‘Your Culture, My Culture!’

A research study by the European Confederation of Youth Clubs.

Written and edited by:
Marios Argyrides, PhD
Member of the Cyprus Youth Club Organization

Acknowledgments:
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PREFACE

Research is an important aspect of many organizations – profit or non-profit. It is a way of searching for knowledge, answering questions and planning for the future. ECYC decided to add research as one of its components for future development and growth and to be used as a way of assessing and implementing new non-formal educational programs across its members. After several discussions, the board decided to accept the research proposal made by the Cyprus Youth Clubs Organization and implement its first research study. With great joy, we received our funding from the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe and started our challenging task. This publication is the final result of much hard work by many people, to receive, analyze and report the results, conclusions and recommendations as best as possible. Through this process, we were able to find out some interesting information and draw some interesting conclusions. In addition, some important recommendations were made for future training and non-formal education procedures which will be implemented by ECYC to best serve its Member Organizations. I hope you will enjoy reading this research publication and be able to benefit from the results and the recommendations. At ECYC, we are hoping for future research studies which will promote our organization even more, significantly increase our visibility throughout Europe and develop even more specific and beneficial recommendations to our members!

Marios Argyrides, PhD
Cyprus Youth Clubs Association Member
ECYC Member
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PART I

INTRODUCTION
The world population became more ethnically heterogeneous during the 21st century and this trend is likely to keep continuing (Wright & Littleford, 2002). In fact, certain reports predict that by the year 2050, the majority of the population in many countries will be minorities. The youth population of these countries is growing up in different circumstances than it did a few decades ago. Therefore, it is very important for us to understand factors that deal with ethnicity across diverse groups and how those factors may affect ethnic group membership.

Ethnic identity, person perception, helpfulness, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice have all been researched in the past (Allport, 1954; Argyrides & Downey, 2001; Keefe & Padilla, 1987; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Phinney, 1990; Triandis, 1990). However, few studies have investigated potential links among these variables. Conclusions have also been reached but with little attention and little focus on solid recommendations, especially in the youth. Existing literature seems to indicate that ethnic identity, person perception, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice have implications for a wide range of situations, may be related, and influence a person’s overall self-concept and identity. As known, the youth population is more vulnerable in many aspects and is more likely to be influenced by the above variables.

These variables seem to have a significant impact on most cultures (Triandis, 1990) and have been assessed in several (Phinney, 1990; Triandis, 1990). More research is needed, especially in the youth population, as additional variables emerge in relation to ethnic concerns across diverse groups.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the variables of ethnic identity, person perception, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice in the youth population of the Member Organizations (MOs) of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC), as well as understand the effects of these variables on the development and identity of each individual.

Research Questions

The following questions are of interest:

1. Do differences exist among the youth population who grew up in different countries on ethnic identity, person perception, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice?
2. Are the five variables (i.e., ethnic identity, person perception, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice) related to each other in each of the youth population of each country?
Figure 1. Conceptual model.

I-C – Individualism, collectivism
EI – Ethnic Identity
PREJ – Prejudice
PP – Person Perception
IV – Independent Variable
DV – Dependent Variable
Definitions

**Collectivism** – In collectivistic cultures, people are interdependent within their in-groups (family, tribe, nation, etc.), give priority to the goals of their in-groups, shape their behavior primarily on the basis of in-group norms, and behave in a communal way (Mills & Clark, 1982).

**Ethnic Identity** – A sense of psychological connection within a group of people who have a common history that is traceable to a common place of origin (Phinney, 1992).

**Individualism** – In individualistic societies, people are autonomous and independent from their in-groups; they give priority to personal goals over the goals of their in-groups, they behave primarily on the basis of their attitudes rather than the norms of their in-groups (Mills & Clark, 1982).

**Perception/Person Perception** – In psychology and the cognitive sciences, perception is the process of acquiring, interpreting, selecting, and organizing sensory information. Person perception is the process of acquiring, interpreting, selecting, and organizing sensory information specific to other people.

**Prejudice** – An attitude (usually negative) towards the members of some group, based solely on their membership in that group (Baron & Byrne, 2000).
PART II

LITERATURE REVIEW
Ethnic Identity

In the 1970s, psychologists began to explore the issues of ethnic as well as racial identity. Ethnic identity has been found to be a difficult and complex variable to assess. The commonality among the research conducted is that the variable of ethnic identity is a complex, contextually-bound factor.

Broadly, ethnic identity refers to an individual's sense of self in terms of membership in a particular group (Liebkind, 1992; Phinney, 1990). Ethnic identity is generally seen as taking on several aspects such as self-identification, feelings of belongingness and commitment to a group, a sense of shared values, and attitudes toward one's own ethnic group (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). Ethnic identity is a dynamic variable that evolves and changes in response to developmental, social and contextual factors and these responses vary over time (Phinney et al., 2001).

Phinney (1992) suggested that ethnic identity is a general phenomenon common to all people. In some of her work, Phinney (1996) delineated culture, minority status, and ethnic identity as aspects of ethnicity that may be helpful in understanding the psychological impact on various racial and ethnic groups. Phinney (1991) noted

“when individuals self-identify as group members, evaluate their group positively, prefer or are comfortable with their group membership, are interested in, knowledgeable about, and committed to the group, and are involved in ethnic practices, they may be said to have a high, strong, secure, or an achieved ethnic identity. Conversely, when there is little ethnic interest, knowledge, commitment, or involvement, and negative evaluation of the group and of one’s membership in the group, then ethnic identity could be called low, weak, or diffuse” (p. 194).

Frable (1997) supported that individuals usually begin life with an unexamined ethnic identity. The individual is then challenged by experiences that make ethnicity personally problematic. To resolve the conflict, individuals initiate an exploration of their ethnic identity, immersing themselves in a culture specific to their ethnicity. This search leads individuals to value their racial, ethnic, or minority group membership and integrate it with other identities (Frable, 1997). In supporting racial and ethnic identity theory, Hurtado, Gurin, and Peng (1994) conducted a study and concluded that ethnicity as a social identity is multidimensional, social histories influence identity structure and content, and these complexities need to be included in empirical work.

Research on ethnic identity also supports several other aspects related to these variables. Cross (1991) supported that in assessing reference group orientation (e.g.,
race awareness, race esteem, and race ideology) and personal identity self-concept (e.g., self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence), no relationship exists between the two variables. Furthermore, Phinney (1990) supported that there is an inconsistent use of the ethnic identity term. Results from her study were inconsistent in relating ethnic identity to self-esteem and adjustment. Phinney also concluded that the most pressing issues are the lack of reliable and valid measures of ethnic and racial identity, experimental and longitudinal studies, accurate measurement of ethnic heritage, and inclusion of contextual variables (SES). In addition, Phinney stated that the investigators who have developed ethnic identity measures have not described the psychometric characteristics of their measures or they have relied on the measure of the originator’s psychometric descriptions. Overall though, the items of ethnic identity measures are highly interrelated and perhaps, are homogeneous (Helms, 1989).

