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The e ffect of task and ego orientation to athletic identity and anti social behavior of
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The effect of task and ego orientation to athletic identity and anti social behavior of students and athletes

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the affect of task and ego orientation on athletic identity and anti social behavior of students and athletes. A total of 156 students (86 males and 70 females with a mean age of 16,5 years) and 150 athletes (90 males and 60 females with a mean age of 18,5 years) participated at the study. The study was conducted from December 2012 to February 2013 during a basketball school tournament at the premises of Anatolia College for students and during local championships for athletes. TEOSQ (The Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire) by Nicholls (1989) was used for the assessment of goals, the A.I.M.S. (Athletic Identity Measurement Scale) by Brewer et al,(1993) for athletic identity and the questionnaire by M.Kavussanu (pro-social and antisocial behavior 2006) was used for antisocial behaviour. All questionnaires have been previously used for similar studies in Greece. Results showed that task and ego orientation as well as identity affect antisocial behavior. Differences among athletes and students were observed only on athletic identity, while regarding the two sexes boys showed higher scores on antisocial behavior and aggression in relation to girls. **Key words:** TASK AND EGO ORIENTATION, ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR, ATHLETIC IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

Sport as a social and behavioral event cultivates some values but the type of the values promoted depends closely by the way various sports are taught and applied. The course of physical education is probably the most appropriate area for the growth of ethics, since it is for all students, is less commercial and bureaucratic, it is organized, has rules and regulations, do not emphasize on competition and winning and the kids are under the supervision of the teacher (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995; Hasandra , 2006). Teaching of sports therefore by its own without including special strategies that aim to ethical growth, is not possible to produce positive changes (Hasandra 2006). For these reasons during the last twenty years studies have been done in the area of physical education and sport in order to examine the relationship among: school and team sports, ethical behavior and the psychological factors of internal motivation, urge and goals.

According to Ames (1992) goal orientation and urge define the selection of task, the level of effort, persistence, the perception of ability and the definition of success and failure. Other studies by Kleiber & Roberts, (1981) Orlick, (1981), by using competitive and non competitive conditions concluded that the behavior of an athlete depends on his/her orientation. Nicholls (1984,1989) stated that ego oriented individuals perceive ability and success from a canonical perspective while task oriented individuals deal mostly with learning and is possible to adopt more inherent motive schemes such is the development of ability and enjoyment (Papaioannou & Theodorakis, 1994). According to Diggelidis & Krommydas (2008), task and ego are orientations representing opposite views on ability and the definition of success. Task oriented athletes present a pro social behavior and judgment in contrary to ego oriented athletes. These individuals perceive success differently, make less effort to approach it and are affected by outside rewards.

The more ego oriented an individual is the most will try to outmatch his/her friends and the most will believe that this effort to outmatch others may lead to success. On the contrary the more task oriented an individual is the most he/she believes that success depends on effort, interest and pursue of new abilities (Treasure & Roberts, 1995). Most of these studies showed that task orientation is significantly related to positive moral behaviours, while ego orientation appears to be significantly related to unsportsmanlike behaviours (Dunn & Dunn, 1999; Proios, Athanailidis, 2004). In contrast to these findings, there are other studies that claim that task orientation is not significantly related to moral behaviours (Kavussanou, 1997; Stephens& Bredemeier, 1996).

Finally it should be noted that the growth of moral behavior is especially important for society. Physical education and sports according to Shields & Bredemeier (1995) is the ideal environment for moral growth. Another factor affecting the behavior of athletes is athletic identity. Athletic identity is defined as the level on which an individual determined as an athlete is a social product and is greatly affected by the opinion of friends, family, coaches and the mass media. Other definitions given for athletic identity include: the commitment of an individual to sports or the "level of maturity and understanding of an athlete regarding his/her effort to maximize opportunities (e.g. business or social) and most important for former and present members of his/her athletic community, the level on which an individual is determined as an athlete (Kent 2007).

At a recent study by Reifsteck, Erin J.M.S.(2011) athletes were asked to determine the term athletic identity. From those that answered 34% stated that athletic identity is the continuous effort for excellence in various sports, 17% answered that athletic identity means for someone to be physically capable, 15% to show strong devotion in education and sports and 34% stated that athletic identity is the perception of an individual that

he/she is actually and athlete. According to those asked and athlete is determined by competitiveness, determination, self esteem, self discipline and dedication to achieving a goal.

