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journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel)Development of a cultural self-efficacy scale for adolescents (CSES-A)<sup>☆</sup>Elena Briones<sup>a,\*</sup>, Carmen Tabernero<sup>b</sup>, Carlo Tramontano<sup>c</sup>,  
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## ABSTRACT

We developed a cultural self-efficacy scale for adolescents (CSES-A) and tested its psychometric properties using both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. Cultural self-efficacy (CSE) was defined as person's perception of his/her own capability to function effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity. On the basis of Bandura's guideline for the development of a domain-specific self-efficacy measure, we tailored 50 items after reviewing literature about cultural competence, adolescents' school-problems and social self-efficacy scales developed in previous studies in intercultural contexts. After pre-testing and analyzing psychometric properties of the scale, we selected 33 items. Eight hundred sixty-eight adolescents with five different cultural origins completed a set of questionnaires, including the CSES-A, internal control expectancies, general self-efficacy, academic expectancies, number of people from diverse cultures they keep in touch with, acculturation attitudes, perceived enrichment of other cultures, acculturation stress and demographic data. An EFA with MPLUS 2.14 highlighted a five-factor solution with 25 items that was supported by a subsequent CFA. The five factors were: self-efficacy in mixing satisfactorily with other cultures, in understanding different ways of life, in processing information from other cultures, in coping with loneliness and in learning and understanding other languages. The pattern of correlation with internal control expectancies, general self-efficacy and cultural variables supported the validity of the scale. CSES-A may be useful for future research on multicultural contexts, in which self-efficacy in cultural adaptation could be a fundamental variable.

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## 1. Introduction

Immigration is a world-wide phenomenon. In the past few years, Spain has become the most multiethnic country in the European Union (OCDE, 2006), even though immigration is a relatively new phenomenon in this country. The Ministry of Education and Science showed that immigrant students represent 8.44% of the total of non-university students (MEC, 2007). Compulsory Secondary Education in Spain is characterized by the highest level of growth in the enrolment of foreign students in the last 10 years.

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This growing cultural diversity in the school context makes often adolescents mix with students from other ethnic and cultural origins. This diversity can give rise to a lack of understanding and harmonic co-existence that should lead, in turn, to problems in social adaptation for students. Therefore, the growing ethnic diversity should imply an effort in educational institution aimed at promoting the functional value of the capacity to handle both one's own and others' culture (Bandura, 2006a).

In this way, Bandura's Cognitive Social Theory emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy, namely believes in one's own ability to carry out actions in a social context with the intention of achieving the desired result (Bandura, 1986, 1992, 1997), as a pivotal predictor of people's behaviors. In multicultural context, Fan and Mak (1998) found out that students with greater cross-cultural self-efficacy were more likely to feel at ease and to mix with students from host society, fostering their socio-cultural adaptation.

There is a general accordance in considering self-efficacy believes to be especially important in cross-cultural interactions (Bandura, 2006a; Fan & Mak, 1998; Harrison, Chadwick, & Scales, 1996; Hechanova-Alampay, Beehr, Christiansen, & Van-Horn, 2002; Li & Gasser, 2005; Tsang, 2001). In such interactions, sojourners and local residents face many barriers that hinder their effectiveness, like verbal and non-verbal communication, cultural ignorance and fear of being rejected, which make these cross-cultural interactions more stressful than communications that occur within the same culture (Church, 1982).

Bandura (1986, 1992, 1997) stated that self-efficacy affects human behavior through four processes: cognitive, affective, motivational and selection. Hence, in a multicultural context, it is possible to hypothesize that people with a high level of cross-cultural self-efficacy may be more likely to succeed in their interactions and expect positive experiences than those with low self-efficacy (cognitive process). Likewise, people with high cross-cultural self-efficacy may be less likely to feel anxiety in cross-cultural interactions than those with low self-efficacy and feel more satisfaction when establishing new relationships with people from other cultures (affective process). Moreover, people with high cross-cultural self-efficacy may be more prone to have cross-cultural contacts and enjoy its benefits (motivational process). Finally, individuals with high cross-cultural self-efficacy may choose to have contact with their hosts even despite the fact that cross-cultural communication may entail to have a certain amount of cultural knowledge, language and tolerance for ambiguity (selection process).

Hence, self-efficacy in cross-cultural interactions has been related to the socio-cultural adaptation of the sojourners. Tsang (2001) suggested that people who feel confident in their efficacy in managing their own lives may more actively seek new cultural experiences. Feedbacks related to their new behavior foster cultural knowledge and reduce uncertainty in future cross-cultural interactions. In the same line, Harrison et al. (1996) found that the greater the cross-cultural self-efficacy of American expatriates the more they report better adjustment in Europe. Likewise, in a longitudinal study Hechanova-Alampay et al. (2002) found that in international students general and social self-efficacy was significantly positive related to their adaptation to the new culture and negative related to their stress levels.

Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, and Obdržálek (2000) studied different variables related to interaction among groups (e.g., contact, self-efficacy and perception of cultural enrichment), evaluating the extent to which they may predict acculturation attitudes. For this purpose, they selected as a theoretical framework Berry's approach (1992), according to which, when two different cultural groups come into contact for a long time, they are involved in an acculturation process that entails change in each group. In this process it is assumed that members of both groups were characterized by specific attitudes concerning how this acculturation process will take place. Berry and colleagues' (Berry & Kim, 1988; Berry, Kim, Power, Yong, & Bujaki, 1989) model of acculturation is based on the combination of two dimensions, namely intention to maintain cultural identity and intention to maintain relations with other groups, that allow to identify four acculturation attitudes: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. Who has an integration attitude prefers that each one maintained his/her own culture of origin, but at the same time promotes participation in the culture of the host society. Who has an assimilation attitude prefers to abandon the culture of origin, and supports inter-group contacts and relations. Who has a separation attitude prefers to maintain the culture of origin and reject contact between cultures. Finally, who has a marginalization attitude reject both intercultural contacts and maintaining the culture of origin.

To sum up, researches carried out in this theoretical framework (Allard & Landry, 1992; Briones, Tabernero, & Arenas, 2005; Piontkowski et al., 2000) have shown that people with a strong belief in their general or social capability are more likely to feel prone and motivated to integrated themselves in another cultural group. On the other hand, the lower their level of self-efficacy in an inter-group situation, the more they avoid contacts with another cultural groups and prefer attitudes of separation or marginalization.

Nevertheless, up to now literature concerning the measurement of self-efficacy in situations of interaction with people from different cultures or in diverse cultural contexts has involved studies characterized by measures of self-efficacy either general (Harrison et al., 1996; Hechanova-Alampay et al., 2002; Piontkowski et al., 2000; Tsang, 2001) or too specific (e.g., nursing in Vargas, Molino, Shellman, Cantero, & Bernal, 2006), not being applicable to other populations, such as adolescents. Hence, we detected the need to create a cultural self-efficacy (CSE) measure for adolescent with diverse cultural origin.

### 1.1. Conceptual delimitation of the construct to be evaluated

Perceived self-efficacy is not a comprehensive trait, but rather a set of domain specific self-beliefs linked to differentiated spheres of operation. Hence, scales created under the approach "the same measurement for everything" have usually low

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