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# The Influence of Cultural Diversity on Organizational Citizenship Behaviors in Professional Sport Teams: The Moderating Role of Intercultural Competence

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**Abstract.** Professional sports teams provide a relevant setting for the study of multicultural work groups. Engaging in additional tasks or voluntary efforts—broadly referred to as organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs)—is key to the effective functioning of such teams. Unfortunately, cultural diversity has been shown to decrease team cohesion and could therefore be detrimental to OCBs. However, intercultural competence (IC) should help team members understand and adapt to the cultural diversity in their teams. Because these aspects remain poorly understood, this study examines the influence of cultural diversity on OCB (i.e., sportspersonship, civic virtue, helping behavior), and the moderating role of IC. A vignette survey study was conducted with 219 professional athletes from different sports (i.e., football, basketball, and volleyball). Data were analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling. Results suggest an inverted curvilinear relationship between cultural diversity and OCB, with OCBs being significantly lower in the moderate cultural diversity condition compared to the low and high conditions. In addition, the results suggest that athletes' level of IC acted as a positive moderator between the level of cultural diversity and perceptions of OCB. These findings are discussed in relation to the literature on cultural diversity and (sport) team dynamics.

**Keywords:** cultural diversity, elite sport, intercultural competence, multicultural teams, organizational citizenship behavior, vignettes

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Managing cultural diversity is a significant challenge for any organization. Indeed, there are many obstacles to working together as a workforce with different norms, values, and behaviors. In fact, research suggests that culturally diverse teams may be less cohesive and more conflictual (Stahl et al., 2010), with the likelihood of additional tasks or extra work activities becoming increasingly difficult among culturally diverse employees (Roberge & van Dick, 2010). Unfortunately, these additional tasks or voluntary efforts—broadly referred to as organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs)—are key to the effective functioning of organizations and therefore represent a necessary concept to consider when exploring the inner workings of groups or teams (Roberge & van Dick, 2010; Yang et al., 2024).

The world of sport offers a revealing microcosm of these social and organizational dynamics (Cunningham, 2007). In professional sport around the world, teams are becoming increasingly multicultural. Taking football (soccer) as an example, the international mobility of athletes has increased greatly in recent years. The latest report from the International Center of Sport Studies (CIES), which included data from 135 football leagues around the world, set a record of 15,310 footballers playing abroad in 2024 compared to 12,841 in 2020 (i.e., + 19.2%; Poli et al., 2024). Not only is multiculturalism a reality of modern professional sport, but the evolution of international transfers continues to intensify. For instance, the 31 main professional football leagues in Europe showed an evolution from 34.8% to 41.9% of expatriates per team between 2009 and 2021 (Poli et al., 2021). For the first time in 2021, expatriates represented more than half of the players in the five major European leagues (Poli et al., 2021). Importantly, the international transfer reports highlight similar trends in other interdependent sports (e.g., basketball; CIES Sports Observatory, 2021).

The extensive literature on the consequences of diversity in teams has shown that it can be both an asset and a liability, and that outcomes are predominantly determined by team processes and conditions (Roberge & van Dick, 2010; Stahl et al., 2010, Tasheva & Hillman,

2019). However, team processes are still insufficiently known in detail, especially process-oriented moderator variables such as boundary spanning, community building, and leadership (Stahl et al., 2010), and personal level diversity such as biculturalism (Tasheva & Hillman, 2019). This is significant given that cross-cultural experience may lead to intercultural competence (IC; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009), which has been positioned as a key factor for effective intercultural interaction and collaboration (Bartel-Radic, 2009). Individuals who are interculturally competent understand the cultural diversity in their teams and therefore can better adapt to varying needs—which in turn promotes enhanced team functioning (Tasheva & Hillman, 2019; Yang et al., 2024). Yet, the role of IC in multicultural collaboration remains poorly understood across groups generally, and in sport specifically.

In the context of sport, several studies have explicitly investigated this group composition phenomenon, particularly in relation to team performance (Maderer et al., 2014; Moustakas & Müller-Schoell, 2016; Prinz & Wicker, 2016; Timmerman, 2000) and perceptions of team cohesion (Godfrey et al., 2021, 2022). This research has generally produced inconsistent results, with for example, some indicating that team diversity was negatively associated with team performance in basketball (Maderer et al., 2014; Timmerman, 2000), and others reporting no relationship in baseball (Moustakas & Müller-Schoell, 2016; Prinz & Wicker, 2016; Timmerman, 2000). Similarly, team diversity has been found to be positively associated with perceptions of task cohesion in a youth context (Godfrey et al., 2022), but negatively associated with task and social cohesion in an intercollegiate context (Godfrey et al., 2021). Clearly, these inconsistencies warrant further research to help understand how cultural diversity influences group processes and outcomes in sport (Godfrey et al., 2020).

Given these identified gaps and opportunities for continued investigation, the current study poses the following research question: How does team cultural diversity and team

members' IC influence OCB? Specifically, we aimed to examine the influence of cultural diversity on the self-reported engagement of OCBs and to explore if and how IC acts as a moderator for that relationship. To position this research more critically, the following section will describe the relevant literature pertaining to cultural diversity and team effectiveness, cultural diversity in sport teams, and introduce the concepts of IC and OCB.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Cultural Diversity and Team Effectiveness**

In industrial-organizational psychology, the multicultural composition of work groups has been examined through the concept of cultural diversity. Commonly presented as the representation of people within a social structure based on different group affiliations and cultural meanings (Cox, 1993), cultural diversity as a concept has acquired definitional ambiguity. For example, scholars have noted an overreliance and emphasis on advancing definitions of 'culture' and 'diversity' without explicit attention to exploring and understanding what the combination of terms 'cultural diversity' means (e.g., Ayoko & Konrad, 2012). Further, this concept has been referred to with a wide range of attributes such as nationality, ethnicity, values, and/or religion (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000) and has included demographic, human capital, and social capital diversity dimensions (Tasheva & Hillman, 2019).

In addition to the ambiguity surrounding how it has been considered, cultural diversity has been positioned as both an asset and a liability, and that team performance is dependent on the effective management of teamwork processes and the conditions under which the team operates (Roberge & van Dick, 2010; Tasheva & Hillman, 2019). In fact, Stahl et al.'s (2010) meta-analysis showed that losses in teamwork processes were related to task conflict and decreased social integration, while process gains were related to increased creativity and

satisfaction. In this way, cultural diversity in and of itself shows no direct relationship with team performance (Stahl et al., 2010), with scholars advocating for a focus on intermediate outcomes, such as OCBs (e.g., Aoyagi et al., 2008; Roberge & van Dick, 2010; Yang et al., 2024).

