| R-C-A method | <p>Participants were engaged in a group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → Was that easy for you to find the need behind each statement and agree on that? Why?</p> <p>C → In our everyday life do you think that people communicate their needs in a straight way? Why?</p> <p>A → Is listening for needs an important skill? Why? How could we improve ourselves on that?</p> |
| Time needed | 10 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) |

Unit 2_Activity 5

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| Name-identity of the activity | Message in a ball |
| Main goals | To practice ways to develop our sharing messages and improve communication skills. |
| Description | <p>Participants were randomly divided into groups of 4 and were given a card with “You messages”. They were asked to change them into “I messages”.</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <p>“You message” is a way to express how you feel by blaming others (focused on the person provoking the feeling), while “I message” is a way to share feelings without blaming (focused on the action provoking the feeling).</p> <p>Some examples of the “You messages” that were given to the participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You made me angry because you do not follow the rules. [I am getting angry when the rules are not followed.]</i> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You are unfair, you should not push your opponent.</i> [It is unfair to push our opponents.] • <i>You upset me when you do not try as hard as you can.</i> [I am getting upset the hardest try is not present]. |
| R-C-A method | <p>Participants were engaged in a group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → How did you feel changing the “You messages” into “I messages”? Which one is coming first to your mind and why?</p> <p>C → Can you think of cases in your everyday life when people use “You messages” to express their feelings? Why do you think this is happening?</p> <p>A → How could you use “I messages” in your everyday life?</p> <p>How could you guide people to use more often these kinds of messages?</p> |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play borrowed by Gibbs (2001) - (modified) |

Unit 2 Activity 6

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| Name-identity of the activity | Sheet volleyball – group discussions |
| Main goals | To develop communication skills and share common goals. |
| Description | Participants were presented the activity “Sheet volleyball” in which people are divided into two groups and the members of each group hold the edges of a sheet. Each team alternates between troughing and catching a ball. People are trying to collect as many points as possible by not losing the ball. When the ball falls to the ground the counting stops. During the first- |

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| | <p>round people are not allowed to communicate with each other, while in the next round they can collaborate to develop communication strategies, but still, they are not allowed to use any words. Finally, in the third round, they can communicate by talking to each other. People are given some minutes among the rounds to develop strategies to increase their performance.</p> <p>Since the course was delivered online, participants after the explanation of the initial part of the activity, without the suggestions of the three rounds, were divided into small groups of four people to discuss possible ways of continuing the activity by providing communication skills.</p> |
| R-C-A method | <p>After that, participants were engaged in a group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → What did you find more challenging in this activity?</p> <p>How could you provide communication skills, using this activity?</p> <p>C → In everyday life how do you manage to achieve a common goal being a member of a team?</p> <p>A → How could you teach the children communication skills and how to share common goals?</p> |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Unit 2_Activity 7

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| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions |
| Main goals | To develop critical thinking and identify effective leadership. |

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| Description | <p>Participants were divided into two groups to discuss as follows:</p> <p><u>Group 1</u> → What do you define as a leader?</p> <p><u>Group 2</u> → Leaders are shaping or being shaped and why?</p> <p>After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion on effective leadership.</p> |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |

Unit 2_Activity 8

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| Name-identity of the activity | Motivational interviewing – role playing |
| Main goal | To practice on motivational interviewing method. |
| Description | <p>Participants were engaged in groups of two to practice in a role-playing open scenario including one interviewer and one respondent. The open scenario is presented as follows:</p> <p><u>Respondent</u>: <i>I would like to change a certain "athletic" behavior in football that I feel deprives me of potential. This has to do with my inability to make immediate decisions at the right time. I am trying and I often feel stressed or unable to act when needed.</i></p> <p><u>Interviewer</u>: starts a motivational interviewing with the respondent by following the guidelines of Miller & Rollnick (2002) and Souders (2020) that have been already presented in the theoretical part.</p> <p>Each pair collaborated to continue this open scenario and a group discussion with all the participants ensued.</p> |
| R-C-A method | R → How did you feel as an interviewer? |