Although the study of perception of self has generally focused on the accomplishments and unique contribution on individuals, Phinney’s (1992) recommendation is consistent with the growing recognition that these self-perceptions may be related to characteristics associated with group membership and group identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Phinney (1990) supported that in addition to the evaluation of the ethnic in-group, there is the important issue of the relations between evaluative aspects of ethnic identity and personal self-esteem. The salience of ethnicity may influence this relation (Phinney, 1996). If we accept Tajfel and Turner’s (1986) proposal that social identity, including ethnic identity, contribute to an individual’s overall self-concept, then Tajfel and Turner’s contribution should differ from Phinney’s (1996) because of variations in the salience of ethnic identity in comparison with the contribution of other sources of personal self-esteem (Lay & Verkuyten, 1999).

According to social identity theory, individuals are motivated to evaluate their group more positively in order to maintain high self-esteem (Tajfel, 1982). Social Identity theory also proposes that a secure sense of ethnic identity may provide a means of positive group evaluation and a powerful way to give group members a sense of ethnic dignity (Tajfel, 1982). In sum, ethnic identity is a fluid and multidimensional concept (Nagel, 1994) that seems to have some relation to ethnic identity, self-esteem, overall self-concept, and perception of others.

**Person Perception**

Another complex variable in the literature is person perception. Throughout the years, both philosophers and psychologists have been interested in the nature of human perceptual processes. Person perception is a part of this process involving how we see and attempt to understand what other people are like. Surprisingly, little effort has been made at relating how we perceive others and areas of obvious concern such as prejudice and aggression. It seems reasonable to expect that many facets of perceiving others could be related to these topics. Argyrides and Downey (2001) proposed that
perception of similarity between others is related to lower levels of prejudice and aggression. Therefore, a brief review of some of the major theoretical approaches and research results follows.

There are several ways that we formulate our perception of others. First impressions (Sherman & Klein, 1994), expectations (Hill, Lewicki, Czyzewska, & Buss, 1989; Hill, Lewicki, Czyzewska, & Schuller, 1990), and stereotyping (Bodenhausen, 1993; Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994) are all classic areas of research in person perception. Self-schemas – cognitive frameworks for organizing, interpreting, and recalling information (Wyer & Srull, 1994) – are also relevant to how people perceive and characterize others (Carpenter, 1988; Dodge & Tomlin, 1987). These schemas are used as a method to organize information about others and to formulate specific perceptions about them. A study by Catrambone and Markus (1987) found results which suggested that self-schemas provide people with certain frameworks in order to understand their own, and others’ schema-related behavior.

Bem (1972) proposed the Self-Perception theory, which stated that we often know our own attitudes in much the same way we know those of others; by observations of behavior. Furthermore, Bem argued that attitudes follow behavior and individuals come to infer their own attitudes by observing their own behavior.

Several studies have been conducted concerning the perception of similarity and a possible influence on liking. Specifically, research has found that perceived similarity to one’s self and attraction/liking are related. There are three main proposals regarding why this relationship is present:

1. Learning of similarity in beliefs is reinforcing: Byrne and Nelson (1964) suggest that interacting with a person who has the same attitude toward something as one does will be rewarding because it will sustain one’s view of the specific idea. Byrne and Nelson suggest that this perceived similarity will give rise to positive affect as compared to having one’s view attacked by someone who disagrees.
2. Similarity leads to the expectation of liking: Aronson (1990) proposed, with supporting data, that we like people who are similar to us because we expect them to like us, and we tend to like people who like us.
3. Similarity leads to easier, smoother social interaction: Davis (1981) proposed that being similar on a specific issue will affect interpersonal interactions. She concluded that people have more attraction towards others who agree with them on various attitudes rather than those who disagree.

It can be seen that our perception of the people around us can influence our behavior. There are also theories (e.g., social categorization theory) about how people perceive others categorically. People generally divide the social world into two distinct
categories: us and them. Moreover, they view people as belonging to an in-group (their own group or us) or to an out-group (another group or them). This is called social categorization, and it takes place on many dimensions, including race, religion, age, sex, ethnic background, occupation, and income. This division of people into distinct in-groups and out-groups is a universal aspect of human behavior (LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

In-group/out-group categorization is more than mere cognitive categorization but carries emotional significance as well (Brewer & Brown, 1998). The in-group/out-group terminology was coined by Sumner (1906), who suggested that attachment to in-groups and preference for in-groups over out-groups are universal characteristics of human social life.

In-groups refer to individuals who exist in a person’s own group and are thought of as “similar to me” (Brislin, 2000). In addition, in-groups are more likely to be positively valued than out-groups (Brewer, 1979), to arouse more positive affect and trust (Kramer & Brewer, 1984), and to elicit cooperative rather than competitive social behavior (Schopler & Insko, 1992).

Out-groups refer to individuals who members of the in-group keep at a distance. In addition, members of the in-group have far less positive feelings about members of the out-group for various reasons (Horenczyk & Bekerman, 1997). Out-group members are often perceived as “different” (Schneider, Hastorf, & Ellsworth, 1979). This perception causes individuals to believe that the specific group does not deserve their time, effort, and concern. Various feelings and different beliefs are usually attached to members of a person’s out-groups. Persons who would be categorized as “them” are perceived more negatively. In fact, studies by Judd, Ryan, and Parke (1991) and Lambert (1995) showed that out-group members are assumed to possess more undesirable traits, are perceived as being more alike (more homogeneous) than members of the in-group, and are often disliked.

Past studies have demonstrated a strong tendency to divide the world into “us” and “them” (Stephan, 1985; Tajfel, 1982). In an experiment by Harasty (1997), in which pairs of same-sex students discussed either their own gender group or the other, ratings indicated that the students made more stereotypical and negative comments about the out-group (i.e., the other gender) than about their own group. In addition, students' comments had the tendency to be global in nature such as “All males/females are like that” (Harasty, 1997). It would appear that in-group and out-group differences in perception are part of every culture.

It should be pointed out that any differences in within group variability perceived in out-groups versus in-groups are viewed as a shared perceptual phenomenon in our perception of others. This view is different from the dimension proposed by Argyrides
and Downey (2001) that a characteristic, or trait, exists whereby some people perceive others as similar to each other and some perceive others as more unique or different from each other. Argyrides and Downey expect others to differ individually along this perceptual dimension, regardless of in-group or out-group categorization.

