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The Role of Sport in Defining Transnational Identities: The Case of Israel

Abstract

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INTRODUCTION

Research Aims and Focus

The research sought to examine how participation of countries in international sport frameworks influences defining their transnational identity within their national identity and what price a country is willing to pay in terms of national identity so as to be accepted or remain within an international sports framework, and stay both on the organizational-functional level and on the value-emotional level. Additionally, this study aimed to develop a new model that would explain the emergence of trans-national identity in the framework of participation in international sporting events, draw the boundaries of the arena and the perimeter of flexibility of a state when faced with a permanent or temporary conflict between its national values and international sport values.

Sport serves as a playground not only for Athletes, but also for politicians and leaders in the local and international arenas. Throughout the 20th Century, sport has gradually taken a significant place in the field of international relations, in particular in the third trimester of the 20th Century, when the process of globalization enhanced, and with it, international sports, which by nature constitutes a mirror of this process.

Gap in Knowledge

Numerous studies in the field of international relations have been conducted with regards to exploiting international sport events for the purpose of a state's promoting political interests in the international arena. The examples of the 1936 "Nazi Olympic Games" in Berlin, the Olympic Games in Moscow, 1980 and Los Angeles, 1984, and the U.S.A and USSR's mutual embargos, and the positive aspect demonstrated by the famous Ping-Pong game held in Beijing between the Americans and Chinese teams, marking the beginning of a new era in the relationship between the two super powers. This study focused on another aspect of international sport events, which is their influence on defining the trans-national identities of the participating countries - often this influence is congruent with their national identities, and at other times, this influence conflicts with their national identities, and the ways in which these countries cope with this influence. Additionally, the literature presents studies of international organizations acting in the realm of high Politics (Hix, 2006), but as far as I know, not

similar studies were conducted in the realm of Low Politics, (Kostakopoulou, 2006) of which sport is a prominent representative.

Context for the Research: A Case Study of Israel

An interesting evidence of the significance of this study is two examples from summer 2015 and autumn 2015.

- **The issue of religious identity** – a number of football players have petitioned to Israeli court demanding that football games not to be held on Saturdays, claiming it is religious discrimination, as it prevents religious people from participating in the sport. The issue is still being debated outside the courts in an attempt to reach a compromise that will lead to some consensus (Zinger, 20/08/2015 *Israel Hayom*).

- **The issue of national identity** – in a number of competitions held in the Arabian Gulf states – sailing, Judo and Badminton – Israeli athletes had to compete without any national identification markers such as national uniforms or the national flag. Instead, they had to maintain low profile and hide their national identity. Two Israeli athletes won medals in the Judo competition, and had to stand on the Podium under the flag of the International Judo Federation rather than the Israeli flag. This issue, which stirs emotions in Israeli public, is debated in various forums including Israeli government and sports organizations as well as international sport organizations.

Israel defines itself as a Jewish Democratic State. Built into this definition is a constant tension between liberal, multi-national values and conservative-religious-national ones. This study sought to examine how this tension is expressed in Israel's international activity in the sports arena.

Geographically, Israel is located in Asia, but has been a member in all European sports Organizations for over 20 years, taking part in all European sports enterprises, after having been part of the Asian Sport, until banned in1974. Through the Uniqueness of the Israeli case, the study examined the issue of influence and price as described above. Evidently, the significance of the proposed research was in the attempt to develop a new understanding which can explain the boundaries of the arena, or the flexibility distance of a state in the attempt to cope with a permanent or specific conflict between

its national values and the values of sport which are primarily trans-national. This understanding can serve as a tool, especially for decision makers and opinion shapers in international organizations and on the state level.

Research Aims

1. To examine the role of sport in defining transnational identities through an examination of the Israeli case
2. To examine the level of influence that international sporting organizations have on the creation of a national identity
3. To explore how a country's participation in international sporting events affect its national identity

4. To explore the relations between national identity and transnational identity within the context of countries' participation in international sports events.

Research Questions

Main research question:

What is the role of sport in defining transnational identities through an examination of the Israeli case?

Secondary research question:

1. What is the level of influence that international sporting organizations have on the creation of a national identity?
2. Does and how does a country's participation in international sporting events affect its national identity?
3. What processes take place between international sports organizations that symbolize transnational identity, and national sporting associations, and the countries in which they operate, that symbolize national identity?

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research examined the role of sport in defining transnational identity, and its aim was to investigate interactions between the International Olympic Committee, which stands at the top of the pyramid of international sporting organizations, and National Olympic Committees and their governments.

This research is based on the following main theories (from earliest to latest):

- Constructivism (Kenneth Waltz, 1979; Martha Finnemore, 1996; Alexander Wendt, 1999)
- Transnationalism (Karl Deutch, 1968)
- Functionalism (David Mitrany,1965, 1975) & Neo-Functionalism (Haas, E. B. 1964)
- Realism (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2008)
- Liberalism (Doyle, 1986)
- Idealism (Weber, 2004)

Leading theories in the field of international relations since its inception as an independent discipline at the beginning of the 20th century until the last quarter of that century referred to the state as an exclusive player. Despite differences between them, these theories have dealt with state systems and identified state self-interest as the driving and decisive factor in international relations. Constructivism, which has been widely acknowledged in the last quarter of the 20th century as a result of traditional theories' failure to foresee the fall of the Soviet Union, was the first to present the international arena made up of many participants, international organizations alongside states and many interests that deviate from self- interest state.