Goal

The goal of the present study is to examine whether task and ego orientation affects athletic identity and anti social behavior of students and athletes and whether there are differences among the two.

METHODS

The study was conducted from December 2012 to February 2013 during a school basketball tournament in Anatolia College for students and during local championships for athletes. A total of 306 students and athletes from which 156 were students (86 boys and 70 girls with a mean age of 16,5 years) and 150 were athletes (90 boys and 60 girls with a mean age of 18,5 years).

Measurement

The following questionnaires were used: TEOSQ (The Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire) by Nicholls (1989) was used for the assessment of goals which was used at a similar study for the assessment of personal orientation of students by Diggelidis N., & Krommydas X. (2008). The A.I.M.S. (Athletic Identity Measurement Scale) by Brewer et al. (1993) was used for the measurement of athletic identity. The specific questionnaire was used successfully for the assessment of athletic identity of Greek athletes by Proios M. (2012). The questionnaire by M. Kavussanu (pro-social and antisocial behavior 2006) was used for antisocial behaviour.

Procedure

The students were given the questionnaires prior to the games. The questionnaires were given within quiet conditions and were accompanied by an instruction leaflet. Answers were anonymous and confidentiality was ensured. After their completion by the participants the questionnaires were gathered in order to proceed to the analysis of the results. The same procedure was followed for athletes participated at local championships.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical analysis was performed by the use of SPSS 17. Student t-test was performed to detect differences among sexes. In order to examine the effect of task and ego orientation on identity and pro social behaviour correlation analysis was used. Table 1 presents indicators of descriptive statistics and variable validity for the total sample and the two sub totals of the study, students and athletes. Descriptive Statistics and Cronbach α of the Task Variables (students-athletes) gives us through the Cronbach a high reliability

Table 1.   Descriptive Statistics and Cronbach α of the Task Variables (students-athletes)

	Cronbach A	Total Sample		Students		Athletes	
		Mean	Typical Deviation	Mean	Typical Deviation	Mean	Typical Deviation
Task Orientation	.81	4.12	.67	4.24	.57	4.08	.70
Ego Orientation	.81	3.17	.48	3.13	.79	3.18	.88
Identity	.84	4.95	1.01	5.22	1.01	4.87	1.00

Pro Social Behavior	.56	3.65	.80	3.78	.74	3.62	.82
Antisocial Behavior	.76	2.41	.92	2.38	.68	2.42	.98

Table 2 presents the correlation analysis among variables and the high rate of correlation between the variables in the total sample:

Table 2. Correlation analysis among variables

	2	3	4	5
1. Task Orientation	.20*	.49*	.32*	-.20*
2. Ego Orientation		.16*	-.15*	.23*
3. Identity			.30*	-.08
4. Pro social behavior				-.25*
5. Antisocial behavior				

Note:* $p < .01$

Table 3 presents the results of Student t-test analysis for independent samples showed the existence of significantly important differences among the two sexes on anti social behavior, $t = 2.66$, $p < .01$, with boys presenting higher scores (M = 2.54 for anti social behavior) in relation to girls (M = 2.25 for anti-social behaviour). In contrary significantly statistical differences were not found for identity $t = -.79$, $p > .05$, pro social behaviour $t = .21$, $p > .05$, task orientation, $t = -1.90$, $p = .057$ and ego orientation $t = 1.34$, $p > .05$.

Table 3. Student t-test analysis for independent samples among the two sexes

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Identity	,109	,741	-,793	367	,429	-,08472	,10689
			-,798	357,154	,426	-,08472	,10620
Prosocial	,022	,882	,218	321	,828	,01975	,09059
			,218	307,732	,828	,01975	,09061
Anger	2,082	,150	1,077	321	,282	,09095	,08442
			1,091	318,932	,276	,09095	,08335
Aggressiveness	,027	,869	3,463	321	,001	,37686	,10881
			3,473	311,141	,001	,37686	,10850
Antisocial behavior	11,336	,001	2,668	321	,008	,27362	,10257
			2,558	236,377	,011	,27362	,10698
Task orientation	,050	,824	-1,907	309	,057	-,14711	,07712
			-1,901	286,629	,058	-,14711	,07738

Ego orientation	4,119	,043	1,349	309	,178	,13352	,09896
			1,315	256,302	,190	,13352	,10157

Table 4 presents the student t-test analysis for independent samples showed the existence of significantly important statistical differences among students and athletes only in identity t = 2.83, p < .01, where students showed higher scores (M = 5.22) in relation to athletes (M = 4.87). On the other hand no significantly statistical difference were found in anti-social behaviour t = 1.45, p > .05, pro social behavior, t = -.36, p > .05, task orientation, t = 1.66, p > .05 and ego orientation t = -.45, p > .05.