Argyrides and Downey (2001) and Argyrides, Mikula, Bean, and Jones (2004) have assessed the variable of person perception within the United States and cross-culturally. Specifically, in all cases, they supported that the perception of high similarity among others was related to lower levels of prejudice and aggression. They supported that perception of similarity among others was linked to perceiving more similarity for others to ourselves, and thus more generally positive affect. Argyrides and Downey (2001) proposed that higher levels of perception of similarity would be related to higher levels of ethnic identity due to the above linkage. Following the proposals of Tajfel and Turner (1986) and Phinney (1992) stating that self-perceptions may be related to characteristics associated with group membership and group identity, the current study proposes that ethnic identity would be related to perceived similarity in person perception.

In further assessing these variables cross-culturally, a recent study by Argyrides et al. (2004) assessed levels of ethnic identity, person perception, and individualism/collectivism in the United States. These authors found that Greek-Cypriot university students have a higher sense of ethnic identity, person perception, and collective self-esteem as compared to Caucasian American university students. African Americans also had higher ethnic identity and collective self-esteem as compared to Caucasians, supporting the findings by Phinney (1992) and Phinney and Alipuria (1990). Surprisingly, African American university students scored significantly lower on person perception (indicating more perceived variability among humans) as compared to American Caucasian university students. Argyrides et al. (2004) proposed, in further support of Phelps, Taylor, and Gerard (2001), that these results may be due to African American students’ feelings of mistrust towards others, especially Caucasians. Therefore, even though their identity and self-esteem may be higher, they still tend to perceive others as different from each other.

**Individualism/Collectivism**

Numerous researchers have argued that one of the most important factors in a culture is the relative emphasis it places on individualism and collectivism (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1990, 1995; Triandis, Brislin, & Hui, 1988). In fact, Triandis (2001) clearly stated that the individualism, collectivism cultural syndrome (Triandis, 1996) appears to be the most significant cultural difference among cultures. Greenfield (2000) calls it the “deep structure” of cultural differences. In discussing cultural differences, almost 100 publications per year use the dimension of individualism, collectivism (Triandis, 2001).
Individualism and Collectivism have been discussed in many contexts in the social sciences (Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994; Triandis, 1995). Some related concepts could be found in the areas of values (Hofstede, 1980), social systems (Parsons & Shils, 1951), morality (Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990), religion (Bakan, 1966), cognitive differentiation (Witkin & Berry, 1975), cultural patterns (Hsu, 1983), and the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989). Cultures differ significantly in reference to which of the variables of individualism and collectivism they consider more critical.

Differentiating further the variables of individualism and collectivism, Triandis, Leung, Villareal, and Clark (1985) proposed the use of idiocentrism and allocentrism to correspond at the personality level to individualism and collectivism. According to Triandis (2001), there are more idiocentrics than allocentrics in individualistic cultures and there are more allocentrics than idiocentrics in collectivistic cultures.

In individualistic cultures, people set and work toward their own goals (Triandis, 1990). When a conflict arises between an individual’s goals and those of a valued group (e.g., family, coworkers), the individual considers his or her goals more important. In collectivistic cultures, people are more likely to downplay their own goals in favor of the goals set by a valued group (Triandis, 1990). That group is most often their extended family (Georgas et al., 1997), but it can also be organizational or religious. Members of collective cultures are much more likely to report membership in a group (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994).

Moreover, differences between individualists and collectivists involve the amount of psychological distance from or the importance of emotional closeness to other people (Kagitcibasi, 1997). Although individualists keep a comfortable psychological or emotional distance between themselves and group members, collectivists tend to feel more comfortable with the constant psychological presence of their group (Baron & Byrne, 2000).

Furthermore, concerning cognition, “collectivists think often about the needs of their in-group whereas individualists tend to focus on personal needs, rights, capacities, and the contracts they have made” (Triandis, 1995, p. 72). As far as social behavior is concerned, conformity to in-group norms not only is more common among collectivists but is also internalized to such an extent that it is automatic, and people enjoy doing what is expected of them (Bontempo, Lobel, & Triandis, 1990). When it comes to attitudes, collectivists favor attitudes that reflect sociability, interdependence, and family integrity, whereas individualists believe in self-reliance, competition, and emotional detachment from their group (Triandis, 1990).

The relationship between individualism, collectivism and prejudice is extremely complex. There are contradictory tendencies that may lead to an increase in prejudiced
behavior. Collectivists are more likely to identify with their cultural group and thus be more ethnocentric. This can create feelings of prejudice towards a specific group. On the other hand, individualists are more likely to overlook or even put down a group that is different from their own, in an effort to be “distinguished” as individuals (Triandis, 1990). In such a situation, the individualists are probably the least likely to be prejudiced (Triandis, 1990). Triandis argued that a possibility exists where some collectivists would feel comfortable seeing themselves as different from other groups, and this can lead to situations like the race riots in India (Hindu-Muslim, Kashmir, Sikhs, etc.) which suggest a deep-seeded identification with one’s own group. Similarly, some individualists are likely to want to be “distinguished,” and thus people might see more prejudice among them (e.g., Americans, Britons) (Triandis, 1990).

The link between individualism and prejudice was shown in studies by Sears (1988) in which “symbolic racism” was linked to individualism. Attitude items criticizing current policies claimed to “unfairly favor African Americans” measured symbolic racism. The data showed that those who were in favor of individualism, hard work, sexual repression, and delays in gratification were more likely to be prejudiced towards a specific group than people who were not in favor of the above variables. However, Klugel and Smith (1986) found that those who favored equal opportunity for all were less prejudiced.

According to Triandis (2001), relatively isolated societies, such as those on islands, tend to be high in “tightness” (people provide sanctions for even minor deviations from norms) (p. 911). In these “tight” cultures, individuals have clear ideas about which behaviors are appropriate and which are not. In addition, individuals in these cultures agree among themselves that sanctions are needed when not following the norms. Furthermore, Triandis claims that since these individuals are less influenced by neighboring cultures, they are less likely to accept other norms. This finding may be useful in answering the research question of the current study. These forms of “tight” societies include members who are interdependent and are also high on collectivism (Carpenter, 2000; Triandis, 1994, 1995).