The Olympic Movement started its activity at a time when the discipline of international relations was acknowledged by the academia as an independent discipline. The theories, as detailed above, were reflected in the attitudes of international actors towards the Olympic movement and its ambitions and conduct. The principles and values of the Olympic Movement, which were determined at the very beginning, were greatly influenced by the theories of Idealism and Liberalism. During the Cold War and dominance of Realistic theory, the Olympic Games served as a playground for the super powers. Throughout that time, theories that regarded the state at the center were

dominant, and the Olympic Movement served as a means for states to advance their goals. Only in the last quarter of the 20th century were these theories slightly pushed aside in favor of Constructivism and Functionalism, which give more room to the activity of International organizations. The International Olympic Committee has made the long distance from the time when the League of Nations did not even bother to respect the letter written by the President of the IOC, and the time when the organization and the permanent seat in the United Nations currently held by the IOC and the tight cooperation between the two organizations in a variety of areas. Therefore, the conceptual framework that underpinned this research comprised the following components:

Universalism, globalization and glocalization. Two key factors led to globalization - technology with the advent of the computer and media revolutions and politics with the breakup of the Soviet Union and disappearance of the iron curtain. Globalization has two characteristics: process changes from institutions and events at a national level to either regional or global and transformation from vertical/perpendicular decision making systems with a clear center to more horizontal systems with many centers. Globalization can be divided into three key areas: economic, political and cultural. Glocalization is the result of the encounter between national and supranational identity. Glocalization is the interface between national identity and transnational identity. It is the dynamic and ongoing encounter that enables safeguarding local elements by participating in global processes (Hargreaves, 1992; Robertson, 1993, 1995).

National identity and transnational identity: national identity is the direct result of the daily presence of common ground components for all people who belong to the same state or nation such as language, historical background, national emblems and their presence is expressed in areas such as education, culture, media and sport. National identity includes collective identity and collective memory (Spohn & Eder, 2003). Its interaction with other states and international organization, which has grown and developed with the spread of globalization, brought about the phenomenon of spillover (Haas, 2008) and helped create a sense of "we feeling" that crosses borders and areas and helps create Transnationalism (Deutch, 1968).

Sport and Olympism: In defining sport for the purpose of this study, we were helped by the work of Elias (1994) who described the process of sportization, and Guttmann's

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(1979) model which differentiated between different sporting activities. The Olympic Movement perceived sport, in all its forms, as a way of life and means of creating a better world where Olympism is its ideology that strives to instill in all humanity (writings of Baron de Coubertin; Olympic Charter; Miller, 2012).

Researchers have engaged in the relationship between sport in general and international relations, and the Olympic Games in particular (e.g. Levernmore & Beacom, 2008; Hoberman, 1995; Jarvie, 2014; Johnson, 2009).

In his debate stirring book, The Clash of Civilizations and the Re-making of the World Order, Huntington (1997) was among the first to emphasize the relationship between globalization and international sport, and one of the best examples of "glocalization" (Bairner, 2001).

I.1 The Visual Model

Sport, as presented in the literature review, is a social phenomenon anchored in local and communal culture. However, it also operates within its state framework subject to its national identity by which may sometimes alternate between receiving and exerting influence. Olympism is a world view that believes in universal ideas and values to create a better world, whose most effective tool is sport. The Olympic Movement, which constitutes the highest international sporting organization, is helped by the creation of a transnational identity, which is reinforced in an era of globalization and media revolution. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of this research.
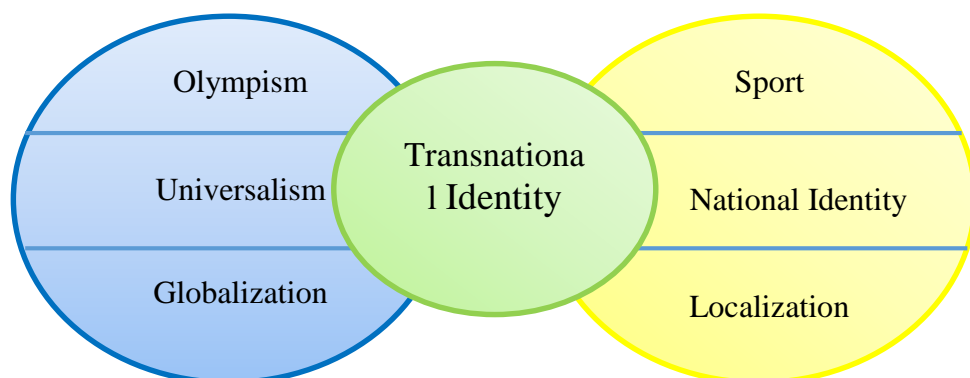
Figure 1: The Role of Sport within International Relations

The conceptual framework model presents a two direction process. Sport finds itself, on the one hand, subject to national values held by societies and countries in which it

operates, and on the other hand, it is part of an international movement with its own supranational identity. Olympism represents universality whereas the Olympic Movement is made up of national organizations and these are not just influenced by their values, but by supranational identity as well. Therefore, there is a permanent and continuing dialogue that influences and defines transnational identity, and this is through sport.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

II.1 Preview

The study sought to examine the extent to which the participation of countries in international sports frameworks affects transnational identity, the overall component of their "national identity," and what "price" a country will agree to "pay" in terms of "national identity" in order be or remain part of international sport, both on the organizational-functional level and on the emotional-cultural level, and to develop a new model which will explain the emergence of transnational identity in relation to national identity, as part of its participation in international sporting events. The model describes the "boundaries" and "flexibility" of a country when facing a permanent or specific conflict between its national values and the transnational sports values. The study adopted a qualitative research approach including a small quantitative part.

Research Hypothesis

A connection will be found between sport activities in international frameworks and the transnational identity component of a country's national identity.

Research Variables

- Explanatory variable or independent variable (X): the independent variable, represented in this research by transnational identity, can explain the changes (or some of them) in the dependent variable, which in this case is Israeli national identity (my case study).
- Explained variable or a dependent variable (Y): the dependent variable is national identity, which is influenced by transnational identity.
- Mediator variable (X1): there are a number of mediator variables such as printed, digital or electronic media, and business and leisure tourism. For the

purpose of this research we will refer to international organizations that represent, through their values and operational patterns, transnational values as mediator variables with an emphasis on sports organizations.