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| | <p>How did you feel as a respondent?</p> <p>C → When in your life you had to understand the needs of others and how did you manage to help people resolve their problems?</p> <p>A → How could you apply this technique to your future trainees? In your opinion which will be the challenges?</p> |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |

Unit 2_Activity 9

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name-identity of the activity | Helium pole – video – group discussion |
| Main goals | To enable participants to intercultural learning by developing cooperation, empathy, active listening, and working on leadership and decision making. |
| Description | Participants were watching a video showing the activity named “Helium pole”. In this video, people were divided into two lines with each person standing shoulder to shoulder facing each other. People raised their hands and lifted only their point fingers aiming to raise the pole down all together. Each member should not lose contact with the pole, resting on two-point fingers. This was the only allowed way of contact with the pole. |
| R-C-A method | <p>Participants were engaged in a group discussion, sharing their perspectives as follows:</p> <p>R → What did you notice about the communication among the participants of this activity? Who played the role of the leader in this activity and how did he/she take over this role?</p> <p>C → Describe your leader model in your everyday life and why you choose this person?</p> |

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| | A → Based on this activity what other skills (besides leadership) do you think are needed when sharing a common goal in action? |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play – (modified) Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWAIOfnhCKI&fbclid=IwAR1ZNq qUtmORQW5ltDRoRFpwjI8OgHKZvGt5ghJU9wZebFYT |

Appendix 3 _ Templates describing the practical activities of Unit 3

Unit 3 _Activity 1

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Main goals | To develop critical thinking and identify the benefits of collaborative learning. |
| Description | <p>Participants were divided into groups of three or four to discuss “Which are the benefits of children when they experience collaborative learning?”</p> <p>After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion on collaborative learning.</p> |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |

Unit 3 _Activity 2

| Name-identity of the activity | Team up approach to building peace |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To brainstorm and define conflict and its’ dimensions. |
| Description | <p>Participants were asked to individually brainstorm and write on a piece of paper 10 words or short phrases that were associated with the word “conflict”. After that, the instructor presented the most common categories to which people divide their answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Forms of conflicts</u> (e.g., disagreement, fight, war) • <u>Causes of conflicts</u> (e.g., misunderstandings, cultural differences, different values, lack of education, anger) • <u>Effects of conflicts</u> (e.g., sadness, depression, broken relationships) <p>Participants then were asked to review their lists of words and match each word to the categories mentioned</p> |

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| | above. A group discussion followed based on the fact that people have different perspectives and experiences on conflicts, and it would be an interesting idea to start working by sharing our understandings of the word “conflict”. |
| Time needed | 10 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Unit 3 Activity 3

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name-identity of the activity | Flight – Fight – Unite (group discussion) |
| Main goals | To identify how people usually respond to conflicts and reflect. |
| Description | <p>Participants were divided into ingroups of three or four people and were asked to discuss how people use to react to conflicts. After that, a group discussion with all the sub-teams followed to share aspects. The group concluded in the following ways of reactions to conflicts:</p> <p>Flight → when people are trying to avoid a conflict.</p> <p>Fight → when people are trying to prove they are right in a conflict.</p> <p>Unite → when people are trying to find common ground between the conflict members, and they are working together to solve the problem.</p> <p>Following this discussion, participants were asked to imagine and suggest a way to transfer the information discussed previously to the children through PE or sports context. The second round of discussion followed with participants’ suggestions, concluding to:</p> <p>Dividing children into face-to-face pairs and engaging them to represent the possible reactions to conflict using</p> |

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| | <p>movements and sounds. Depending on the teachers' sign "Flight, fight, unite", children could reproduce the pre-agreed movements and/or sounds to embody the feeling of each reaction.</p> <p>Finally, participants were asked to form themselves the R-C-A method to organize the discussion with their pupils.</p> |
| R-C-A method | <p>Participants shared their aspects and after discussion, they concluded the following conversation structure:</p> <p>R → How did you feel expressing sounds and body movements according to each reaction? How did it feel to "flight", "fight" and "unite"?</p> <p>C → Which experiences drove you to select these movements or sounds? How do people usually react in conflict? How do you react in a conflict?</p> <p>A → Which are the important things to consider before expressing our reaction to a conflict?</p> |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Unit 3 Activity 4