According to Triandis (2001), there are also “loose” cultures where there is tolerance of deviation. These societies are relatively heterogeneous and people do not depend on each other much. The more “complex” the culture, the more individualistic it is likely to be (Triandis, 1994, 1995). According to Chick (1997), cultures differ in complexity. Chick claimed that the complexity of cultures can be seen through gross national product per capita, percent of urban population, size of cities, personal computers per capita, and so forth. Obviously, in complex cultures, there are more choices and lifestyles. Therefore, it is easy to understand why individualistic cultures are more likely to be more complex than collectivistic cultures. In collectivistic cultures, child rearing emphasizes conformity, obedience, security, and reliability, whereas in
individualistic cultures, child rearing emphasizes independence, exploration, creativity, and self-reliance (Triandis, 2001).

To conclude the discussion on individualism and collectivism, it is very important to address the significance of situation-specific dispositions in understanding further these variables. Chatman and Barsade (1995) conducted a study where they randomly assigned participants who were either allocentric or idiocentric to simulated cultures that were collectivistic or individualistic. From this study, it was found that the allocentrics assigned to a collectivistic culture were the ones who were the most cooperative to the culture. The individuals assigned to the individualistic culture (no matter whether they were idiocentric or allocentric) were very low in cooperation. Furthermore, idiocentric participants assigned to the collectivistic situation were somewhat cooperative. In other words, the collectivistic culture had some impact on idiocentric participants but the individualistic culture had no impact on any group.

Like most variables in the behavioral sciences, individualism and collectivism has had its criticisms. Specifically, Voronov and Singer (2002) critically assess the dimension of this variable and its uses in cross-cultural psychology. They argue that individualism and collectivism research is characterized largely by insufficient conceptual clarity and a lack of systematic data. As a result, Voronov and Singer question the utility of the individualism/collectivism variable as an explanatory tool for cultural variations in behavior. In addition, they suggest alternative dimensions for cross-cultural research, and interpret the weaknesses of research on individualism and collectivism as illustrative of a general trend in social psychology.

Another criticism in the area of individualism/collectivism research deals with the notion that individualism is the opposite of collectivism and European American countries are more individualistic as compared to East Asian cultures. Social scientists assume that individualism is more prevalent in Western societies. However, a meta-analytic review of the literature by Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier (2002) found that European Americans were found to be both more individualistic and less collectivistic than others. However, European Americans were not more individualistic than African Americans, or Latinos, and not less collectivistic than Japanese or Koreans. Among Asians, only the Chinese culture showed the largest effects of being more collectivistic. Since the above variables have been used previously with success in all the cultures associated in the current study, the individualism and collectivism variables will be utilized despite the criticism by Voronov and Singer.

**Prejudice**

In understanding prejudice, it is important to first discriminate between stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. According to Fiske (1998), stereotype includes the cognitive component, prejudice includes the affective component, and discrimination as the behavioral component of group category-based responses.
Contrary to popular belief, prejudice does not always include negative attitudes as supported by Judd et al. (1991).

Prejudice is a sensitive issue that has been studied extensively (Allport, 1954; Daws, 1977; LeVine & Campbell, 1972). Prejudice refers to the emotional component of a person’s reactions to other groups (Baron & Byrne, 2000). It is basically an attitude (usually negative) toward the members of some group, based solely on their membership in that group (Baron & Byrne, 2000). There are two main theories on how prejudiced behavior can be acquired.

Attitudes often function as schemas, which cause the individuals who might be prejudiced toward any particular group to process certain information about this group differently from the way they would process information about any other group. These schemas can be applied to our decision-making processes as well. In support of this schematic approach, a study by Blascovich, Wyer, Swart, and Kibler (1997) showed that racially prejudiced persons take significantly longer than persons who are not racially prejudiced to decide whether strangers whose racial identity is ambiguous belong to one racial category or another. This delay in decision-making is due to more easily applied schemas of the non-prejudice group. In addition, research has found that information that is consistent with an individual’s prejudiced views often receives closer attention and therefore is remembered more accurately than information that is not consistent with these views (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Judd et al., 1991). Consequently, since we are selective of the information we choose to process, prejudice tends to increase in strength as time goes by.

The Group-Norm theory of prejudice (Sherif & Sherif, 1953) is the second theory for why prejudiced behavior may be acquired. This theory holds that all groups (whether in-groups or out-groups) develop a way of living with characteristic code beliefs, standards and “enemies” to suit their own adaptive needs. This theory also holds that various pressures exist which cause individual members of a group to keep their beliefs about certain aspects of any situation. This means that an in-group’s preference must be a member’s preference as well, and the group’s enemies must be a member’s enemies as well.

The underlying dimension of all theories of prejudice includes the perceived threat to the core of the prejudiced person (Fiske, 1998). Recent social psychology has focused on examining the specific emotions directed at outgroup members.

Prejudice may involve more than negative evaluations of the groups toward whom it is directed. For example, prejudiced people may experience specific negative emotions or feelings when they are in the presence of members of a specific group they dislike (Bodenhausen, Kramer, & Susser, 1994). Prejudice is usually carried out with
some form of verbal or non-verbal action. Allport (1954) stated that we may distinguish five certain degrees of negative action in terms of prejudice:

1. **Antilocution.** Most people talk about their prejudiced beliefs to like-minded friends and occasionally with strangers.
2. **Avoidance.** If prejudice is more intense, it leads the individual to avoid members of the disliked group, sometimes at the cost of convenience.
3. **Discrimination.** The prejudiced person makes detrimental efforts and undertakes to exclude all members of the disliked group from employment, residential housing, and so on.
4. **Physical attack.** Under conditions of heightened emotion, prejudice may lead to acts of violence of some sort.
5. **Extermination.** Prejudiced beliefs may lead to pogroms, massacres, and racial genocides (e.g., WWII).

As seen from Allport’s point of view, prejudice can be easily related to the variable of aggression. Among the most important attitudes affecting aggression are various forms of prejudice (Baron & Richardson, 1994). Prejudice influences aggression, with highly prejudiced individuals directing stronger attacks against members of disliked out-groups than against members of their own group (Genthner, Shuntich, & Bunting, 1975).

Prejudiced persons will almost certainly claim that they have sufficient warrant for their views (Allport, 1954). They will tell of bitter experiences they have had with the group targeted for their prejudiced behavior (Allport, 1954). But usually, it is evident that their facts are insufficient and irrational (Allport, 1954). They have the tendency to use stereotypes when holding beliefs about certain groups.

Stereotypes, like schemas, are cognitive frameworks consisting of knowledge and beliefs about specific social groups and the typical or “modal” traits supposedly possessed by persons belonging to these groups (Judd et al., 1991). These frameworks also suggest that all persons belonging to social groups possess certain traits. When stereotypes are activated, the tendency to overgeneralize to a specific group is likely. In further understanding the power of prejudice, a meta-analysis (Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson, & Gaertner, 1996) indicated that the prejudiced attitudes (the affective component) predict discrimination (the behavioral component) far better than do stereotypes (the cognitive component).