- Confounding (Intervening) Variable (X2): here, too, there are several intervening variables. In the current research, we will consider factors that determine or affect the country's activity (directly or through voluntary organizations operating within its jurisdiction) within the framework of international sports organizations.

II.1.1 Research Paradigm: Qualitative Research

Guba and Lincoln discern four qualitative research paradigms: (1) Positivist (using quantitative research tools); (2) Post-Positivist; (3) Theoretical-Critical, and (4) Constructivist (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), but we will accept the Shkedi's recommendation (Shkedi, 2010, p 18) and focus on two "super-paradigms" - Qualitative and Quantitative – and will focus on their uniqueness and characteristics. They will be presented schematically based on Shkedi (2010), Collins & Hussey (2009), and Creswell (2009):

To summarize this section, the characteristics of the qualitative approach are emphasized while focusing on the four fundamental questions, each addressing a different aspect of the research hypotheses, and all interconnected in a way where the answer to each question affects the answers to other questions (Shkedi, 2010 p. 36). This will be done with reference to the research aims. A small quantitative part was added to the findings in order to show numerically the rate of recurrence relating to each category emerging from the study.

II.2 Case Study

In the current research, the research question is how transnational identity is influenced by the activities of international organizations, with an emphasis on sports organizations. The research engages in contemporary events and processes and does not require any control over the conduct of people or events.

The effect that transnational identity has over national identity may, in some cases, lead to conflict between the two identities, which often require decision-makers in international organizations and countries to act in order to gain insight into the processes and the "measure of flexibility" decision makers have. We believe that Israel, because of its uniqueness as detailed in previous chapters, can be used as a case study which will help achieve these insights.

Does case study represent the case itself, or is it a source that we can use to try, shed light on a phenomenon and say things in a broader sense? Literature addresses this question extensively, yet we will only note that despite criticism, there is a consensus that even if researchers examine a unique process it still has characteristics that can be generalized (Lincoln & Denzin, 2005). Nonetheless, since qualitative research is mainly based on holistic social phenomena, and case study is that by nature, this is likely to affect the needed degree of generalization (Lincoln & Guba, 2005), and thus the researcher has the duty to use all of the knowledge and skills that he or she has acquired and sharpen his or her awareness and observation abilities.

Table 1: Research Design

	Aim	Tool	Population
Stage 1	Collection of information, background and academic research data, books, journals, articles, news items and protocols as the basis for interviews with the study population	Content analysis: books, studies, protocols, publications	
Stage 2	Gathering information from the study population about the study questions	Focused Interviews and questionnaires, if necessary	We begin with the "decision makers" group, then "users", and ending with "influencers"
Stage 3	Integration and triangulation of the information and findings from the study population	Content analysis	

II.3 Research Population and Sampling Method

The quantitative research approach uses a random/representative sample. In order for the sample to qualify as such it must include many participants who were selected randomly, and whose findings will enable generalization. In contrast, qualitative research prefers a purposeful sample, which focuses on selecting a small number of subjects who best represent the population from which they were selected, and who hold the key to understanding the phenomenon under study (Mason, 1996).

The current research population included 20-30 participants who were divided into three groups: "decision-makers", "influencers", and "users".

"Decision-makers" are (1) Israelis serving in top positions in international sports organizations, such as board-members in the Olympic Movement and international and European sports associations; (2) Past and present chairpersons of sports associations and organizations in Israel; (3) Senior officials in the Israeli government whose

activities are related to sports: Sports and Education Ministers, Ministers of foreign Affairs, and high-ranking officials; the chairman of the Education and Sports Committee in the Knesset and heads of local authorities who are interested in and aware of sports.

"Influencers" are (1) Members of the media covering the sports field; (2) Members of the academy whose work concerns issues relevant to this study

"Users" are (1) Prominent athletes and coaches who have participated in major international sports competitions, such as the Olympic Games and World and European championships.

II.4 Research Tools

Since the population of the current research consisted of experienced, highly expressive informants who could provide valuable quality information based on their experience and positions, the best research tool for this research was a semi-structured, face-to-face interview. To supplement the information and validate it, and to obtain information which is not "filtered." We also used documents and media reports.

II.5 Data Analysis Methods - Content Analysis

Data analysis is the process of arranging and structuring all of the collected information and understanding its meaning, based on categorization, which is based on connecting pieces of information that seem to belong with the same phenomenon. Categorization is done by comparing different pieces of information in an attempt to find similarities among them. The categories have two aspects: (1) internal – relates to the significance of the data, and (2) external – relates to other categories and conceptual perspectives. The conceptual perspective is important for data analysis, since it is the researchers' ability to observe the data in analytical depth. This observation may be naturally biased, and thus degrade the quality of the research; this is where academic literature is introduced as a balancing factor, which will be discussed in the next section. Finally, a measurement of the rate of recurrence was added to each of the categories to strengthen the confidence in the findings..

II.6 Researcher Position

Until recently, I have served as secretary-general of the Israeli Olympic Committee for twenty years, starting from 1995. In 2001 I was elected to join the Executive of the European Olympic Committees' organization, representing 50 National Olympic Committees. In 2005 and later in 2009 and in 2013 I was reelected, and during that time I headed committees in charge of the European Youth Games, the Olympic Games, and Sport and the Environment. I have been active in the field of sports and the environment, as a member of the International Olympic Committee since 2010.

As part of my work in these positions I have had the privilege to become familiar with the decision-making processes and the work methods of the most important organizations in the Olympic Movement, as well as the major position-holders in these organizations. I am also well acquainted with the vast majority of the research population, and I have worked with them and for them, in different levels of affiliation and intensity, in the last years.