Another trend in studies involving cultural diversity has been a focus on rigorously objectifying and quantifying specific cultural diversity within teams (e.g., national diversity, age diversity, racial diversity). Importantly, researchers have cautioned against relying on objective reports and emphasized the need to explore individual perceptions and experiences of multicultural environments (Adler & Aycan, 2018; Shemla et al., 2016). For example, within the same team, one person may feel that the diversity of national backgrounds is a strength for the group while another may be frustrated or anxious by such a diverse team composition and perceives it as problematic (e.g., a barrier to interaction or communication). In this regard, Adler and Aycan (2018) stated that it is not the objective presence or absence of diversity that should be of interest, but rather how individuals perceive, cope with, and ultimately manage it. The notions of individual perceptions and the management of diversity are critical considerations (Adler & Aycan, 2018; Shemla et al., 2016). From this perspective, the onus is on the team environment and how cultural diversity is considered and approached (Ely & Thomas, 2001).

### **Cultural Diversity in Sports Teams**

Although it is important to generally explore how cultural diversity is perceived and approached, it is equally necessary to consider the environment that individuals are embedded in while doing so. Specifically, group dynamics researchers have advocated for the transferability of topics across similar group contexts (Eys et al., 2020). For example, Hackman (1990) argued that learnings should be transferable across contexts so long as those

contexts involve clear group boundaries, task and outcome interdependence, and a defined organizational structure. Such groups have been termed ‘task groups’, which represent a range of high-performance contexts with overt membership and performance outcomes (e.g., surgical teams, performing arts groups, military teams; Lickel et al., 2000).

From this general classification of task groups, sport teams hold value in relation to exploring cultural diversity and intercultural competence (Cunningham, 2007). For instance, at elite and professional levels, team composition is becoming increasingly diverse (e.g., Poli et al., 2024), and there is ample support in the sport literature for how composition should impact both individual and team level outcomes (Eys et al., 2020). Similarly, researchers have advocated for how research in sport contexts can complement and augment our understanding of group dynamics topics such as teamwork (Van Raalte & Brewer, 2019).

Previous studies have mostly examined the relationship between cultural diversity and team performance. Using archival data from professional basketball and baseball teams, Timmerman (2000) conceptualized cultural diversity as age diversity and racial diversity, and performance as winning percentage (i.e., number of wins divided by the total number of games played). After controlling for team ability (i.e., game statistics such as rebounds per game in basketball or earned run average in baseball), age and racial diversity were found to be negatively associated with team performance in basketball but not baseball. In a similar study from the five largest European soccer leagues (England, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain), Maderer and colleagues (2014) found that both cultural heterogeneity (i.e., heterogeneity index) and cultural distance (i.e., distance between the focal individual and the average of all other group members) were negatively associated with performance (i.e., the average number of points a team earned per game in one season divided by the team’s market value) after controlling for number of players, average age, and age diversity. The results also

supported a stronger negative impact of cultural distance on performance compared to cultural heterogeneity.

This relationship between cultural diversity and team performance, however, was not supported in other studies. For instance, Moustakas and Müller-Schoell (2016) used nationality as a measure of cultural diversity in a professional ice hockey context. After controlling for total team payroll, no effect of national diversity on measures of team performance (e.g., regular season wins, goals for and goals against, playoff wins) was found. Similarly, with professional cycling teams from the Tour de France, Prinz and Wicker (2016) examined the relationships between diversity in terms of age, nationality, and language (i.e., variation coefficient and Blau index) and team performance measured by the number of riders arriving in Paris. The results revealed that this type of diversity did not have a significant effect on team performance.

Extending previous research on cultural diversity in sport to the youth and university/college sport contexts, Godfrey and colleagues conducted two studies with Canadian athletes on interdependent sport teams (Godfrey et al., 2021, 2022). In the first study, the authors used a cross-sectional design to examine the influence of ethnic diversity on cohesion in youth sports teams (Godfrey et al., 2021). Participants reported their ethnicity and completed a questionnaire measuring their perceptions of task and social cohesion. Controlling for gender, age, and team tenure, the results indicated that ethnic diversity negatively predicted youth athletes' perceptions of both task and social cohesion. Using a longitudinal design in their second study (Godfrey et al., 2022), the authors examined whether ethnic diversity collected at one point in time predicted intercollegiate athletes' perceptions of the four dimensions of cohesion two weeks later. Controlling for gender, team tenure, and team size, the results revealed that ethnic diversity positively predicted one

dimension of task cohesion (i.e., team unity toward task goals). No relationship was found with the other three dimensions of cohesion (Godfrey et al., 2022).

The previous studies highlight inconsistencies that can largely be explained by differences in its conceptualization and operationalization. For example, age, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, and cultural distance are all terms that have been adopted, each of which represent distinct types of diversity (Godfrey et al., 2020). In addition, even the most studied correlate, team performance, has been operationalized inconsistently (e.g., winning percentage; points earned per game). Finally, the samples and contexts investigated have varied greatly, spanning the types of sports, the level of competition, and the age of the athletes. Recently, Godfrey and colleagues (2020) emphasized the need to rely on clear definitions of key terms (e.g., culture, nationality), a clear statement of the aspect of cultural diversity being examined (e.g., outward appearance, underlying values), and a clear rationale for the choice of diversity measurement (e.g., categorical, mathematical indices). The authors also reiterated the importance of accurately conceptualizing diversity as variety (i.e., qualitative differences based on categories), separation (i.e., differences along a lateral continuum), or disparity (i.e., hierarchical status differences), depending on the specific context and assumptions under investigation (Harrison & Klein, 2007).

Regarding the team environment and how diversity is considered, Szymanski and colleagues highlighted the importance of individuals' (i.e., athletes and coaches) past experiences and backgrounds (e.g., binationality) as critical aspects that shape their perceptions and, in general, the performance of their teams (Szymanski & Ipek, 2020; Szymanski et al., 2021). They found that bicultural professional football players exhibited higher levels of creativity, exhibited more leadership behaviors, and performed better in teams with multicultural managers (Szymanski et al., 2021). Similarly, a case study of a professional volleyball team highlighted how athletes' experiences with multicultural groups

and their cultural awareness influenced (a) how they viewed and acknowledged (or did not acknowledge) cultural diversity, (b) how they engaged with teammates daily, and (c) their social position within the team structure (Eluère et al., 2023).

### **Intercultural Competence**

An individual's ability to know and adapt to the specifics of different cultures has been referred to as IC (Bartel-Radic, 2009; Peng et al., 2020) as well as cross-cultural competence (Richter et al., 2023). Following Bartel-Radic and Giannelloni (2017), we believe that both terms can be used interchangeably. IC was defined as "the ability (and we could add the willingness) to draw on personal resources and traits to understand the specifics of intercultural interaction and to adjust one's behavior to these specifics" (Bartel-Radic & Giannelloni, 2017, p. 633). Specifically, IC describes the attitudes, skills, knowledge, and personality traits that could help individuals adapt more easily and effectively to other cultures. This definition encompasses three considerations of intercultural competence known as (a) traits (i.e., enduring characteristics that determine typical behaviors in intercultural situations), (b) attitudes and worldviews (i.e., perceptions of other cultures or information from outside one's own cultural world), and (c) capabilities (i.e., the ability to be effective in intercultural interactions; Leung et al., 2014).