Application of the theories of prejudice has influenced cross-cultural studies and has given rise to the question of what happens if we discover that an out-group is similar in certain aspects to our in-group. An example of this is the cognitive framework of out-group homogeneity, which basically consists of viewing the out-group as less variable than the in-group and viewing the in-group as reliably more heterogeneous than the out-group (Mullen & Hu, 1989). Linville and Fischer (1993) proposed that a possible
mechanism for this effect might be that there is greater familiarity with individual exemplars of the in-group and thus, the out-group is perceived as less variable. This theory has been contested by Park, Judd, and Ryan (1991), who proposed a mixed model instead, in which variability information is somehow stored within an abstract representation separate from that of the group exemplars. These researchers argued that out-group homogeneity, when it occurs, sets the stage for stereotyping, which as noted above, is frequently the beginning of prejudice. While out-group homogeneity has been reported in a number of studies, research by Lee (1993, 1995) explored this aspect of group classification and reports a consistent lack of supporting evidence.

Kenrick, Neuberg, and Cialdini (2002) summarized the goals that are served by prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. According to Kenrick et al., as groups view one another as potential competitors, they begin to compete, inadvertently bringing the hostile competition they initially feared. This self-fulfilling prophecy can spiral into an increasingly intense conflict, as those involved become even more convinced that the others are hostile. In addition, prejudice also serves as a way of gaining social approval since one would "agree" with members of his or her own group in the attitudes towards another group. Prejudice also serves as a mechanism of managing one's self-image. People with low self-esteem have a tendency to devalue members of other groups and people with high self-esteem do so as well, but primarily when their self-image is threatened by failure.

In an attempt to reduce prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination, the ignorance hypothesis was developed (Stephan & Stephan, 1984) which suggests that people would change their prejudices and stereotypes if only they knew the true facts about members of other groups. It has been found however that facts alone are not sufficient (Kenrick et al., 2002). Another theory (Blanchard, Weigel, & Cook, 1975) proposed that intergroup conflict could be reduced if members of negatively stereotyped groups could behaviorally disconfirm these stereotypes. In addition, it is important for the contact between intergroup members to be supported by local norms and authorities while members of different groups interact as equal status participants (Cook, 1978). Furthermore, research suggests that the contact should be at the individual, person-to-person level, should be rewarding, cooperative, and everybody working towards common goals (Herek & Capitanio, 1996; Pettigrew, 1997). This theory is supported also by research from Argyrides and Downey (2001) who found that perception of similarity among others is negatively related to prejudiced attitude. Therefore, if these variables are present, prejudiced attitudes are limited and it is hard to target individuals with these false attributions and stereotypes.
PART III

METHODOLOGY
Participants

The focus of this study included the youth population of the Member Organizations (MOs) of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC). The questionnaires that assessed the variables in this research study were administered via the internet using the Zoomerang online survey method. A total of 291 young participants answered the questionnaires. The table which follows describes the country of origin of each young person, the frequency of young persons from each country and the representative percentage of each country.

Table 1
Country and Frequency of Young People that Answered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Romania 32 11.0
Russia 7 2.4
Slovakia 1 0.3
Sweden 3 1.0
Turkey 2 0.7
United Kingdom 11 3.8
Ukraine 3 1.0
Total 291 100.0

Due to the fact that the survey was advertised through online procedures, this resulted in the link to the survey reaching some participants from Non-Member Organizations of ECYC such as Turkey, India, Bosnia and Herzegovina, etc. These countries were not included in the analyses of the results. More specific information will be addressed in the “Results” section of this report.

**Measures**

Ethnic Identity was assessed using The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992). Phinney developed this 15-item, 4-point (1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*) measure to assess, conceptually and methodologically, ethnic identity as a general phenomenon across different groups. After extensive research of large samples, this measure has two components: a) Ethnic Identity Search (5 items), which assesses socializing with one’s group members and exploration and participation in cultural traditions and b) Affirmation, Belonging, and Commitment (7 items), which assesses feelings of attachment to one’s group, ethnic pride, and attitudes towards one’s group. The three remaining items are used only for purposes of identification and categorization by ethnicity.

The measure has been used subsequently in dozens of studies and has consistently shown good reliability, typically with alphas above .80 across a wide range of ethnic groups and ages. However, for the young population, the reliability coefficient reported for the overall measure was .90. Higher scores on this measure imply higher levels of ethnic identity.

Person Perception was assessed using the People Perspective Questionnaire (Argyrides & Downey, 2001). This 12-item, 11-point (0 = *Totally different in every way, nothing similar at all* to 10 = *Totally similar in every way, nothing different at all*) measure
assesses whether a person perceives others as similar or different from each other. This measure also has a 4-item helpfulness subscale (assessing the willingness of a person to help another individual in need). This scale has reported reliability coefficients ranging from .84 to .86 across a number of samples. Higher scores on this measure imply higher levels of perceived similarity in others.

Prejudice was assessed using the Modern Racism Scale (MRS; McConahay, 1986). The MRS was developed and intended to measure a dimension of the cognitive component of racial attitudes. The MRS is a new version of the Old Fashioned Racism Scale (OFRS; Greeley & Sheatsley, 1971). McConahay (1986) proposed that OFRS is not a valid measure in today’s world as present-day racists will not call themselves so, but they hold beliefs that may be identified as indicative of modern or “symbolic” racism.

The MRS has valid psychometric properties. Specifically, McConahay (1982) first developed a six-item version for adults, administered it to a sample of 879 Caucasian adults, and obtained an alpha coefficient of .75. Another sample of 709 Caucasian adults obtained an alpha coefficient of .79 (McConahay, 1983). In young samples, the alpha coefficients for a later seven-item MRS version ranged from .81 to .86 (McConahay, 1983). Test-retest reliability of the final version ranged from .72 to .93 across a number of samples (McConahay, 1986). However, because the word “African-American” would not apply within the cross-cultural context of this study, the word was modified to “minority,” in order to be applicable to all cultures. In addition, because not all seven of the items of the OFRS, nor all seven items of the MRS would be appropriate or meaningful questions in all cultures, a selection was made of four items from each scale that could apply to both, totaling eight items. This change could affect the psychometric properties of the measure. The eight items of the modified version of the scale varied in the possible answers ranging from Strongly Disagree (receiving a score of 1) to Strongly Agree (receiving a score of 5). Designated scores were reversed and a total score was obtained. Higher scores on this measure imply higher levels of prejudice.