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions – Football field |
| Main goals | To develop teamwork and to reflect on the benefits and challenges of sports. |
| Description | <p>Participants were described the following activity the aim of which was to draw the best football pitch in the shortest time:</p> <p><u>Part 1:</u></p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are divided into groups of three. - Each group receives a pen and one piece of paper. - People in their groups should draw a football pitch including three rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) All the members of the group should touch the pen all the time. (b) The pen is not allowed to be taken off the paper and start from another point. (c) People are not allowed to talk to each other during this activity. - The group that first finishes the draw, wins. <p><u>Part 2:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each group divides the football pitch into two halves, the positive one and the negative one. - For some minutes group members are discussing the benefits of participating in sports and then the possible challenges, by noting the keywords of their discussions. - Finally, an open discussion is taking place by hearing the aspects of each team. <p>After the description of this activity, the instructor provided some time to the participants to think about the activity and share an appropriate structure for the discussion part.</p> |
| <p>R-C-A method</p> | <p>After participants' sharings the instructor suggests the following conversation structure:</p> <p>R → How did your team manage to collaborate? How did you feel?</p> <p>C → In real life how do we establish the rules of a teamwork activity?</p> <p>A → Which are the important things to consider before establishing those rules and taking initiatives?</p> |

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| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | VIDC (2020) – (modified) |

Unit 3 Activity 5

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| Name-identity of the activity | Human knot – video - group discussions |
| Main goals | To develop communication skills, decision-making, and problem-solving. |
| Description | <p>Participants were watching a video with the activity named “human knot”.</p> <p>The video presented the activity to which all members of one group make a circle and they were asked to raise their right hand and grab the right hand of another member of the circle. Then they should do the same with their left hand. Finally, they were asked to find a way to return to their initial places – by untying the knot - without leaving their hands.</p> <p>After participants watched the video, they were engaged in group discussions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you observe during this activity? • Which are the goals of this activity? • How would you deal with touching issues that might emerge? (e.g., all catching pieces of fabrics instead of touching the others) • How could you make this activity even more tricky/interesting? (e.g., participants are not allowed to talk to each other) |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |
| Origin | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbCPau5YL0g&t=2s&fbclid=IwAR1cTIzZ2SRtm795sOuA1dYEWGxcPxQBfNREnROKzgl |

Unit 3_Activity 6

| Name-identity of the activity | Problem-solving – role playing |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <p>Main goals</p> | <p>To develop critical thinking and to expand understanding of communication skills and positive reinforcement.</p> |
| <p>Description</p> | <p><u>Part 1</u> Some participants were randomly chosen to read a story by playing some roles. The other participants were hearing the story. This story was describing the “walking” of some frogs in the woods, when suddenly, two of them were falling into a deep pit. The two frogs did a lot of effort to jump high enough to get out of this pit, but when the other frogs realized it was hopeless, they shouted and discouraged them to do so, suggesting just to stay there and accept their faith. One of the two frogs stopped the efforts, as he was convinced it was disheartening, while the other continued to jump spending all his energy, although he was completely exhausted. Suddenly, he sprang from the pit and all the other frogs were so curious asking: <i>“Why did you keep trying since we shouted that it was impossible?”</i></p> <p><u>Part 2</u> After the initial reading of the story, all participants were facing the same question as to the other frogs in the story: <i>“Why do you believe that this frog kept trying since the others are shouted not to do so?”</i> After participants’ brainstorming, the end of the story was revealed... <i>this frog was deaf.</i></p> <p><u>Part 3</u></p> |

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| | <p>A group discussion followed, focused on the next questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think this story speaks about? • What is positive reinforcement and how could we cultivate it in our trainees? • What did this activity make you reflect on? |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Unit 3 _Activity 7