I attempted to minimize the drawback of coping with the claim against my lack of objectivity and bias by using the tools I have detailed throughout the entire chapter, and especially through transparency and self-criticism. However, I took advantage and use my experience, familiarity, and knowledge on the tangent field of study in order to maximize the capabilities of the "human research tool," as phrased by Lincoln and Guba (1985), who is capable of processing information from the moment it becomes available, to speculate in response to the knowledge, and to test hypotheses with the relevant factors in the contexts in which they arise.

II.7 Ethical Considerations

This research adopted strict ethical considerations. The "covert" contract pertains to questions of mutual trust: the subject will cooperate willingly and with an open mind, his or her answers will reflect his or her truth, views and values while emphasizing the importance of things as he or she sees them. The researcher will respect the subject and his or her story and will not be judgmental or patronizing, presenting the accounts in a businesslike and fair manner.

The "overt" contract highlights several key principles in ethical codes:

- Getting the participants' consent
- Safeguarding confidential materials
- Protecting the participants from any harm that can be caused by participation in the research

Lieblich (2008) summarized the "overt" contract or "informed consent" as she called it, into eight sections that must be expressed in a real contract signed by both the researcher and the participant prior to beginning the study:

1. A statement about the purpose of the study;
2. Details of the encounters, their location, duration, and what they will include
3. A statement giving the participant the right to terminate his or her participation in the study at any time without any damage caused to him or her;
4. Obtaining the participant's written consent to record the interviews and the conditions of how they will be used;
5. Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity by stating the measures taken for this purpose;
6. Providing an assessment of the expected contribution of the research alongside the risks of its publication (may cause controversy);
7. Providing information about the framework in which the research is conducted;
8. Emphasis on the need for the participant's signed statement that he or she has read the form, received an explanation, and gave his consent to participate in the study.

Naturally, this study was conducted while adhering, as best we could, to all of the rules of ethics as they were detailed in this chapter.

III. FINDINGS

III.1 Findings Relating to Research Question 1:
What is the level of influence that international sporting organizations have on the creation of a national identity?

Document Analysis

An analysis and comparison of the values according to which the International Olympic Committee (representing transnational values) and Israel (representing national values) focused on two fundamental documents of these bodies - the Olympic Charter (Olympic.org>Documents/2/2015) and the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel

The Olympic Charter was first published in 1908 under the name "**Annuaire du Comité International Olympique**" (Guidelines for the International Olympic Committee), although parts were written by the founder of the modern Olympic Games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin in 1898 (Olympic.org>Documents/2/2015). It has been known by its current name since 1978 and the last version of the Charter was published in September 2013. In December 2014, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) adopted "Agenda 2020" that includes reference to the values of the Olympic Movement (Ibid), and in the case of new emphases with regard to the Olympic values, is presented here.

The Olympic Charter has three principal goals, as detailed in the Introduction to the Charter:

- Set the principles and core values of Olympism
- Constitute the legal foundation of the IOC
- Define the rights and obligations of the three central bodies of the Olympic Movement - the IOC, international sports federations and National Olympic Committees.

The Declaration of Independence is a document that announces the establishment of the State of Israel. **The Declaration of Independence** is its accepted name, but its official title is "The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel" and it is under this name that it was published immediately after being read by David Ben-Gurion (Israel's first Prime Minister) at the ceremony that took place on Friday, 14 May 1948 at 16:00, eight hours before the end of British Mandate in the land of Israel. In the absence of an Israeli constitution, this document, as decreed by the High Court of Justice in October 1948, expresses the "wish of the nation" and its credo (Knesset.gov.il/ Accessed 05.05.2014).

Over the years, the Knesset has introduced 13 fundamental laws, the first of which was legislated on 12 February 1958 and the last of which was legislated in March 1992. These laws deal with the makeup and bases of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities with the exception of three laws: Basic Law: Jerusalem as Capital of Israel (30 July 1980), Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation (3 March 1992) and Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty (17 March 1992).

The Declaration of Independence can be divided into four parts:

- Historical part - the justifications of the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own in the Land of Israel;
- Practical part – the declaration of the establishment of the state and its ruling institutions;
- Declarative part - the character and values of the state;
- Statement of intent with regard to nations of the world.

Table 2: Comparison of IOC transnational values and State of Israel's Declaration of Independence transnational and national values

IOC Olympic Charter	State of Israel Declaration of Independence	
Transnational Values	**Transnational**	**National**
Universalism	Institutions founded on freedom, justice and peace	National homeland for the Jewish people
No discrimination (race, religion, politics, gender)	Equal social and political rights for all citizens regardless of religion, race or gender	As seen in the visions of the Hebrew prophets
Autonomy	Freedom of religion, conscience, language of education, culture	Open to Jewish immigration
Free elections	Faithful to the United Nations' Charter	Jerusalem as capital of Israel (Basic Law)
Solidarity and friendship Human dignity Peaceful society Agenda 2020 Sustainability Gender equality Good governance	Freedom of employment (Basic Law) Human Rights and freedom (Basic Law)	Advocate of peace and defender of its right to exist

Below are selected quotes from the Declaration of Independence, (Interim Government of Israel, official paper No.1, Tel Aviv, 5 Iyar 5708, 14 May 1948, p.1)[1] that emphasize the link between transnational and national values that the state of

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[1] The English translation of the **Declaration of Independence** was taken from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/declaration%20of%20establishment%20of%20state%20of%20israel.aspx

Israel instituted: "The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped" and accordingly the character and values of our country will be:

"The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles" (Jewish state).

"It will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel" (Jewish state and democracy).

"It will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants... It will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture" (democratic country).