Individualism and Collectivism were assessed using the Individualism/Collectivism Scale (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995). Since a great interest has developed in the field of psychology lately for the variables of individualism and collectivism, Singelis et al. (1995) developed a scale to measure these variables. The researchers found a total score for the two main variables of individualism and collectivism, as well as a subdivided score for horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. The 32-item scale was presented as “a new personality test” and unless otherwise noted, items were answered on a 9-point scale. The range of answers was from 1 = Never or Definitely not to 9 = Always or Definitely yes. Using a fairly diverse sample, the alpha reliabilities for the two main scales were .71 for individualism and .71 for collectivism. Higher scores on this measure imply higher levels of individualism and collectivism, respectively.
Procedure

After the research proposal was approved by the European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC) Board of Directors and the funding was received by the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, the researcher first created an account with Zoomerang online survey company. The questionnaires, which were all in the English language, were then given to designated individuals from the Member Organizations (MOs) of ECYC to be translated. The questionnaires were translated to Greek, Dutch, German, French and Slovenian. The translated questionnaires, including the English one, were then entered into the Zoomerang online survey website and a different link was created for each translated questionnaire. The Secretary General of ECYC then forwarded the links to all MOs and their members inviting them to answer the questionnaires. Specifically, the instructions were:

“This study explores various issues of your identity and how you perceive others. The questionnaires you are about to answer contain statements about your feelings and attitudes toward yourself and others. It will take 20-30 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Please answer as carefully and truthfully as possible. Try to answer all questions and not to leave anyone unanswered. By clicking “Submit Answers” you are giving your consent to take part in this study. All information will remain in the strict of confidence”

In addition, participants also answered a background information questionnaire that included questions concerning the person’s age, gender, country they live and country they grew up in, size of community where the person grew up and education level. The links were sent in August 2009 and the online questionnaires were closed on December 31st 2009 after periodical reminders and encouragers.

Data Preparation and Statistical Analyses

Upon completion of the survey collection of the data, all information was gathered and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Version 15.0 (SPSS 15.0). Preliminary analysis was conducted to identify and possibly remove any outliers that could skew the results. When all data were cleaned, the appropriate statistical analyses were completed to address all research questions.
PART IV

RESULTS
Even though the research team took many steps in order to increase the response rate of young people as much as possible, the response rate was disappointing. As it was stated earlier, there were only 291 young people that answered the questionnaires. In addition, the frequency of responses of several countries was so low that no statistical analysis could be conducted. Therefore, individuals from non-ECYC Member Organizations were excluded from the data analysis, including many of the participants from Member Organizations that were too low in frequency (i.e. Sweden which had only 3 people and Italy with only 4). After careful review and discussion, only seven countries were selected to take part in the study. The criterion used to make that choice was that these countries had enough young participants which answered the questionnaires which allowed for some statistical analyses to be conducted.

These seven countries were Armenia, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Romania and United Kingdom. The final number of young participants used in this research study was 242. The figure that follows shows the frequency of young participants from each country. As can be seen from Figure 2, there was a varied representation of countries with the majority coming from Germany and Cyprus. Specifically, there were 73 (30.2%) from Germany, 62 (25.6%) from Cyprus, 35 (14.5%) from Belgium, 32 (13.2%) from Romania, 17 (7.0%) from Armenia, 12 (5.0%) from Finland and 11 (4.5%) from the United Kingdom.

The young participants were also asked about their gender. Results indicated that the majority of the young participants were females. Specifically, there were 159 (65.7%) females and 83 (34.3%) were males. Figure 3 shows the frequency for gender.
The young participants were also asked about the community size where they grew up in. Results indicated that there was a fair representation from different community sizes. Specifically, there were 105 (43.4%) who grew up in a community of less that 50,000 people, 77 (31.8%) grew up in a community with a population between 50,000 and 500,000 and 60 (24.8%) who grew up in a community with a population larger than 500,000. Figure 4 shows the frequency for size of community.

![Figure 4: Number and Percentage of Community Size of Participants](image)

Finally, the young participants were also asked about their educational level. Results indicated that there was a fair representation from different educational levels. Specifically, there were 96 (33.0%) who were still in High School, 94 (32.3%) who graduated High School, 69 (23.7%) with a Bachelor’s degree, 30 (10.3%) with a Master’s degree and 2 (0.7%) with a Doctorate degree. Figure 5 shows the frequency for education level.

![Figure 5: Number and Percentage of Education Level of Participants](image)
It is worth noting that the participants had an average of 26.8 years of age.

The current study was interested in answering the following research questions:

1. Do differences exist among the youth population who grew up in different countries on ethnic identity, person perception, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice?
2. Are the five variables (i.e., ethnic identity, person perception, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice) related to each other in each of the youth population of each country?

**Research Question 1**

In an attempt to answer the following research question, statistical analyses were conducted and provided the following results which will be presented for each variable of interest separately.

**Person Perception**

Person perception assessed how individuals perceived others, that is, if they perceived others as similar or different from each other. Higher scores indicated more
perceived similarity. Concerning this variable, young participants from Armenia and Cyprus had the highest similarity scores whereas, young participants from the United Kingdom had the least similarity scores. Results can be seen in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Similarity Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARMENIA (17)</td>
<td>63.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYPRUS (62)</td>
<td>63.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMANIA (32)</td>
<td>59.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELGIUM (35)</td>
<td>59.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINLAND (12)</td>
<td>59.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY (73)</td>
<td>56.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (11)</td>
<td>52.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from the table that the largest difference existed between the UK and Germany and the other five countries which seemed to have more similar scores. This indicates that the young participants from the United Kingdom and Germany perceive others as more different from each other than they do in Armenia, Cyprus, Romania, Belgium and Finland.

Helpfulness

Helpfulness assessed how willing people are to go out of their way and help someone in need. It was believed that the more similar people perceived others, the more likely they would be to help others. Therefore, we expected to find similar results to person perception. Higher scores indicated more willingness to help. Concerning this variable, young participants from Finland and Armenia had the highest helpfulness scores whereas, young participants from Belgium, the United Kingdom and Romania had the least helpfulness scores. Results can be seen in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Helpfulness Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARMENIA (17)</td>
<td>63.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYPRUS (62)</td>
<td>63.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMANIA (32)</td>
<td>59.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELGIUM (35)</td>
<td>59.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINLAND (12)</td>
<td>59.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY (73)</td>
<td>56.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (11)</td>
<td>52.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is clear from the table that the helpfulness scores varied greatly indicating different helpfulness levels across the countries. However, our prediction was not accurate in that, individuals from Armenia and Cyprus did not have the highest scores in helpfulness levels. They are, however, in the top three places, and it is possible that with a much larger sample size, the prediction would be accurate. It is also worth noting that on the question that stated: ‘Do you feel that we should be willing to make some sacrifices (within reason) to help those less fortunate than ourselves?’ almost all of the participants had scores between 6.5 and 8.5 out of 10 which is encouraging of their willingness to help.