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Name-identity of the activity | “Yes, and” versus “No, but” – role-playing |
| Main goals | To develop critical thinking and understanding of communication skills and positive reinforcement. |
| Description | <p>Participants were asked to think about:</p> <p><i>“How would you reinforce one of your pupils who seem to be reluctant to participate in team sports?”</i></p> <p>Two volunteers were chosen to answer the question. While the first one was answering the instructor kept reinforcing his opinion with the phrase “Yes, and...”. However, while the second one was answering the instructor discouraged him, by using the phrase “No, but...”.</p> <p>The goal of the instructor here was not to receive the correct answer but to make participants think about how the answering style of the “authority” – in the present case the instructor – could have an impact on participants’ feelings and willingness to express their thoughts.</p> |

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| R- C- A method | <p>Participants after their giving responses were asked the following questions in terms of a group discussion:</p> <p>R → How did you feel when your ideas were rejected (No, but) answers?</p> <p>How did you feel when your ideas were accepted (Yes, and) answers?</p> <p>C → Have you ever experienced similar situations in everyday life? Which were the outcomes?</p> <p>How could we possibly disagree without discouraging other people?</p> <p>A → Which of the two approaches seem to work better?</p> <p>How could we cultivate a more accepting responding style to our pupils through sports?</p> |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Unit 3_Activity 8

| Name-identity of the activity | Rumor spread – video – group discussion |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To develop empathy and have a better understanding of rumor spreading and its' possible implications. |
| Description | <p>Participants were watching a video called “Rumor spreading” without knowing neither its' title nor what is it about. In this video, people were in a row behind each other, turned in such a way that they had no eye contact. The first player started by hitting his front one on the back to turn and when he did, the first showed him once, a series of movements that represented something (e.g., a car accident). Then, the second player did the same to the next one trying to imitate the kinetic pattern he saw. The same happened again and again until all the players had the</p> |

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| | opportunity to be engaged and present the same kinetic pattern to their front ones. The video ended with the first and the last players presenting together with the kinetic patterns they experienced. |
| R-C-A method | Participants after watching the video were engaged in a group discussion based on the next questions: R → What did you observe in this activity? What do you think is about to highlight? C → Have you ever experienced a similar situation in your everyday life? How did you feel? A → Would you use this activity in one of your sessions? If yes, how, and why? |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnbfhCyHPaA&t=232s |

Unit 3_Activity 9

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Main goals | To identify the key characteristics of organizing a PE lesson in a multicultural group. |
| Description | Participants were divided into groups of three or four people to discuss: <i>“How can you organize a PE lesson in a multicultural class? What do you need to take care of?”</i> After their small group discussions participants returned to the whole group to share their aspects and have an open discussion on collaborative learning. |
| Time needed | 7 minutes |

Unit 3_Activity 10

| Name-identity of the activity | Barnga – video – group discussion |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To develop awareness into a new set of rules and realize that people from different cultures perceive some situations differently. |
| Description | A video is shared with participants in which people were divided into groups of four and each group was sitting at one table having a piece of paper with rules and a deck with cards. People were given some minutes to read the rules but they were not allowed to talk to each other. They could draw something or make some gestures but not speak at all. Then, people in the video were announced that each group would play one round with the cards and after counting, each winner would move to the table of winners and the loser to the table of losers. This process continued for some rounds and each time after counting, some players were moving to another table. Each round lasted for some minutes and stopped with a certain sound. |
| R-C-A method | <p>After participants watched the video, they were engaged in a group discussion as follows:</p> <p>R → What did you expect at the beginning of the video? What did you realize at the end? What are the benefits to the participants of this activity? How do you think they felt during this activity?</p> <p>C → Have you ever felt similar emotions in your everyday life? What did you do to communicate and interact appropriately? Why do you think there is the rule of “not talking” during the game?</p> <p>A → How do people usually react when they are facing different rules?</p> |