International and intercultural experience do not 'automatically' lead to IC (Bartel-Radic, 2014). Likewise, cultural and ethnic diversity in sport teams may reduce negative stereotyping and extremist attitudes (Coenen & Kunst, 2021). Positive contact experiences, encouraged by the appropriate management of cultural diversity, are essential to positive team outcomes (Coenen & Kunst, 2021). The greater the diversity in a multicultural team (e.g., variety level and/or cultural distance), the greater the need for IC of its members to enable effective functioning (Leung et al., 2014). The presence or absence of IC could

account for the differential effects of cultural diversity reported in the literature. In this regard, IC is potentially a moderator of the effects of objective cultural diversity on group functioning outcomes. Indeed, various perspectives advanced by scholars suggest that individuals with high IC may perceive less uncertainty, anxiety, or intergroup bias in intercultural interactions (i.e., the ‘neutralizing the negative’ perspective) or increase positive intercultural relations (i.e., the ‘positive psychology’ perspective) due to their positive attitudes toward outgroups (Pittinsky et al., 2011) or their compassion and desire to learn through intercultural interactions (Migacheva & Tropp, 2013). It might also limit the salience of certain group faultlines (e.g., nationality, language), thereby limiting categorization processes based on perceived differences between group members (van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Essentially, IC is expected to influence team functioning through improved social interaction (Yang et al., 2024) and a greater willingness to engage with, understand, and help other group members (Bennett, 2004). Considering IC as a possible moderator is also in line with the recommendations of scholars to explore mediator and moderator variables that may resolve the inconsistent findings on this topic (e.g., Roberge & van Dick, 2010; van Knippenberg et al., 2004).

### **Organizational Citizenship Behaviors as an Indicator Team Functioning**

The concept of OCB has been defined as “an individual behavior that is not directly or explicitly recognized by the official rewarding system and which generally favors an efficient functioning of the organization” (Organ, 1988, p. 4). Podsakoff et al. (1997) advanced the most recent operationalization by introducing the three dimensions of helping behavior (i.e., helping employees prevent or deal with work-related problems), civic virtue (i.e., being involved and concerned about the organization), and sportpersonship (i.e., tolerating problems without complaining). OCB has been positively related to various measures of

organizational effectiveness (e.g., commitment, productivity; Podsakoff et al., 2009, Yang et al., 2024). Likewise, Aoyagi et al. (2008) argued for its relevance in the sport domain.

Specifically, they suggested that the greater frequency of OCB would be indicative of the athletes' investment in the success and well-being of the team (Aoyagi et al., 2008). Notably, positive relationships between OCB, cohesion, leadership, athlete satisfaction, and performance have been reported in sport (Aoyagi et al., 2008; Martínez & Tindale, 2015). Thus, there is preliminary evidence to position OCB as an indicator of team functioning.

In addition to the implications for team functioning, there is reason to expect that OCB will be related to cultural diversity in the context of team composition. For example, it is possible that team composition influences how team members interact with their peers, particularly through social categorization processes (Tajfel, 1982). Chattopadhyay (1999) found that demographic dissimilarity (i.e., differences between group members in terms of race or age) negatively affected OCB. These results demonstrated an asymmetrical effect of demographic dissimilarity on OCB, with this relationship depending on group composition, cultural background, and contextual considerations such as expectations when working in groups with demographically dissimilar peers. In this study, white employees in minority-dominant groups (i.e., more than half of the group members were minorities) were less altruistic, whereas minority employees in white-dominant groups (i.e., more than half of the group members were white; Chattopadhyay, 1999) were not. Kadam et al. (2021) also noted that while OCB exists in both national and multicultural contexts, what is valued as OCB in one culture is not necessarily appreciated in another. They did not, however, find moderating effects of cultural distance for the IC and OCB relationship.

Therefore, based on the studies reported above, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among professional athletes' perceptions of cultural diversity, IC, and OCB. Given the prevalence of these types of diversity in professional sport and their

salience to athletes (e.g., Eluère et al., 2023), we focused on: (a) national diversity (i.e., the countries in which individuals hold their citizenship) conceptualized as variety (i.e., the proportion of nationalities represented on the team), and (b) language diversity (i.e., differences in language proficiency) conceptualized as disparity (i.e., the inequality of resources among team members in terms of mastery of the club's lingua franca; Eluère & Pougué Biyong, 2022). As is often the case in the literature, we use the global term cultural diversity to refer to these characteristics, while acknowledging the differences between the terms (Godfrey et al., 2020). In addition, we examined whether professional athletes' IC moderated the relationship between cultural diversity and OCB. We hypothesized that (a) participants with low IC would be less willing to engage in OCB, especially in a context characterized by moderate cultural diversity, and that (b) participants with high perceived levels of IC, would be more willing to engage in OCB, especially in contexts characterized by moderate cultural diversity. Importantly, we proposed that the moderating effect might differ depending on the level of cultural diversity within the team. Earley and Mosakowski (2000) argued that categorization into same-nationality subgroups would be less pronounced in highly diverse groups than in groups with few nationalities represented. Consequently, contexts of moderate cultural diversity are expected to amplify it the most.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

We combined purposive and snowball sampling techniques to obtain the most representative sample of high-level team sport participants (e.g., years of competition, age, percentage of expatriates; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Specifically, we first used typical case sampling to subjectively identify teams that were representative of modern professional sports (i.e., multicultural, national level, professionalism). Subsequently, snowball sampling allowed us

to share the study on a larger scale through participants who in turn recruited other individuals (e.g., former teammates, coaches) who fit the sample characteristics. These efforts enabled us to obtain a generalizable sample for elite interdependent sport.

The sample consisted of 219 professional athletes (137 females and 82 males;  $M_{age} = 25.72$ ,  $SD = 6.34$ ) competing in French championships in three of the most popular interdependent team sports worldwide (i.e., football,  $n = 65$ ; basketball,  $n = 73$ ; volleyball,  $n = 81$ ). Of the total sample, 72.6% identified as French athletes and 27.4% as expatriates (i.e., 16 other nationalities), which is consistent with team compositions across professional sports (e.g., CIES Sports Observatory, 2021; Poli et al., 2021, 2024). On average, participants had competed professionally for seven seasons ( $SD = 5.23$ ; range = 1-30 seasons) and practiced 12 hours per week with at least one official competitive game per week.