"It will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations" (commitment to UN decisions).

From a comparative analysis of the values instituted by the IOC and the State of Israel, it appears that they both proffer a long list of values based on freedom, equality and independence as well as democratic principles and division between authorities, values that can be defined as transnational.

One can characterize among the values instituted by the State of Israel three unique ones: the religious basis (Hebrew prophets), the national basis (the Jewish people returning to their homeland and defense of its right to exist) and this in addition to citizens' values that are shared with the Olympic Movement.

In this light we will examine with the research population the extent of flexibility of the two bodies that deal with the issue of national values of Israel as well as the extent of flexibility available in their common transnational values, at the declared level at least.

However, in practice, it is possible that there will be circumstances with differing interpretations or deviations from a national value.

The Israeli Olympic Committee, as shown in its articles of association, is an ambiguous body. It has to operate in accordance with the Olympic Charter, as any deviation from it may result in expulsion from the organization. Nonetheless, but as an Israeli organization it has to operate according to the laws of the state of Israel and act in accordance with accepted values in Israeli society. As such, we will also

examine the extent of flexibility of the IOC in its conduct versus the Israeli Committee and its governance.

III.2 Findings Emerging from the Semi-Structured Interviews: Themes, Categories and Rate of Recurrence

Research Question 1:

Table 3: Themes emerging from the first research question

The IOC, Based on Transnational Values, Is an Active Player in and Has Influence on International Relations					
Categories	**Universal values**	**Sporting values**	**Lack of values**	**Important player**	**Peripheral" player**
Rate of reoccurrence	72%	84%	24%	45%	32%

Table 3 shows the influence of sporting events on defining transnational identity:

1. The International Football Federation (FIFA) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) are legitimate players in the international arena. We have seen this in relation to senior people outside the world of sport such as the Secretary General of the U.N., Director General of the Prime Minister's Office and even in the words of a former Minister.

2. In Israel and particularly the Israeli sport systems, there is a unified perception with regard to the importance and status of the IOC in the international arena.

3. Attention must be paid to the words of one senior official of the IOC who defined the organization's international values as "western values". This insight will help with understanding the interface between transnational values and national identity in the activities of the Olympic movement versus different countries and committees and 205 national Olympic committees.

Research Question 2:

Table 4: Themes emerging from the second research question

Values and Israeli Identity						
Categories	**Values with a strong influence on Israeli identity**		**Values with a medium influence on Israeli identity**		**Values with a weak influence on Israeli identity**	
Sub-Categories	The right to self-defense	Religion	Jerusalem as a national value	Symbolism of Holocaust Memorial Day and Memorial Day	Civil Autonomy	Universality
Rate of reoccurrence	72%	72%	24%	64%	64%	68%

Aspects of participation in international sport competitions		
Categories	**Emotional / Mental**	**Functional / Practical**
Rate of reoccurrence	48%	48%

Research Question 3:

Table 5: Attitudes - conflicting values   .4

Attitudes – Conflicting Values			
Categories	**Understanding Reality**	**Flexibility of Actions**	**Effect of the Result**
Rate of reoccurrence	64%	72%	68%

Table 6: Sample findings emerging from Research Question 3: attitudes and conflicting values

Category	Selected Evidence	Rate of Recurrence
Understanding Reality	*"The Olympic Movement is not there to change societies, we cannot change the world unfortunately, but what we have done is to use the tools that we have on hand"* (IOC Official) *"we cannot forget that we are related to societies that are governed by the political policy of each country"* (IOC Official) *"We are an organization founded on nationalism. Flag, anthem. Flag anthem. If every delegation entered the Olympic stadium carrying the Olympic flag, I don't know how long we would survive"* (IOC Member) *"If you want to be part of an international organization, you have to conform to world rules"* (Olympic Tennis player) *"On the one hand you have to weigh national interests and on the other, you have to take weight the benefits to athletes"* (P.M and former Olympic Athlete)	*64%*

IV: CONCLUSIONS

IV.1 Factual Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from this research are based on the findings that emerged from the research tools and literature. Despite the considerable advances in the area since the beginning of the 21st century, skepticism remains with regard to the place of sport and sporting organizations as "serious" and "legitimate" areas of research in international relations. The conclusions are also based on an acknowledgement that it is impossible to ignore the presence, influence and role of two leading international sporting organizations - the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) - in the international arena. From this research,

the Olympic movement is the only international sporting organization that meets all required criteria to be given the status of a legitimate player, with influence in the internal relations arena. The importance of this statement is that it provides scientific validity to our use of the International Olympic Committee as the international sporting organization employed as the "litmus test" for examining the influence that membership in international sporting organizations has on national identity versus transnational values.

The conclusions emerging from the research demonstrate that the transnational identity of the Olympic movement is grounded in late 19th - early 20th century European-Western culture and its power is derived from it being the "key holder" of the Olympic Games. Those games are perceived as the single most important international sporting event and its influence extends far beyond that of sport itself. In other words, the conclusion is that only an organization with transnational values that strives, in its activities, to educate human society in accordance with its values, and as such to influence the national identities of its component members, meets the definition of a player in the international arena. One can say that transnational identity is defined on the basis of the legitimacy in the international arena characterized by the Olympic movement. In addition, transnational identity is formulated on the basis of economic globalization and the political and economic power ascribed to the Olympic movement, despite the differences of opinion with regard to its character and influence.