**Prejudice**

Prejudiced assessed the negative beliefs and attitudes of individuals against minorities in their country. Higher scores indicated more prejudiced attitudes. Concerning this variable, young participants from Armenia had the highest prejudice scores whereas, young participants from Finland had the lowest prejudice scores. It was predicted that the higher the scores of perceived similarity to those around them, the higher the prejudiced scores would be to minorities. Results can be seen in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Helpfulness Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FINLAND (12)</td>
<td>22.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMENIA (17)</td>
<td>20.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYPRUS (62)</td>
<td>17.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY (73)</td>
<td>16.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELGIUM (35)</td>
<td>15.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (11)</td>
<td>14.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMANIA (32)</td>
<td>14.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Scores of Prejudice by Country
It is clear from the table that the prejudice scores stand out for Armenia and Finland respectively, both in opposite directions; Armenia having the highest prejudice scores and Finland the lowest. Once again, it seems like our prediction was not completely accurate, in that individuals from Armenia who did have the highest similarity scores did also have the highest prejudice scores but that was not the case for the other countries.

**Individualism/Collectivism**

Collectivism assessed the needs of individuals to belong in a group, work for the collective good of the society and place duty before pleasure whereas individualists tend to be more egocentric and place their own needs above anyone else’s. Higher scores indicated more collectivistic attitudes and lower scores more individualistic attitudes. It was believed that individuals with high perceived similarity and helpfulness scores would also have high collectivism scores and vice versa. Concerning this variable, young participants from Armenia had the highest collectivism scores whereas, young participants from the United Kingdom and Belgium had the lowest collectivism scores. Results can be seen in Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Prejudice Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARMENIA (17)</td>
<td>21.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYPRUS (62)</td>
<td>17.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELGIUM (35)</td>
<td>17.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMANIA (32)</td>
<td>17.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (11)</td>
<td>17.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY (73)</td>
<td>16.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINLAND (12)</td>
<td>14.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5
Scores of Collectivism by Country
It is clear from the table that the collectivism scores, and as predicted, would be very similar to the similarity scores. Armenia scored the highest, again, on collectivism indicating a greater tendency than other countries to belong in a group, work for the collective good of the society and place duty before pleasure. Cyprus, Romania, Finland and Germany followed. The United Kingdom and Belgium seem to have the lowest collectivism scores indicating a more individualistic attitude.

Ethnic Identity

Ethnic Identity assessed the knowledge and efforts of individuals to find out more about their ethnicity as well as their feelings of belongingness and pride in their ethnic background. Higher scores indicated higher levels of ethnic identity, involvement, knowledge and pride. It was believed that individuals with high ethnic identity scores would also have high similarity, collectivism and prejudice scores and vice versa. Concerning this variable, young participants from many countries had very similar scores with the exception of Germany who had the lowest significant score. Results can be seen in Table 6.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CYPRUS (62)</td>
<td>35.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMENIA (17)</td>
<td>34.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (11)</td>
<td>33.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMANIA (32)</td>
<td>33.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELGIUM (35)</td>
<td>32.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINLAND (12)</td>
<td>31.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY (73)</td>
<td>28.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from the table that the ethnic identity scores were not quite as predicted, since most of the countries were very close in scores to one another. In other words, Cyprus and Armenia had very similar scores, as predicted, but the rest of the countries also had significantly higher scores than was expected. This is a good result though since it is indicative that the young participants were searching for knowledge and placed efforts to find out more about their ethnicity as well as having positive feelings of belongingness and pride in their ethnic background.

**Research Question 2**

In order to address the research question concerning whether the five variables (person perception, helpfulness, prejudice, collectivism and ethnic identity) are related to each other, several correlational statistical analyses were conducted and the results follow. Initially, an analysis was conducted that included all 242 participants to see how these variables related to each other regardless of country. This analysis indicated the following:

- Individuals who are more prejudiced have also more individualistic attitudes (place personal benefit above common benefit).
- Individuals who are more prejudiced are less likely to be helpful to others.
- Individuals with more collective attitudes (work for the good of the greater family and community) also have higher levels of ethnic identity and are more likely to be helpful to others.
The same analysis was conducted for each country separately and yielded the following results:

**Armenia**

- Individuals who are more prejudiced are less likely to be helpful to others.
- Individuals with more collective attitudes (work for the good of the greater family and community) also have higher levels of ethnic identity.
- Individuals with individualistic attitudes (place self needs before others’ needs) and less likely to be helpful to others.

**Belgium**

- Concerning young participants from Belgium, these variables did not seem to be related to one another in any way. There were some similar trends as other countries, but none of them was statistically significant so that it can be reported.

**Cyprus**

- Individuals who are more prejudiced are less likely to be helpful to others and have more individualistic attitudes (place self needs before others’ needs).
- Individuals with more collective attitudes (work for the good of the greater family and community) also have higher levels of ethnic identity and are more likely to be helpful to others.
- Individuals with high levels of ethnic identity are more likely to be helpful and have a more collective attitude (work for the good of the greater family and community).

**Finland**

- Concerning young participants from Finland, these variables did not seem to be related to one another in any way. There were some similar trends as other countries, but none of them was statistically significant so that it can be reported.

**Germany**

- Individuals who are more prejudiced have more individualistic attitudes (place self needs before others’ needs) and are less likely to be helpful to others.
- Individuals with more collective attitudes (work for the good of the greater family and community) are more likely to be helpful to others.

**Romania**
- Individuals who are more prejudiced are less likely to be helpful to others.
- Individuals with more collective attitudes (work for the good of the greater family and community) are more likely to be helpful to others and are less prejudiced.

**United Kingdom**

- Individuals who are more prejudiced are less likely to be helpful to others.
- Individuals with more collective attitudes (work for the good of the greater family and community) are more likely to be helpful to others and are less prejudiced.

**Further Analysis**

The research team decided to also look at the effects of education level and community size on any of these variables. Results were very positive and promising, as predicted. Specifically, regardless of country of origin, young participants who grew up in smaller communities (population <50,000) were more willing to help others as compared to those who grew up in medium size communities (population 50,000 – 500,000) or large communities (population > 500,000).