### **Vignettes: Diversity Characterization and Scenario Description**

An experimental vignette methodology was adopted to manipulate and control the different types and levels of cultural diversity thereby simultaneously enhancing both internal and external validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). This methodology was also chosen because of the hypothesized causal relationships. Based on Harrison and Klein's (2007) typology, cultural diversity was operationalized as nationality diversity and language disparity. Both were manipulated to create three vignettes corresponding to short, carefully constructed descriptions of realistic situations representing differentiated levels of cultural diversity within the team (i.e., low, moderate, and high; see Appendix A).

Following suggestions for implementing vignette protocols (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014), each vignette began with a description of a particular context/level of nationality and language disparity within a fictional professional sports team of which the respondent was portrayed as a member. The three conditions were: (a) a team composed of 85% French and

15% foreign players, all of whom could understand and speak English fluently, but where the foreign players had limited comfort with French (low condition); (b) a team consisting of 45% French, 40% foreign players from the same country, and 15% foreign players from different countries, where the members could either understand or speak English fluently, but the foreign players could not understand French (medium condition); and (c) a team consisting of 10% French and 90% foreign players, where most members could understand and speak English fluently, but some foreign players could not understand either English or French (high condition). The percentages of French and foreign players used in the vignettes were consistent with current data on international transfers in professional sports teams in France (e.g., CIES), while representing extremes as realistically as possible. For example, first division professional teams, whether in football, basketball, or volleyball, are never completely homogeneous or heterogeneous in terms of nationality. In this line, we also avoided creating the low and high diversity conditions in a symmetrical way by deliberately referring to different percentages (i.e., 85-15%; 10-90%).

All vignette characterizations ended with a scenario explaining that the team lost after being in the lead near the end of an important game. The loss was the result of communication problems and lack of effort on the part of some teammates (i.e., a critical event that is likely to be interpreted differently based on individual perceptions). The following is a sample scenario provided to participants for the moderate diversity condition:

*You are a member of a professional sport team in France. Out of your teammates, 45% are from France, 40% are from the same different country, and 15% are from other different countries. Your coach is French and usually speaks both French and basic English during training sessions and competitions. As for your teammates, most are able to speak and understand English comfortably, yet only a few of the expatriates can understand French. Tonight, you were playing an important game*

*that would impact the team standings. Your team was in the lead toward the end of the game, but there were communication issues in your team and it did not seem like everyone was playing at a high intensity and effort—you ended up losing the game.*

## **Measures**

**Intercultural Competence.** IC was assessed using the multidimensional measure developed by Bartel-Radic and Giannelloni (2017) which provides “comparably high coverage and sound psychometric properties” (Richter et al., 2023, p. 31). The measure is appropriate for “individuals from various contexts and international backgrounds (‘pure locals’ without any international experience from various countries and ‘multicultural people’ with a highly intercultural background)” (Bartel-Radic & Giannelloni, 2017, p. 641). There are numerous tools available for measuring IC, yet achieving accurate data for this multidimensional concept remains challenging (Richter et al., 2023). Often, assessments are confined to self-reports of competencies, personality traits or knowledge, neglecting actual attitudes towards cultural diversity, behaviors, and actionable capacities. This weakness can also be objected to the now widely used measure of cultural intelligence (Thomas et al., 2015) which is subject to self-efficacy beliefs and the Dunning-Kruger effect (Koc, 2021). In this study, capacities for action are crucial to our vignette protocol (i.e., reactions to specific practical scenarios). Among several best practices, contextual sensitivity has been identified as necessary for rigorous IC measurement (Richter et al., 2023). Consequently, despite potential shortcomings in addressing the need for a more standardized approach (Richter et al., 2023), we extracted four specific dimensions from Bartel-Radic and Giannelloni’s (2017) questionnaire with relevance to measuring cross-cultural competence. This approach helped to mitigate social desirability bias by framing items as personality traits instead of IC. The original questionnaire consists of 13 items and measures four personality traits that are

components of IC: motivation to understand human behavior, complex versus simple explanations, open-mindedness, and emotional stability. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, with four items being reverse-scored. This way, higher scores represented greater perceptions of IC and the Cronbach alpha for this study was .73.

**Organizational Citizenship Behaviors.** OCB was assessed using the questionnaire developed by Podsakoff and colleagues (1997), which includes three dimensions: (a) helping behavior (7 items; e.g., “I try to act like a peacemaker when other team members have disagreements”); (b) civic virtue (3 items; e.g., “I am willing to risk disapproval to express my beliefs about what’s best for the crew”); and (c) sportspersonship (3 items; e.g., “I always focus on what is wrong with our situation, rather than the positive side”). Following Aoyagi et al.’s (2008) investigation of OCB in the sport context, the wording of the items was adapted to sport teams (i.e., ‘crew’ replaced by ‘team’; ‘crew members’ replaced by ‘teammates’). All items were measured on a 7-point Likert type scale with higher scores representing greater perceptions of OCB. The internal consistency and construct validity of the OCB measure have been supported in previous studies (Aoyagi et al., 2008; Podsakoff et al., 1997). In the present sample, the Cronbach alpha coefficients were .80 and .84<sup>1</sup>.

## **Procedure**

After receiving ethical approval from the first author’s institutional research ethics committee, 28 head coaches of professional football, volleyball, and basketball teams were contacted using word-of-mouth and snowball sampling methods. Coaches who responded were asked to share the survey link with their athletes. Importantly, coaches assisted with recruitment but were not informed of which athletes ultimately participated in the study. All participants were required to provide informed consent before completing the questionnaires.

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<sup>1</sup> The participants completed the OCB questionnaire twice (cf., Figure 1 presenting the procedure).

In addition, participants had the option of receiving the vignettes and questionnaires in either French or English. Language proficiency was assessed using a 10-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (I can neither understand nor speak French/English) to 10 (I can both understand and speak French/English fluently). All participants scored above 6 in at least one of the two languages.