The evidence gathered for this study shows that the International Olympic Committee is aware of the cultural differences that characterize societies in which 205 national Olympic committees operate and carry out a process of learning and cultural sensitivity. The results of this process are expressed in a prioritization of values and a soft policy approach, in which there is willingness to relinquish some universal values in order to maximize participation in the Games. It is also possible to conclude from the research that the International Olympic Committee makes a great effort to preserve its values as much as possible and to operate with the understanding that it must allow national values to be expresses in order to allow as many countries as possible to participate in the Games. That is to say, the processes of mutual inclusion and assimilation as well as cultural sensitivity between transnational and national identities are created by the interaction between them. Hence, it is possible to state that transnationality in its

encounter with national identity is defined on the basis of preserving the principle of universality and the right to participate in sport and be a part of the Olympic family. Furthermore, the participation of as many countries as possible is what validates the existence of the Olympic movement and this creates reciprocity and cultural sensitivity that sustain both - the Olympic movement with its western values, and the countries that participate in the Games with their varied national and cultural values.

Thus, the research reveals that participation in international sporting events, and particularly the Olympic Games, is important to a country both from a practical/functional perspective as a stage to develop and strengthen diplomatic relations and improve its international status and image, as well as from a moral perspective as contributing to national identity and pride. This participation is accompanied by an understanding that a country's national values will be exposed to and influenced by the transnational values of the Olympic movement.

In Israel's case, the research shows that its participation in international sporting events is a source of pride, particularly if they result in victories and sporting achievements, and positive influence on Israeli society image in the international arena. The government's ability to use this positive influence for the advancement or improvement of Israel's status in its international relations is a direct consequence of its overall policy. Moreover, Israeli identity can be divided into two levels: the collective identity including components of civil and sovereign identity, and collective memory, including components of national and religious identity. This state identity comprises a religious element, a national-cultural element, a sovereign element and a civil element.

From the analysis of the Israeli case, the conclusion is that transnational identity has a much greater influence on the civil component as a result of the similarity/ compatibility that exists between the Israeli civil element and values of the Olympic movement; all this occurs through the clarification of the national element that is much stronger in the Israeli identity component, whereas the religious component is the most sensitive one. The influence of the civil element is expressed, as shown in the research, as the desire "to be like Europe" whilst some of the national/cultural and religious components are fortified to the extent that the country is willing to tolerate sanctions.

In conclusion, when transnationality encounters national identity, it is defined on the basis of both the International Olympic Committee's and Israel's understanding with regard to the "field of play" in which they both operate and the flexibility required in order to preserve and develop the cooperation between them. The International Olympic Committee's joint and continuing activities with governments and international organizations creates an interaction and a dialogue between the organization's universal values and national values of its member bodies. As a result of this interaction, universal values trickle into the sporting community and in some cases even spill over into areas and sectors that are outside the sport system. In this way, sport, and especially the Olympic Movement, contribute to and influence incorporation of transnational values into components of national identity. Simultaneously and in parallel, a process of assimilation and inclusion of values in addition to Olympic values that affect transnational identity takes place. As long as the importance of the Olympic Games and international sporting events is maintained in the eyes of world countries, they will continue to appear in this field of play and as such the place of sport as one of the parameters that define transnational identity.

IV.2 Conceptual Conclusions: A New Construct for Understanding the Role of Sport in Defining Transnational Identity

On a conceptual level, the findings that emerged from the analysis of Israel's case in this research allow the development of an evidence-based understanding and a model that theoretically explains the process of defining transnational identity.
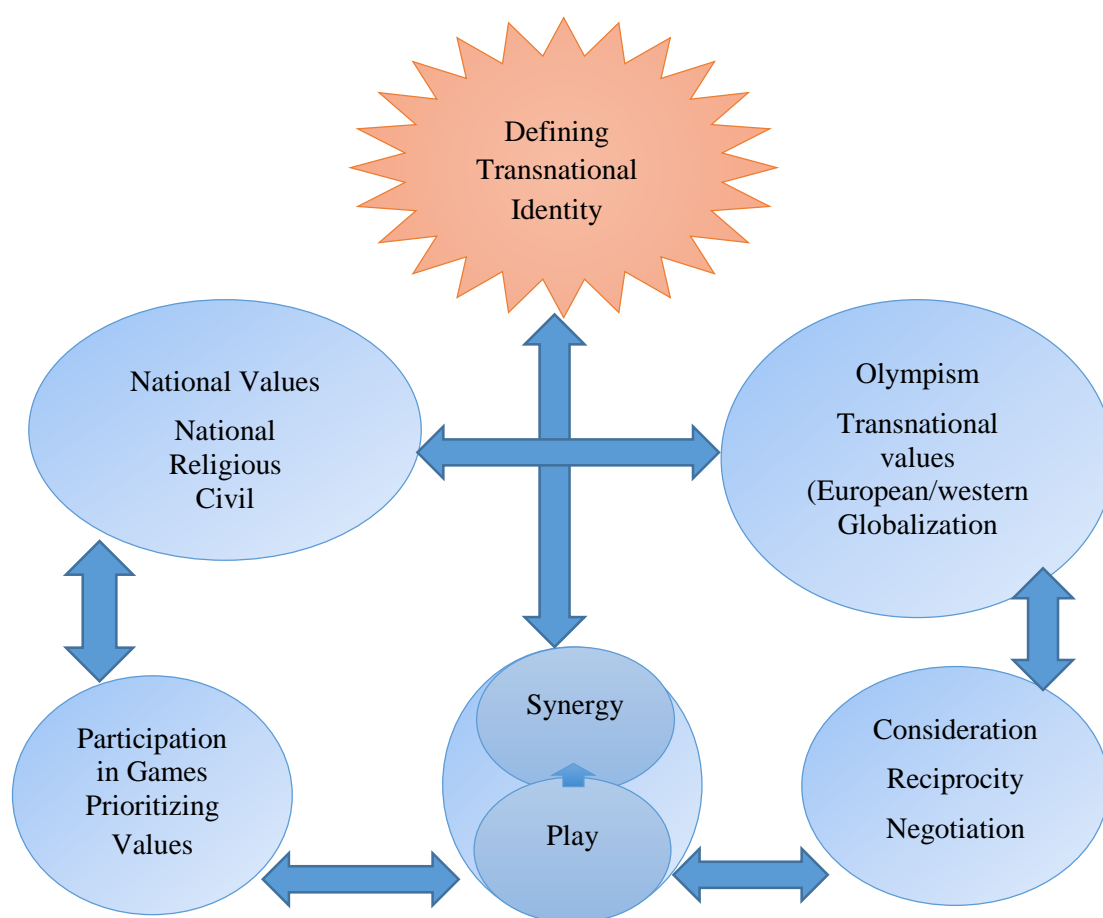
Figure 2: Sport Defining Transnational Identity - SDTI Model