Furthermore, when looking at the variable of education level, regardless of country of origin, results indicated that the higher the level of education, the higher the level of ethnic identity of young participants. Last but not least, when addressing the variable of gender, there were no significant differences between males and females on any variable, in any country.
PART V

DISCUSSION
The purpose of this study was to examine the variables of ethnic identity, person perception, individualism, collectivism, and prejudice in the youth population of the Member Organizations (MOs) of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC), as well as understand the effects of these variables on the development and identity of each individual.

**Findings and Interpretation**

Results indicated that the young participants from each country did have significant differences on the variables of ethnic identity, person perception, helpfulness, individualism/collectivism and prejudice. Concerning person perception, the largest difference existed between the UK and Germany and the other five countries which seemed to have more similar scores indicating that the young participants from the United Kingdom and Germany perceived others as more different from each other than they do in Armenia, Cyprus, Romania, Belgium and Finland.

Person perception in this study encompassed similarities or differences in others concerning general attitudes, hopes and goals for the future, ability to solve problems, etc. The level of homogeneity of a group could influence this variable, which may be why scores are the highest in Armenia and Cyprus, followed by Romania. Some similar historic backgrounds among them could have been key significant factors that increased scores on perceived similarity. The current findings concerning person perception do not provide support for Argyrides and Downey’s (2001) study which supported the relationship between person perception and levels of prejudice.

Concerning helpfulness, scores varied greatly indicating different helpfulness levels across the countries. However, our prediction was not 100% accurate in that, individuals from Armenia and Cyprus did not have the highest scores in helpfulness levels. They are, however, in the top three places, and it is possible that with a much larger sample size, the prediction would be more accurate. It is also worth noting that when asked about their willingness to make some sacrifices (within reason) to help those less fortunate than themselves, the answers were favorable which is encouraging of a humanistic approach of a willingness to help, regardless of country of origin.

Concerning prejudice scores, Armenia had the highest and Finland the lowest. Once again, it seems like our prediction was not completely accurate in that, individuals from Armenia who did have the highest similarity scores did also have the highest prejudice scores, but that was not the case for the other countries. The more homogeneity exists in a country, the more likely the prejudice levels would exist towards minorities. Once again, Armenia has a long history of homogeneity and diaspora which could explain some of the results. In addition, the type of minority each country was referring to was different, and this could also influence the results.
Concerning collectivism, and as predicted, scores were very similar to the similarity scores. Armenia scored the highest indicating a greater tendency than other countries to belong in a group, work for the collective good of the society and place duty before pleasure. Cyprus, Romania, Finland and Germany followed. Similar reasons as stated above concerning prejudice scores could also explain this result. Perception of historical events can be a great motivator for individuals from a specific country to increase levels of belongingness and have a more collective attitude.

Finally, concerning ethnic identity, scores were not quite as predicted, since most of the countries were very close in scores to one another. In other words, Cyprus and Armenia had very similar scores, as predicted, but the rest of the countries also had significantly higher scores than was expected. This is a good result though since it is indicative that the young participants were searching for knowledge and placed efforts to find out more about their ethnicity as well as having positive feelings of belongingness and pride in their ethnic background.

Furthermore, Argyrides and Downey’s (2001) study was supported from this research study in that young participants who were more prejudiced also had more individualistic attitudes and were less likely to be helpful to others. On the other hand, individuals with more collective attitudes had higher levels of ethnic identity and were more likely to be helpful to others. In a collectivistic society, one would place duty before pleasure and personal benefit, which could explain why one would also be more helpful to others. Moreover, it is obvious that a more prejudiced person would also be less likely to help someone, unless of course they would belong in their “approved” category.

Within our statistical analysis, we also found that regardless of country of origin, young participants who grew up in smaller communities (population <50,000) were more willing to help others as compared to those who grew up in medium size communities (population 50,000 – 500,000) or large communities (population > 500,000). This result was expected since traditionally, individuals from smaller communities do have a more collective attitude and higher levels of willingness to help others.

Furthermore, when looking at the variable of education level, regardless of country of origin, results indicated that the higher the level of education, the higher the level of ethnic identity of young participants. This was also expected since a person who is developing, who is increasing in knowledge level and is “challenging” more things, it is also expected to have spent more time in investigating and appreciating things about his/her own ethnic identity.

Conclusions
There are several conclusions that can be drawn from the current study. First, there is enough evidence to claim that the five variables used in the current study – ethnic identity, person perception, helpfulness, individualism/collectivism, and prejudice – do seem to be interacting with each other in one way or another, especially with individualism/collectivism, prejudice and helpfulness. However, it seems like the interactions are multidimensional, fluid, and context specific.

A second conclusion revolves around the variables of individualism and collectivism. Voronov and Singer (2002) suggested alternative dimensions for cross-cultural research, and interpreted the weaknesses of research on individualism and collectivism as illustrative of a general trend in social psychology. This suggestion should be taken into consideration before utilizing these variables in current scientific research.

Lastly, it is concluded that two traditional themes of humanity are supported by the current research. Small communities across several countries do seem to still have a more collective attitude and be more willing to be there for one another, something that is usually lost in larger communities. Also, there is no evidence for any gender differences concerning these variables.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions reported above, the following recommendations are made:

- Training programs should be developed which will focus on increasing similarity levels while maintaining and appreciating differences in all countries, especially in Germany and the United Kingdom. These programs should also promote the concept of helpfulness and how that relates to the perception of similarity.
- More training programs should be developed and implemented in all countries which will focus on identifying stereotypes and decreasing prejudice, especially in Armenia.
- Through non-formal education procedures, the concept of “personal self” vs. “collective self” should be promoted. These educational programs will promote the idea of a more collective self since it has positive outcomes on the variables of this research study.
- ECYC should continue the hard on work on gender equalities since it is supported that gender did not affect any of the results.

ECYC is already providing and will continue to provide support for the Member Organizations in order to decrease certain attitudes that interfere with the healthy development of the youth of Europe of the 21st century. The youth is a very fragile
population; these teenagers and young adults are the European citizens of tomorrow. These results help us identify the above stated programs which are needed to develop healthy minded citizens, free of stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes and a more healthy ethnic identity and collective self-esteem.

**Limitations**

The current study had the following limitations: First, the sample size was too low and it would have been better to collect more representative data from all ethnic groups. Another limitation revolved around the word minority. When using the word “minority” in the current study, no specific group was targeted. The participants of the current study were asked to respond to the prejudice part of the survey while taking into consideration their own definition of what constitutes a minority. Therefore, some of the results should be interpreted with caution.
REFERENCES