This study used a 2 (i.e., order of the vignettes) x 3 (i.e., levels of cultural diversity) within- and between-subjects design (Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010). The players participated in two 15-minute questionnaires one week apart. The first data collection assessed participants' perceptions of their IC. This measure was presented among two other questionnaires used as distractors: (a) Neuroticism and Extraversion (i.e., 6 items selected from the NEO-PR; Costa & McCrae, 1992); (b) Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (i.e., 9 items selected from the NEO-PR, 1992). Before completing the measures, participants read the general instructions (see Appendix B). Inspired by Godfrey and Benson's (2023) vignette study protocol, these general instructions ostensibly described the survey as a study of 'personality traits of professional athletes' to reduce the potential occurrence of desirability bias in measuring participants' IC. Here, distractors are generally understood as irrelevant personality items included in a set of IC items used to construct the narrative for a study on personality traits. Similarly, social desirability bias is an inherent characteristic of self-report questionnaires, where individuals tend to respond in a way that portrays a positive image of themselves (Shelton & Richeson, 2005; Tourangeau et al., 2000). In this study, this bias was controlled by the experimental vignette methodology itself which is considered "a good choice when the goal is to investigate sensitive topics in an experimentally controlled way" (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014, p. 357)

One week later, participants were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions when they logged on to the online platform. Participants read their assigned vignettes and

were asked to answer questions about the behaviors they would engage in (i.e., the measure of OCB) as a member of those specific teams. Each participant was asked to read two vignettes, which were presented in random order. To avoid a contamination effect between the first and second measures of OCB, participants were given a distraction task prior to the presentation of the second vignette. The distraction task required participants to answer an open-ended question about their current physical/technical strengths and areas for improvement in these aspects as a team member in general. As shown in Figure 1, the questionnaires were distributed in random order via LimeSurvey®.

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, kurtosis, and skewness were performed. Additionally, the reliability of the questionnaires using Cronbach's alpha coefficients and the correlations among variables were examined. Confirmatory factor analyses were also conducted to assess the validity of the measurement scales.

To explore the relationships between condition (i.e., vignettes), IC, and OCB scores, data were analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) with the lmerTest package of R, version 4.1.2 (Bates et al., 2015). Because participants were randomly assigned to two of three vignettes, HLM was used to account for both the nested (i.e., multiple observations within a single participant, level 1) and crossed (i.e., participants observed in multiple conditions, currently in multiple vignettes, level 2) structure of the data. These analyses allowed us to control for the interdependence of the data, avoid Type I errors, and achieve acceptable reliability (Baayen et al., 2008). In addition, HLM allows the use of incomplete data (present in our sample) to avoid loss of information due to averaging over observations (Judd et al., 2012). Thus, participants could be randomly distributed across selected conditions and did not necessarily need to be tested in all of them (Boisgontier & Cheval,

2016). Then, the effect of age, sex, professional experience, and the type of sport practiced on the various variables and their interactions were considered. This involved analyzing how these demographic and professional factors influenced the outcomes and examining any potential interaction effects between them.

We first examined intra-class correlations (ICC) by computing a null model for OCB scores. Two models were then used to examine the moderating role of IC in the relationship between diversity conditions (i.e., vignettes) and OCB scores. A first model (Model 1) was computed to examine the main effects of both diversity and IC on OCB. Vignette and IC were included as predictors of OCB scores. Vignette 1 and Vignette 2 were sequentially specified as the reference condition to examine all vignette comparisons.

In a second model (Model 2), the interaction term between vignette and IC was included to test whether OCB scores varied as a function of IC. Accordingly, the interaction between vignette and IC was regressed on OCB scores. As in Model 1, Vignette 1 and Vignette 2 were specified sequentially as the reference condition. Model 1 and Model 2 were then compared using the likelihood ratio test to determine which model provided a better fit to the data and to determine whether the interaction effect between condition and IC was related to more information compared to the initial model.

## **RESULTS**

Of the original 219 participants, 152 completed the questionnaires at both time points (i.e., attrition rate = 30.59%). To examine the possibility of sample bias, we calculated a series of analyses to explore differences in perceptions between those who completed both time points and those who did not (i.e., only completed the demographic and IC questionnaires), controlling for gender, nationality, prior work experience, and perceptions of IC. The chi-square tests revealed no significant differences in demographic characteristics for

gender,  $\chi^2(1) = .08, p = .78$ , and French versus expatriate,  $\chi^2(1) = 1.44, p = .23$ . In addition, MANOVAs revealed no significant differences for work experience,  $F(1) = 2.09, p = .15$ , and IC levels,  $F(1) = 1.36, p = .25$ . For the second data collection, the randomized nature of the vignette distribution resulted in three conditions with 50, 55, and 47 participants. Using chi-square tests, no significant differences were found between these groups based on demographic characteristics (i.e., gender, French vs. expatriate, sport).

Confirmatory factor analyses did not support the multidimensional nature of IC and OCB in the present sample. The best fit indices, although unsatisfactory, suggested unidimensional measures of both IC (CFI = .743; SRMR = .091; RMSE = .106) and OCB (CFI = .712; SRMR = .104; RMSE = .147). Despite the modest fit values, the relationships between professional athletes' perceptions of cultural diversity and their overall perceptions of IC and OCB were further examined. For each construct, the Cronbach alphas were .73 for the IC scale and .80 and .84 for each administration of the OCB scale.

Analysis of the skewness (-.67 to -.27) and kurtosis (-.49 to .64) values indicated that the OCB scores were moderately skewed to symmetrical and normally distributed for the three conditions. OCB scores averaged 5.58 ( $\pm .69$ ) for Vignette 1, 5.43 ( $\pm .83$ ) for Vignette 2, and 5.52 ( $\pm .66$ ) for Vignette 3. IC scores averaged 3.72 ( $\pm .49$ ) for the entire sample. The descriptive statistics and correlations are presented in Table 1.

We computed a null model for the OCB scores. The ICC,  $\tau_{00}/(\tau_{00} + \sigma^2)$ , indicated that the between-individual variance accounted for 28% of the total variance for the variable, and the within-individual variance accounted for 72% of the total variance. Thus, the null model confirmed the usefulness of an HLM approach for these data. The analyses revealed no significant effects of age ( $p = .29$ ), sex ( $p = .60$ ), professional experience ( $p = .40$ ), or the type of sport ( $p = .33$ ) on OCB scores, nor on the interaction ( $p > .27$ ) between OCB and IC.

The variance inflation factor scores for the fixed effects in Model 2 were 1.01 for the variable Vignette and 1.00 for OCB, indicating that multicollinearity was not a significant concern.

Models for the HLM analyses are shown in Table 1. Using moderate diversity (i.e., Vignette 2) as the reference condition, Model 1 indicated that OCB scores were significantly and positively associated with the low diversity (i.e., Vignette 1) condition ( $\beta = .10, p = .03$ ) and were not significantly associated with the high diversity (i.e., Vignette 3) condition ( $\beta = .05, p = .34$ ). Thus, OCB scores were significantly higher in the low diversity condition than in the moderate diversity condition. Using low diversity as the reference condition, OCB scores were not significantly associated with the high diversity condition ( $\beta = -.06, p = .21$ ). Thus, there was no significant difference in OCB between the low and high diversity conditions. Finally, HLM analyses revealed positive associations between OCB and IC scores ( $\beta = .61, p < .001$ ) - overall, IC scores positively predicted OCB scores. We observed a marginal  $R^2$  of 0.014 and a conditional  $R^2$  of 0.817 for Model 1.