The SDTI model demonstrates that Olympic values are, in fact, transnational values based on Western cultural values, which were in existence when the Olympic movement was established and to which, since the beginning of the last quarter of the 20th century, globalization values, also the product of the West, have been added.

The International Olympic Committee created a playing field, determined that rules of the game would be based on its values and invited national players to come and play. Since the purpose of the game is to spread the Olympic philosophy to national players, and of course to strengthen its long term existence, it must allow as many of them as possible to remain on the field and continue to play. Therefore, the International Olympic Committee has understood that it must prioritize its values, be considerate and willing to accept the many cultures that characterize national players, through negotiation and willingness to reciprocate. National players come to the field carrying the values linked to their state identity made up of religious identity, national/cultural

identity, sovereign identity and civil identity where the relative strengths of each is known in advance.

National players want to join the Olympic field of play and it is important to them that they do. Because the rules of the game are known, they understand that they must be flexible with regard to the national values, and be open to the possibility that they will be influenced by Olympic transnational values. Hence, national players carry out processes to clarify their stance and values and conduct their own prioritization of values, those that can be flexible and those that cannot. These parallel processes - of the Olympic Committee on the one hand and national players on the other hand- are characterized by cultural sensitivity, flexibility, dialogue, negotiation and reciprocity. The Olympic Committee's need to maximize the number of participating countries complies with countries" need to take part in the game. Thus, mutual reciprocal relations create a synergy that promotes defining transnational identity.

The synergy between Olympic transnational values and state values exists on sporting fields as a result of understanding, persuasion, or "twisting arms". The results of this synergy enable the promotion of defining a transnational identity and creates an atmosphere of culturally sensitive, multinational games.

This influence of sport is not a unique event, but part of a process that influences and redefines transnational identity as well as national identities.

As a result, the findings of this research enable the construction of an applied, feasible, ethical model to predict the level of conflict that could result from encounters between transnational and national values. Table 6 and Figure 3 show the feasible model.

Table 7: the Feasible Model of Conflict Types and Intensity

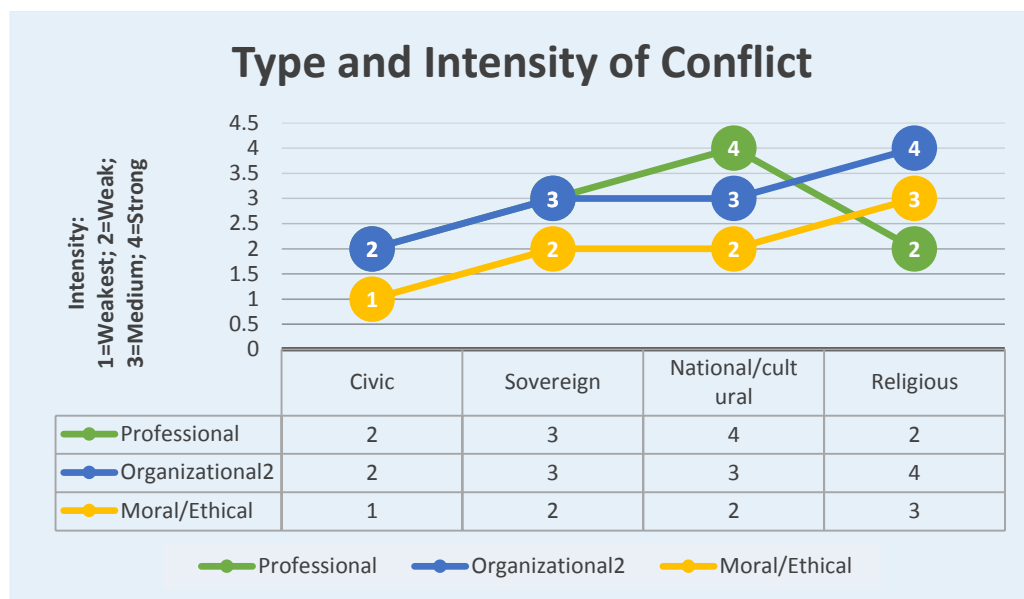| Grounds and Intensity of Conflict			
Professional	**Weak**	**Medium**	**Strong**	**Weak**
Organizational	**Weak**	**Medium**	**Medium**	**Strong**
Moral/Ethical	**Weakest**	**Weak**	**Weak**	**Medium**
	Civil Identity	**Sovereign Identity**	**National Identity**	**Religious Identity**

Definitions

The horizontal axis includes Israel's state identity components in ascending order of their intensity from left to right:

- **Civil identity**: values identical to western civilization such as equality, desire for peace, human dignity and freedom, non-discrimination, etc. These can be seen as transnational values.

- **Sovereign identity**: values that define the way in which the state is run and managed within its territory. These values are translated into laws made by parliamentary institutions elected by the people in democratic elections (legislative authority), their implementation by government (executive authority), under the supervision and control of the courts (judicial authority). These values ensure autonomy and protect against outside interference.