Table 4. Student t-test analysis for independent samples among students and athletes

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Identity	,027	,870	-,793	367	,005	,35237	,12439
			-,798	140,501	,005	,35237	,12444
Prosocial	1,382	,241	,218	321	,145	,15991	,10959
			,218	116,754	,126	,15991	,10371
Anger	1,573	,211	1,077	321	,918	,01057	,10263
			1,091	102,182	,921	,01057	,10701
Aggressiveness	2,115	,147	3,463	321	,477	-,09569	,13439
			3,473	114,960	,458	-,09569	,12848
Antisocial behavior	3,409	,066	2,668	321	,718	-,04544	,12581
			2,558	151,901	,660	-,04544	,10305
Task orientation	1,512	,220	-1,907	309	,098	,15310	,09220
			-1,901	130,784	,067	,15310	,08278
Ego orientation	,065	,799	1,349	309	,652	-,05344	,11845
			1,315	120,205	,633	-,05344	,11165

Table 5 presents the affect of identity and orientation on anti social behavior stepwise multiple regression analysis was used. The specific statistical procedure is a way of selecting predictive factors of a specific, dependent variable based on statistical criteria. More specifically it determines which variable consists the best predicting factor, which consists the second best, etc. At the beginning the variables of identity and goal orientation were added. The results showed that they are considered as statistically significant indicators interpreting the 11% of variation. Both goal orientations had a significant affect on anti social behavior (b = -.26 for task orientation, b = .28 for ego orientation), but not identity.The same procedure was followed on the affect of identity and goal orientation on pro social behavior. The results showed that these constitute statistically significant predicting indicators for pro social behavior interpreting the 18% of variation. Both goal orientations showed a significant effect on anti-social behaviour (b =.25 for task orientation, b = -.24 for ego orientation) and identity (b = .23).

Table 5. Regression Analysis Results

	Antisocial Behavior			Pro social behavior		
	F	R2	b	F	R2	b
	13.98*	.11		24.56*	.18	
Identity			.00			.23*
Task			-.26*			.25*
Ego			.28*			-.24*

Note: * p < .01

CONCLUSIONS

The goal of the present study was to examine whether task and ego orientation affects athletic identity and anti social behavior of students and athletes as well as whether there are differences among the two. The results are in agreement to older studies regarding the fact that motives affect performance (Ames and Ames 1984·, Deci and Ryan1985, Duda and Allison 1989, Duda and Nicholls 1992, Maehr and Nicholls 1980,Nicholls 1984, Treasure and Roberts 1998). Additionally, the results support the view that both task and ego orientations significantly affect the behavior of students and athletes.

The present results also agree with the results of past studies by Kavussanou, (1997), Stephens & Bredemeier, (1996) where it was found that both task and ego orientations are not related to moral operations and significantly affect on anti social behavior contrary to the results of Duda, (2001), D'Arripe-Longueville et al,(2006) Dunn & Dunn, (1999), Proios & Athanailidis (2004) where it was found that only ego orientation is positively correlated to negative social behaviors. Regarding sex the above mentioned results confirm previous studies that showed differences in sexes with boys presenting more negative athletic behaviors in relation to girls (Bredemeier& Shields, 1984a, 1984b; 1986). This comes in contrast to other studies in sports where no significant differences among sexes were found (Proios,2005), while it comes in agreement with Beller & Stoll, (1995), Hall (1981) who did not reveal significant differences among students and athletes on anti social and pro social behavior. In relevance to task and ego orientation between students and athletes no significantly statistical differences were found.

This result also agrees to the results of Diggelidis et. Al (2005). The present study showed that there was a positive correlation among ego and task orientation. This initially appears to come in contrast to existing theories. Nevertheless, it has been supported that high ego orientation combined to high task orientation is a characteristic of athletes (Papaioannou et.al., 2003) or of individuals showing high ambition and goals that have not yet been met, Diggelidis et.al, (2005). The fact that sample selection was done from just one geographical area consists a limitation and does not facilitate generalization of results for young students/ athletes. Nevertheless, the results of the present study offer a descriptive base for further studying in the areas of school and competitive sports.

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