In Model 2, we included the interaction effect between IC and the three cultural diversity conditions, sequentially using moderate diversity and low diversity as reference conditions. Using moderate diversity as the reference condition, HLM results revealed a significant and negative interaction between the high diversity condition and IC ( $\beta = -.23, p = .02$ ), indicating that IC scores moderated the differences in OCB scores between the high and moderate diversity conditions. This result suggests that the effect of IC on OCB was significantly less pronounced in the high diversity condition compared to its effect in the moderate diversity condition. Thus, the difference in effects between the high and moderate diversity conditions was significantly less pronounced for individuals with higher levels of IC. In contrast, no interaction effect was found between the low diversity condition and OCB ( $\beta = -.06, p = .52$ ). Using low diversity as the reference condition, no interaction effect was found between IC and the high diversity condition ( $\beta = -.16, p = .11$ ), indicating that IC

scores did not moderate the difference between the low and moderate diversity conditions and between the low and high diversity conditions. We observed a marginal  $R^2$  of 0.178 and a conditional  $R^2$  of 0.825 for Model 2.

Finally, using the likelihood ratio test, results indicated that the inclusion of the interaction term between vignette and IC provided a marginally but significantly better fit to the data than the model without the interactive term,  $\chi^2(2) = 5.76, p = .06$ . Thus, these results provided reasonable support for the moderation hypothesis.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among professional athletes' perceptions of cultural diversity, IC, and OCB. Specifically, we hypothesized that athletes' level of perceived IC would moderate the influence of cultural diversity on their willingness to engage in OCB, particularly in a context characterized by moderate cultural diversity. In general, the results revealed that when participants were exposed to low levels of intra-team cultural diversity (i.e., low national diversity and language disparity), they reported higher levels of OCB, indicating that they were more willing to engage in behaviors that favored the efficient functioning of the fictitious team. The results also indicated that participants who reported higher levels of IC were more willing to engage in OCB within their team. Finally, perceptions of IC also moderated the relationship between cultural diversity and OCB only in the moderate cultural diversity scenario (i.e., moderate national variety and language disparity). In the following sections, we describe the implications of these findings in more detail, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the study.

The first finding worth discussing concerns the higher perceptions of OCB observed in a context of low cultural diversity—operationalized as low national variety and language disparity. This finding aligns with those from studies supporting higher levels of group

functioning outcomes under low cultural diversity conditions, such as task and social cohesion (Godfrey et al., 2021), member participation and contribution (Aritz & Walker, 2014), or communication (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000). Interestingly, our results indicated that perceptions of OCB only differed significantly between the low and moderate conditions of cultural diversity, and thus did not support a linear relationship between cultural diversity and a group functioning outcome (i.e., OCB). This finding is consistent with the perspective that the effects of cultural diversity are complex and dependent on context and a variety of factors (Roberge & van Dick, 2010; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). In their review of diversity in work groups, van Knippenberg and Schippers (2007) advanced that “the potentially positive effects of diversity on group performance may only obtain up to a certain level of diversity, beyond which the lack of a common frame of reference may get in the way of fully appreciating all group members’ contributions” (p. 532). The authors encouraged researchers to explore curvilinear effects of diversity as a promising line of research and a way to overcome such inconsistencies.

It is also worth discussing the fact that the lowest perceptions of OCB were observed in the context of moderate cultural diversity. This finding is consistent with the literature on diversity in organizations, where moderate variety (of any kind) is more challenging than minimal and maximal variety because of the overlap between some but not all team members and how it can lead to subgroup and communication problems or conflict (Earley & Mosakowzki, 2000; Harrison & Klein, 2007). Similar consequences have been reported in sport settings, with the same trend found among professional volleyball players on a multicultural team (Eluère et al., 2023). In contrast, the literature describes fewer such risks in homogeneous groups (i.e., low variety) and even in highly diverse groups (i.e., high variety), likely because members are so different from one another that they cannot easily

categorize themselves into subgroups (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000) and thus must reach across categories to connect and coordinate (Harrison & Klein, 2007).

Another possible reason why the moderate cultural diversity condition appeared to be the most problematic for OCB in this study may be the two types of cultural diversity considered (i.e., national variety and language disparity). It is possible that their convergence increased the potential for individuals to categorize themselves and others (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Similarly, it is possible that the observable differences that athletes interpreted across their teams could have led them to more easily associate with certain teammates, thus influencing subgroup formation (Lau & Murnighan, 1998). Indeed, it is possible for subgroups to be accentuated when their presence is combined with additional similar attributes that are highly correlated (e.g., nationality and language). As a result, although the total number of subgroups is reduced, they may be more hermetic and harmful to group functioning. Importantly, the current study did not control for a variable that could inform which perspective best explains the relationship between cultural diversity and OCB.

Our results also showed a positive relationship between perceptions of IC and OCB. This suggests that professional athletes with high IC (i.e., individuals with personality traits that make them more capable of adapting to intercultural interactions; Bartel-Radic, 2009) may be more willing to help their teammates and go above and beyond job expectations, regardless of the multicultural composition of their team. This finding is important for several reasons. First, it suggests that it is not so much objective cultural diversity that is related to group functioning, but rather the ways in which team members adapt to other cultures and the specifics of intercultural situations. Second, it suggests the need to focus on how professional athletes approach the context of multicultural teams (i.e., different nationalities and languages spoken), rather than emphasizing how many nationalities are present and how many languages are spoken. This supports claims that individual perceptions and experiences of

diversity are more important than actual objective representation within groups (Adler & Aycan, 2018; Shemla et al., 2016; Szymanski & Ipek, 2020; Szymanski et al., 2021). Third, this finding highlights an interest in the organizational management of diversity to understand how group members can be helped to efficiently shape perceptions of diversity for group functioning and to use their past experiences to best achieve team goals. These main points could form potential future lines of research in professional sports team settings.

Finally, our findings position IC as a moderator operating within sport teams. This is an important finding that could help researchers and coaches better understand the impact of cultural diversity on professional sport team dynamics. Indeed, some scholars have argued that the inconsistency of the negative/positive effects of diversity on small groups may result from a focus on testing relationships between diversity and outcomes without considering possible moderating variables (e.g., Van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). In the current study, with a moderately multicultural team, the less interculturally competent the athletes were, the more they may have perceived differences as contributing to subgroup formation (Shemla et al., 2016) and categorized themselves as part of one group or the other, which in turn could affect their willingness to engage and invest effort in their teammates and team (i.e., helping behavior, sportsmanship, civic virtue). Conversely, the most interculturally competent athletes may have felt more able to adapt to intercultural interactions (Bartel-Radic & Giannelloni, 2017) and, therefore, to produce more OCB. The moderating effect of IC in the sport context warrants further research, particularly to determine how professional athletes' ability to understand the specifics of intercultural interactions and their ability to adapt their behavior to these specifics can be developed and/or trained.