- **National/cultural identity**: values that define social and state character through symbols (flag/anthem) and "collective memory" ("from Holocaust to Resurrection", "the whole world is against us", "our right and duty to defend ourselves").

- **Religious identity**: in the case of Israel this also trickles into national/cultural identity in the definition of Judaism both as a religion and a nation. Israel is the Jewish people's state and has no religion and state separation.

The vertical axis includes the layers that characterize the Olympic movement's identity in order of strength from bottom to top:

Ethical/moral layer: values that are not directly related to sport, but the Olympic movement strives, through sport, to bequeath them to the world. Peace between nations and cultures, brotherhood and solidarity between people and living harmoniously with the environment.

- **Organizational layer**: values connected to the outer envelope of the "playing field" such as sporting autonomy, universal initiatives, freedom to organize, freedom of movement, freedom of the press.

- **Professional/sporting layer**: values connected to the "playing field" itself: the right to participate in sport with full equality, no discrimination of any sort, no sporting embargos, and fair play.

Figure 3: Type and Intensity of Conflict

Figure 3 can be used to predict where there might be conflict and evaluate its intensity. In the case of Israel, for example, there is a low chance of conflict at the ethical/moral level, which falls within the area of civil identity, and if it did exist its intensity would be minimal - for example freedom of speech and press. In contrast, where contents of professional and/or organizational levels spill into the areas of national identity, and more importantly, religions identity, powerful conflicts will arise and in some cases may cause the country to renege. For example, the sanctity of the Day of Atonement is a value which will not be flexed at all. In conclusion, the smaller the chances of conflict, the greater the sports organizations" ability to influence the areas in which transnational and national values interact.

IV.3 Practical Implications and Recommendations

The International Olympic Committee, which is a player in the international relations arena and has a transnational identity, is in permanent and constant interaction with 205 National Olympic Committees and through them with their governments, each of which has its own national identity. During this interaction, the different identities influence one another and are influenced by one another as a result of their joint activities in the international sporting arena. In order for the synergy between identities to continue, all participants must show willingness to accept the effects of other identities without endangering the basic characteristics of their own identities and therefore our recommendations are presented below.

IV.4 Research Limitations

The research paradigm employed in this research was qualitative and we chose a case study as the way of dealing with the research questions using in-depth interviews and document analysis as research tools.

As their advantages and disadvantages were discussed in depth in the Methodology chapter, only relevant and key research limitations follow:

- This research examined a subjective, multi-color reality and the way it is seen by participants. The research language was informal and definitions were adapted to the research process and researcher's personality.
- There is an interaction between the researcher and research topic and despite all efforts, and awareness of the problem, it is possible that the researcher's voice, which is difficult to separate from the subject, may be heard.

IV.5 Contribution to Knowledge

Most research in the area of international relations dealing with sport and international sporting events focused on state preference and how different countries have used and exploited these events to promote their national and international interests.

This research centers on examining and analyzing the reciprocal influence that exists between international sporting organizations and national and governmental sporting organizations with respect to the role of sport in defining transnational identity and clarification, sometimes with a change of emphasis, of national identity. The contribution to theoretical knowledge was made because this research closed a gap in knowledge in this area.

In this study we have shown that the International Olympic Committee is not just a sporting organization but a legitimate player in the field of international relations and its purpose is to spread Olympic ideas through sport. These Olympic ideas, based on European/Western values, define the transnational identity of this organization, just as it defines the identity of many international organizations that are recognized as players in the international arena.

In this research we have demonstrated that the interaction through sport, which exists between the International Olympic Committee and National Olympic Committees and their governments, forces the IOC to prioritize its values and moderate its stance. This interaction exposes the IOC to the influences of a variety of national identities. These can be assembled under the headings of 5-6 civilizations based on the 1966 theory of Samuel Huntington.

Additionally, the SDTI model that was developed in this research shows that the definition and characteristics of transnational identity are dynamic and open to influence and that sport plays an important role, as it is both national and international. The dual identity of sport plays an important role in creating glocalization in the national arena whose influence trickles into the international arena. As this model was developed on the basis of the findings that emerged from this research, it is possible to say The research suggests an innovative model to help understand the place and influence of sport on transnational identity. The model presents a process in which interaction takes place between national and transnational identity. This is a process in which two identities influence and are influenced simultaneously by each other. Thus this research is also innovative.

This model, we hope, will help to narrow the existing gap in knowledge in understanding the significance of transnational identity, which represents at a given time a dominant civilization and the processes with which it copes in order to interact with the numerous national identities to which it is exposed in the current world.

- We developed an original applied model from the theoretical one through which we can trace friction points between specific national identities and transnational identity through characterization of the content of developing conflict and its intensity. Thus, the SDTI model embodies an addition to practical knowledge. The model is based on three anchors identified and defined in this research

- Transnational identity is dynamic and its definitions are only correct for the present - at the time that this research was carried out, this identity has Western values.

- Sport, which at its foundations, has transnational values and in fact is a means of reinforcing national identity, serves as an important stage in the interaction between transnational and national and the creation of glocalization.

- Prioritization of transnational and national values. Prioritization is dynamic and changes according to national political preferences and geopolitical situations. Therefore, this applied model can be used as a guideline for decision makers whether from national or international organizations to understand the issues with which they will have to cope when determining policy with regard to hosting or participating in international sporting events.

IV.6 Further Research

The influence of sport on changes in defining transnational identity identified with European/Western values:

- The phenomenon of recruiting athletes from different countries to participate in European leagues and national teams together with the migration from the Middle East and Africa and integration of these migrants into national sport in European countries.

- "Migration" of international sporting events from the beginning of the 21st century, such as Olympic Games, World Championships etc., from Europe to other continents.

- The number and weight of non-European personalities in international sporting organizations (as deciders, influencers and users) since the beginning of the 21st century.

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