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| | <p>What is your conclusion from this activity?</p> <p>How could we modify this activity for an intercultural session in PE or a sports context? (e.g., basketball game – different card of rules for each player)</p> |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |
| Origin | <p>VIDC – (modified)</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9KMksUIH2Q&t=101s</p> |

Unit 3_Activity 11

| Name-identity of the activity | Teachable moments |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To engage participants with teachable moments, cultivate the positive values of sports, and reflect on behavior management. |
| Description | <p>Participants were described (diagrams and pictures) the following activity:</p> <p><u>Part 1</u></p> <p>Some people were asked to play a normal basketball game for some minutes.</p> <p><u>Part 2</u></p> <p>Those people were asked to play the same game, but now some of them would have to play some roles. Some of the roles were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You do not like when people cheat. When you realize that someone does, you demand from this person to leave the game or apologize.</i> • <i>You are focused on winning. You do not care if it needs you to cheat to succeed, you do so.</i> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You are not interested in the game. Sometimes you play and sometimes you just stare.</i> • <i>You feel like you have been left out of the game because you do not play so well. You decide to leave the game silently.</i> <p><u>Part 3</u></p> <p>After participants watched the video, the instructor explained to them about “teachable moments”. More specifically, the instructor highlighted that a conflict or an issue that promotes some behaviors could be seen as a teachable moment and be exploited accordingly by the teacher/coach.</p> |
| R-C-A method | <p>After presenting both the activity and the theoretical part, participants were engaged in a group discussion as follows:</p> <p>R → Can you think of any other roles for your future pupils based on this activity?</p> <p>Can you think of R-C-A questions for your pupils after experiencing this activity?</p> <p>C → How is this activity connected to real life?</p> <p>A → Can you suggest some ways to facilitate behavior management of your pupils in the class?</p> |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |

Appendix 4 _ Templates describing the practical activities of Unit 4

Unit 4 _Activity 1

| Name-identity of the activity | Group discussions |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To develop critical thinking and make an introduction to the concept of “observation”. |
| Description | <p>Participants were randomly divided into groups of 3 or 4 people (the name of their group was 1,2 or 3) and were asked to discuss the following:</p> <p><u>Group 1</u>: “<i>What do you think of the word observation?</i>” and “<i>Which elements would you observe in your pupils to collect information about them?</i>”</p> <p><u>Group 2</u>: “<i>Which elements would you observe in PE teachers or coaches while they are teaching or training respectively to collect information about them?</i>”</p> <p><u>Group 3</u>: “<i>Which are the factors that affect the way we observe others?</i>”</p> |
| R-C-A method | <p>After their group discussions, participants engaged as a whole group into an open discussion as follows:</p> <p>R → Is this an easy process to define the concept of observation? Why yes or no?</p> <p>C → Do all people observe in the same way? Why yes or no? What times would you observe your pupils?</p> <p>A → Which do you think are the benefits of observation?</p> |
| Time needed | 10 minutes |

Unit 4_Activity 2

| Name-identity of the activity | Picture observation |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <p>Main goals</p> | <p>To separate organized from accidental observation.</p> |
| <p>Description</p> | <p><u>Part 1</u> Participants were asked to observe one picture for 30 seconds. This picture showed some people (both adults and children) dancing in a circle near the beach, imitating someone (in the center of the circle) who demonstrated to them the dancing movements. Some people seemed to be out of the circle and just staring.</p> <p><u>Part 2</u> After the initial observation of the picture, without providing any specific direction to participants, the picture was not visible anymore and participants were asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many people were in the picture? - How many of them were adults and children respectively? - What did they do? - Where were they? - What was the person in the middle of the picture doing? - How did the other people respond? - What else did you observe? <p>After participants responded to those questions, they were all engaged in a group discussion to express their views on how it feels to observe a situation without targeted directions and draw conclusions about it. Which is more useful, targeted, or random observation? Maybe both are needed sometimes and of yes, when?</p> |

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| Time needed | 10 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) - modified |