In addition to the previously summarized findings, it is worth highlighting several strengths of this study. First, following Godfrey and colleagues' (2020) recommendations, we clearly articulated how we approached the concept of cultural diversity and provided an

explicit description of the conceptualization of diversity in terms of variety and disparity. Second, we sought to examine how perceived diversity might be related to important group processes, represented as OCB behaviors. Such a finding demonstrated a nuanced approach to understanding the effects of diversity in group composition, suggesting that it is a members' perceptions and behaviors that influence the ultimate outcomes (i.e., performance), not necessarily diversity per se. Third, to explore our research question, we employed an experimental vignette methodology which is recommended for investigating sensitive topics in an experimentally controlled way (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014) and is generally underutilized in sport settings (e.g., Meredith et al., 2018). This approach allowed us to explore an important concept, but also one that has been described as difficult for athletes to discuss (e.g., Eluère et al., 2023). The vignette design allowed us to systematically manipulate a precise level of objective cultural diversity and capture players' perceptions of and reactions to similar environments while controlling for several other factors that may influence their evaluations and subsequent behaviors (e.g., team size, scenario). Our preliminary findings provide a framework for researchers to explore in more naturalistic experiments or longitudinal designs.

Despite the many strengths, there are limitations to the study. The main limitations arise from the use of an experimental vignette methodology. The vignettes describe a particular context/level of nationality and language disparity within a fictional professional team that loses an important match after leading late. Even though the three team compositions were consistent with data on international transfers in professional sports teams in France, the vignettes show something that *can* but *does not* necessarily happen outside the experimental situation (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Further, such a methodology requires prespecified variables (i.e., nationality and language in the present study) and levels (i.e., low, moderate, and high cultural diversity), but does not protect against the omission of

important variables. The sport psychology literature has identified numerous variables that influence teammates' behaviors such as norms, leadership, cohesion, and team tenure (for a review, Eys et al., 2020). Interestingly, recent research has supported a relationship between one of these variables (i.e., cohesion) and a type of cultural diversity (Godfrey et al., 2021, 2022). Other group dynamics variables, such as cohesion, should be considered in future studies investigating the relationship between cultural diversity and OCB.

Other limitations relate to the sampling method and online data collection, which also limit the generalization of the present results. Convenience and snowball sampling resulted in an imbalance between female and male players in the present sample (i.e., 63.0% of females), and a high number of nationalities in a small part of the sample (i.e., 27.4%). Caution should also be exercised in generalizing these findings to broader populations of professional players, as the specific characteristics of the sample may not accurately represent the target population. While the mean age of the study participants was similar to that observed in professional football, basketball, and volleyball teams in France (e.g., CIES Sports Observatory, 2021; Poli et al., 2022), our sample composition does not accurately reflect the distribution of professional players in France (i.e., highest number of professional players in football, ahead of basketball and volleyball and more male professional players than female professional players).

In addition, online data collection may have resulted in less investment by participants and may have contributed to response acquiescence or less thoughtful and invested engagement. We had no control over the conditions under which players were exposed to the fictional team and game scenario (e.g., time of day, home or club context, on a phone or laptop). However, it is worth noting that online data collection allowed professional players to participate in the study in their natural setting (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014), something which is typically difficult for researchers to achieve through in person collection approaches.

Given the above limitations, it would be worthwhile in the future to attempt to replicate our findings in a more ecological situation and with a larger number of group dynamics variables and professional players who accurately represent this population. Such studies would confirm or refute the present results and determine the extent to which they can be generalized to professional players practicing similar team sports. However, such an ecological design should avoid confounding national diversity with language disparity, as was done in our vignettes. In the current study, it was not possible to distinguish the respective effects of these two indicators of cultural diversity, which, despite the interest of our findings, may call into question their external validity. Finally, the current study employed unidimensional scales for OCB and IC with moderate fit indices, highlighting the need for future research to explore the multidimensionality of these constructs in the professional sports context.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study suggests that moderately culturally diverse sport teams may pose increased challenges for members and coaches. However, given that players' perceptions of and reactions to cultural diversity (i.e., their willingness to engage in OCB) appear to be shaped by their level of IC, we encourage (cultural) sport psychologists to further investigate this competence as a promising resource for multicultural team management. Finally, while the conceptualization and measurement of diversity is a major limitation of the current literature, we highlight the novelty of our vignette design to explore different levels of objective cultural diversity, which we believe enhances the validity and utility of our findings. Nevertheless, there is a need for more ecological and dynamic large-scale empirical studies to investigate how professional sports teams may function differently based on the cultural diversity composition/structures that characterize them. In doing so, it will be critical to

carefully consider the definitions and measures of cultural diversity using robust instruments tailored to the specific indicators being studied (e.g., although they overlap, language differences and national diversity cannot be combined in an ecological context and may have different effects).

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**Table 1.**

*Descriptive Statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation, Minimum, Maximum) and Correlations Among Studied Variables*

	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Correlation coefficients			
					IC	OCB Vignette A	OCB Vignette B	OCB Vignette C
IC	3.72	.49	1.92	4.69	-			
OCB Vignette 1	5.58	.69	3.92	7.00	.49***	-		
OCB Vignette 2	4.43	.84	2.46	6.92	.38***	.87***	-	
OCB Vignette 3	5.52	.66	3.46	6.77	.37***	.84***	.75***	-

Note. \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ ; OCB = Organizational citizenship behaviors; IC = Intercultural competence

**Table 2**

*Fixed and Random Effects of the Models Examining the Contribution of IC and Conditions*

