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## Coaches' cultural intelligence:

How coaches rate themselves and what are their cultural training needs?

Borges, M.<sup>1</sup>, Rosado, A.<sup>2</sup>, Lobinger, B.<sup>3</sup>, Freitas, F.<sup>4</sup>, de Oliveira, R.F.<sup>1</sup>

School of Applied Sciences, London South Bank University, London, UK
Faculty of Human Kinetics, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal
Institute of Psychology, German Sport University Cologne, Cologne, Germany
Faculty of Economy, University of Coimbra, Portugal

### Introduction

The rise of globalisation over the past decades has impacted nearly every aspect of modern sport across the world. In European football, for example, this phenomenon has changed the dynamics in the way coaches move between countries (1) and has also increased their need to rapidly adapt to new realities.

Coaches and players interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds more than ever before, and whilst this cultural diversity can inspire creativity and drive innovation, it also poses some additional challenges (2,3). The ability to function effectively in different cultural contexts, called Cultural Intelligence (4), has never been more relevant for coaches.



#### **Methods**

Participants were 209 football coaches (38.8±10.4 years) either with international experience (n=88) or without (n=121), and different levels of coaching certification (n=95 levels 1&2 and n=114 levels 3&4).

The independent variables were migration experience, education level and certification level. The dependent variables were cultural intelligence and cross-cultural training needs assessed through the survey. One-Way ANOVA were used for comparisons across groups concerning crosscultural training needs.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, normality tests, factor loadings for the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and Cronbach's α for the Cultural Intelligence in Sport Scale (CQsport)

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Figure 1. CQsport dimensions considering coaches' international experience.



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Figure 2. Training needs considering international experience. A) Theory-based methods of delivery; B) Practicebased methods of delivery

#### Results

Coaches without international experience rated themselves with less cultural intelligence in the sports context and more cross-cultural training needs than coaches with international experience. This was especially so at the stage of working in a foreign country.

Both groups preferred practice-based delivery methods, or theorybased training delivered by migrant.

#### Discussion

International experience may provide opportunities to interact, test cultural assumptions and understand cultural differences. This experiential learning (5) is probably the mechanism behind the differences observed between coaches with and without cultural experience of each of the CQsport dimensions.

Cross-cultural training interventions can now use the validated CQsport to evaluate changes in cultural intelligence pre-post programme.

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