Unit 4_Activity 3

| Name-identity of the activity | Problem tree |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To understand the importance of detecting a focal problem, its' causes, and its' effects. |
| Description | <p><u>Part 1</u> Participants were given the picture of a tree, named “problem tree” (branches, trunk, and roots). The trunk represented the actual problem, the roots represented the causes of that problem, and the branches represented its' effects.</p> <p><u>Part 2</u> After using this analogy, participants were asked to work in groups of 4 or 5, thinking of a possible problem they might have to face in a multicultural class and then make use of the draw of the problem tree mentioned before, to define the problem, its' causes, and its' effects.</p> <p><u>Part 3</u> Participants were presenting their workshops to the rest. A group discussion follows focused on the importance of detecting a problem, its' causes, and its' effects to orient in solutions.</p> |
| Time needed | 15 minutes |
| Origin | Edu-Pact module handbook (2020) – (modified) |

Unit 4_Activity 4

| Name-identity of the activity | Five fingers |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main goals | To catch up with a simple way to collect feedback from the group and develop new ones. |
| Description | <p><u>Part 1</u> Participants were asked to draw the outline of their hand and reflect on the whole course, providing feedback by answering certain questions represented by each finger:</p> <p><u>Thumb</u>: What did you like? <u>Index finger</u>: What would you highlight? <u>Middle finger</u>: What did you not like? <u>Ring finger</u>: What message will you take home? <u>Pinkie finger</u>: What do you think needs more attention? Any recommendations?</p> <p><u>Part 2</u> Some of the participants voluntarily presented their draws.</p> |
| R-C-A method | <p>Participants were engaged in a group discussion as follows:</p> <p>R → What do you think of this method to collect feedback? Would you use it in your groups as PE teachers or coaches? Would you modify it somehow? C → Can you compare this method to any others you have already used? Can you think of other methods to collect feedback from your groups? A → What are the key points of collecting feedback from your groups? Why is this important?</p> |
| Time needed | 12 minutes |
| Origin | Edu-Pact module handbook (2020) |

Unit 4_Activity 5

| Name-identity of the activity | Living scale |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Main goals | To combine movement in the process of collecting feedback. |
| Description | <p>Participants shaped a semicircle to which the one edge is “0” (sad face) and the other one is “10” (happy face). Each time they were asked to draw a face in that point of the semicircle that represent them the most as the instructor asked questions.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How satisfied you are with unit 1 of the course? - How much did you appreciate unit 2 of the course? - How important do you think was unit 3 of the course? - How possible is it that you will use the inputs from this course in your professional life? - Which number better represents your effort during the whole course? <p>A group discussion followed to provide participants with the chance to express their opinions on the activity and try to modify it for their groups.</p> |
| Time needed | 10 minutes |
| Origin | Edu-Pact module handbook (2020) – (modified) |

| Name-identity of the activity | Categories of observers |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Main goals</p> | <p>To highlight concepts related to observing and assessing as well as to engage participants with the design and evaluation of one activity.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Description</p> | <p><u>Part 1</u></p> <p>Participants were presented the following activity scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some pupils are divided into 4 or 5 groups and 3 pupils were selected as observers. • Observers are given some cards (depending on what we would like them to observe during the activity). • The activity begins when the PE teacher refers to one word or phrase, and each group needs to find as many words as possible related to the referred one in 1 minute. • When the PE teacher says “Stop” all the groups stop the collaborative thinking and writing. • One representative member of each group reads the words, and the other groups delete the words they listen to be the same as theirs. • The process is repeated until all groups read their words. • Groups will receive points for each unique word they have noted. • Observers note for each round their observations. <p><u>Part 2</u></p> <p>After the presentation of the activity, participants were asked to work in groups and reflect on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would they design the cards of the pupils-observers to follow during the activity and why? |

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|--------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which roles would they share with their pupils during the activity to create teachable moments (connection with unit 3) and why? - How would they drive the group discussion with their pupils at the end of the activity following the R-C-A method? |
| Time needed | 20 minutes |
| Origin | Right to Play (2008) – (modified) |