*(Vignettes) in the Prediction of OCB*

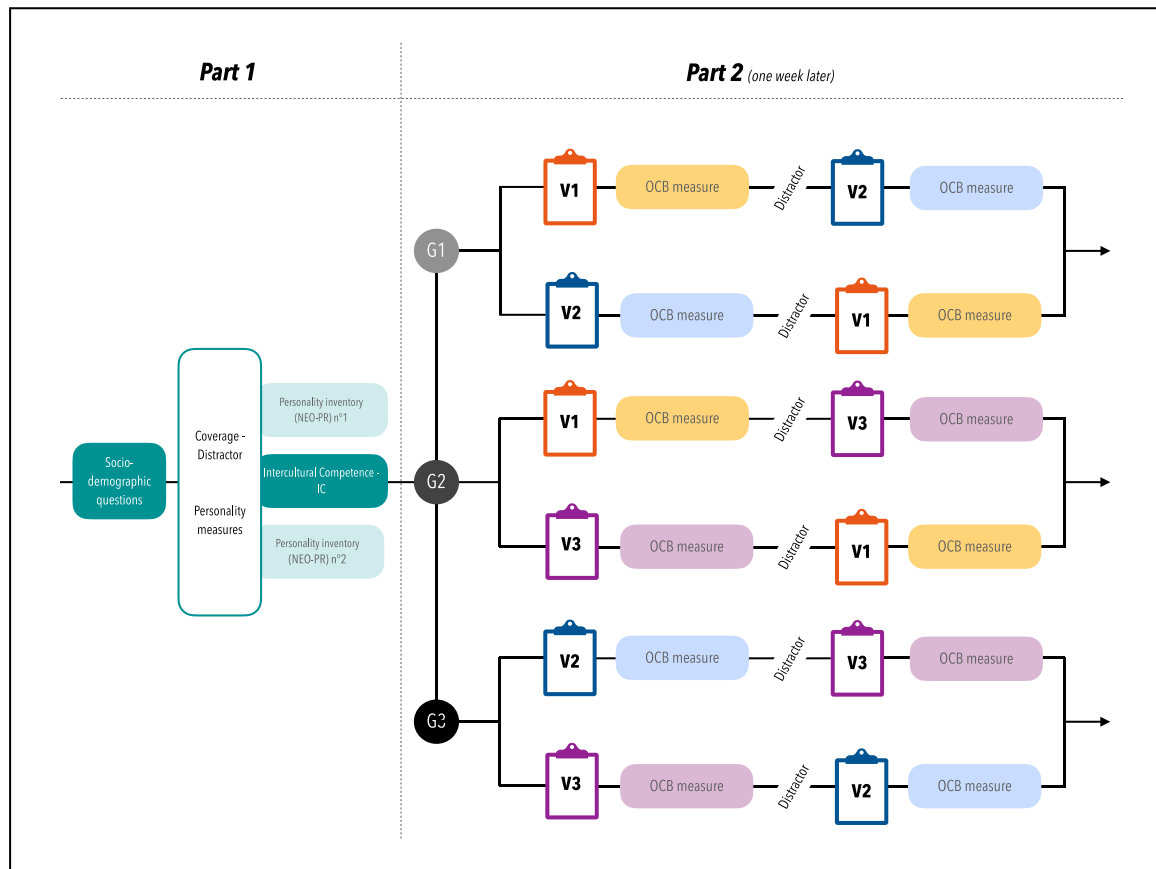
	<b>Model 1</b>			<b>Model 2</b>		
Fixed effects	$\beta$ (SE)	<i>p</i>	$\beta$	$\beta$ (SE)	<i>p</i>	$\beta$
Intercept	5.46 *** (.06)	.001	-.07	5.46 *** (.06)	.001	-.06
IC	.61 *** (.10)	.001	.41	.71 *** (.12)	.001	.48
OCB Vignette 1	.10 * (.05)	.049	.15	.10 * (.05)	.049	.13
OCB Vignette 3	.05 (.05)	.415	.07	.04 (.04)	.415	.06
IC x OCB Vignette 1				-.06 (.10)	.525	-.04
IC x OCB Vignette 3				-.23 * (.10)	.020	-.15
Vignette 2 (constant)						
Intercept	5.57*** (.06)	.001	.07	5.56 *** (.06)	.001	.07
IC	.61 *** (.10)	.001	.41	.64 *** (.12)	.001	.43
OCB Vignette 2	-.10 * (.05)	.022	-.15	-.10 * (.05)	.022	-.13
OCB Vignette 3	-.06 (.05)	.197	-.08	-.05 (.05)	.153	-.08
IC x OCB Vignette 2				.06 (.10)	.524	.04
IC x OCB Vignette 3				-.16 (.16)	.109	-.11
Vignette 1 (constant)						
Random effects	$\sigma^2$			$\sigma^2$		
Participants						
Intercept	.34 (.59)			.34 (.59)		
Residual	.10 (.31)			.09 (.31)		
logLik	-236.3			-233.4		
Conditional R-squared	.817			.825		
Marginal R-squared	.014			.178		
model 1 vs model 2						
						$\chi^2(2) = 5.73, p = 0.06$

*Note.* OCB = Organizational citizenship behaviors; IC = Intercultural competence.

$\beta$  = Standardized effect size; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Figure 1**

*Procedure for the Two-time Points Vignette Study Design*



## **Appendix A**

### **Vignettes Representing Differentiated Levels of Cultural Diversity Within Teams**

#### **Low Diversity**

“You are a member of a professional sport team in France. Most of your teammates are the same nationality. Out of your teammates, 85% are from France and 15% are from other different countries. Your coach is French and usually speaks both French and basic English during training sessions and competitions. As for your teammates, all are able to speak and understand English comfortably. The expatriates can even understand French to a certain extent. Tonight, you were playing an important game that would impact the team standings. Your team was in the lead toward the end of the game, but there were communication issues in your team and it did not seem like everyone was playing at a high intensity and effort—you ended up losing the game.”

#### **Moderate Diversity**

“You are a member of a professional sport team in France. Out of your teammates, 45% are from France, 40% are from another different country, and 15% are from other different countries. Your coach is French and usually speaks both French and basic English during training sessions and competitions. As for your teammates, most are able to speak and understand English comfortably, yet only a few of the expatriates can understand French. Tonight, you were playing an important game that would impact the team standings. Your team was in the lead toward the end of the game, but there were communication issues in your team and it did not seem like everyone was playing at a high intensity and effort—you ended up losing the game.”

**High Diversity**

“You are a member of a professional sport team in France. Out of your teammates, 10% are from France and almost everyone else holds his/her citizenship in a different country. Your coach is French and usually speaks both French and basic English during training sessions and competitions. As for your teammates, most are able to speak and understand English comfortably, yet only a few of the expatriates can understand French. Some players do not comfortably understand nor speak either of those two languages. Tonight, you were playing an important game that would impact the team standings. Your team was in the lead toward the end of the game, but there were communication issues in your team and it did not seem like everyone was playing at a high intensity and effort—you ended up losing the game.”

## **Appendix B**

### **General Instructions**

The dynamics of professional sport teams is receiving increased research attention, with a central focus being on understanding how characteristics and experiences of team members influence the way they interact with one another.

The information we are collecting about you is for a study on personality characteristics of professional players, conducted at [Names of the laboratory and the university].

This study consists of two parts that will take place one week apart. Each time-point should only take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

During the first time-point, you will be asked to provide information about yourself (e.g., age, gender, sport background) and to fill out four short questionnaires about your personality characteristics.

For the second time-point, one week later, we will provide you with two different situations typically met by professional sport teams. After each situation, we will ask you to answer questions meant to explore how you would behave as a member of those teams.

Please answer each question as sincerely as possible. Note that there is no right or wrong answer, and that you can stop your involvement at any time without having to justify yourself, and without consequences whatsoever.