

# Testing the Psychometric Properties of the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy in Turkey

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## Abstract

The validity and reliability of the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (SEE) was tested using a sample of 348 emerging adult university students living in Turkey. Different from the original scale's four-factor structure, results of principal components analyses and confirmatory factor analyses exposed that there were three factors explaining 45% of the total variance of the SEE in the Turkish culture. There were high correlations among these three factors of the 30-item Turkish version of the SEE, two subscales of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, and a 10-item Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale as proof of its convergent validity. The 30-item Turkish version of the SEE also had high internal consistency and test–retest reliability scores. The group differences for gender and ethnicity are given, and future research suggestions for using that scale in multiracial social contexts are discussed.

## Keywords

Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy, validity, reliability, university students, gender differences, ethnicity, parental ethnocultural empathy

## Introduction

All countries are composed of several ethnic groups, and oftentimes ethnic discrimination and prejudices are common problems that damage interpersonal relationships between these groups (e.g., Jalali & Lipset, 1992–1993). Like many other countries of the world, Turkey with its young and growing population also suffers from ethnic discrimination and prejudice. In addition to the Turks, the majority ethnic group, there are more than 20 million Kurds, Zazas, Arabs, Armenians, Circassians, and other groups, comprising one fourth of the total population, who live in the country (Etnik Nüfus Dağılımı; <http://etnoloji.blogspot.com/>). Only a few research findings (e.g., Mazlumder, 2008; Şahin-Fırat, 2010) demonstrate the ethnic discrimination experiences of various ethnic groups in Turkey, and

it is necessary to improve and expand this research to gain an understanding of the factors that affect and create a peaceful environment. Exposure to ethnic discrimination has numerous harmful effects on individuals, such as creating low self-esteem (e.g., Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Santana, Almeida-Filho, Roberts, & Cooper, 2007), suffering from higher levels of depression (e.g., Benner & Kim, 2009; Davis & Stevenson, 2006), and anxiety (e.g., Waelde et al., 2010). Someone who discriminates against others who are different from his/her ethnicity must also have

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lower cognitive and emotional ability to recognizing other ethnic groups' perspectives. With respect to understanding other ethnic groups' perspectives, there is a relatively new psychological concept known as "ethnocultural empathy." Ethnocultural empathy is defined as "empathy directed toward people from racial and ethnic groups who are different from one's own ethnocultural group" (Wang et al., 2003, p. 221). Ethnocultural empathy seems to be an important protector against ethnic discrimination. In the present study, we aim to highlight the importance of ethnocultural empathy in personal relationships and increase the empirical research in that area by validating the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy in Turkey.

### *Cultural Diversity in University Campuses*

During the college years, young people become involved in new social environments and meet many people from various social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. This period of life is known as "emerging adulthood" by developmental psychologists and is described as a transition stage between adolescence and adulthood (Arnett, 1998, 2000). The university years also extend the identity formation process of emerging adults and provide time and options for their efforts in developing a healthy identity in their society. In Turkey, many of the nearly two million young people take the university entrance examination and try to register for a specific university's department. At the end of this competitive process, they generally leave their parents' home for the first time. During this transition period, university students must adapt to a new campus, a new city, different accommodations (e.g., dormitories with crowded rooms), and a new social environment, surrounded with ethnic, cultural, and political diversity. It is also during this adaptation process that college students' values change. For instance, Sheldon (2005) determined a movement from extrinsic values (e.g., financial success and popularity) toward intrinsic values (e.g., emotional intimacy, personal growth, and community

contribution) in the following years of their college education. University students' attitudes toward other ethnic group members also change in a positive manner; this is the result of the increased contact between students of different ethnicities and the development of more interracial friendships (Antonio, 2001; Rude, Wolniak, & Pascarella, 2012). Park (2009) investigated university students' attitudes toward affirmative action in a longitudinal study and found a positive change toward affirmative action (helping disadvantaged groups) due to the effects of peer groups and exposure to various social, racial, and political groups. The results of another longitudinal study applied to a college student sample (Saenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007) also showed that peer group interactions between various ethnic groups, support for diversity education, and a positive social climate for diversity enhances a college student's positive attitudes and interactions with other races. Feeling that they have a peaceful and secure environment on their campuses has great importance for minority students. Hutz, Martin, and Beitel (2007) found a positive link between an ethnocultural person-environment fit and college adjustment. Creating a social climate that is respectful to all ethnic groups' values, beliefs, living styles, and traditions consequently improves multicultural contacts between various peer groups. College students who have ethnically diverse friendship networks were much more likely to develop relationships that reflect less racial stereotypes toward multicultural groups (Martin, Trego, & Nakayama, 2010).

Racial interaction and developing a positive multiracial climate in the campus environment plays a critical role in youths' trust, beliefs, and psychological health. However, students from various racial ethnic groups can still be exposed to some violent acts, discrimination, and interracial harassment in their campus environments (McCabe, 2009; Smith, & Jones, 2011). McCabe (2009) found that race and gender contributed to microaggression on college campuses. For instance, Black men were perceived as threatening and Latinos as sexually available by their counterparts.

Black women were especially subjected to aggressive acts. Just being female also promoted exposure to aggression for ethnic women where male-dominated academic majors are at issue. Smith and Jones's (2011) longitudinal survey, which used a college student sample, determined that Asian, Black, and Latino students experienced higher levels of racial harassment in their campuses compared with White students. Asian and Black female students were also more exposed to violent acts in their interracial dating experiences. As a result of those findings, there has been a recent increase in psychology research to develop courses and prevention programs for creating a peaceful multiracial environment on college campuses. Sanners, Baldwin, Cannella, Charles, and Parker (2010) tested the effectiveness of an educational format on a university student sample and found that cultural diversity education promoted students' cultural sensitivity toward each other. In their experimental study, Blanchard, Lilly, and Vaughn (1991) found that exposing anti-racist opinions promoted college students to express their anti-racist opinions more strongly. Chongruksa and Prinyapol (2011) examined the role of psychoeducational group counseling, which included respecting diversity and improving multicultural awareness among Buddhist and Muslim adolescents in Thailand. They determined that the group counseling had a positive impact on adolescents' intergroup relations, multicultural competence, and prejudice reduction. Loya and Cuevas (2010) applied an anti-racism course and provided an environment for class discussions about diversity issues. They determined that the impact of the education program raised the multicultural awareness of non-minority students and their racial attitudes were changed in a positive manner.

Such kinds of diversity education and intervention programs also lead to improvements in college students' moral reasoning abilities (Mayhew & Engberg, 2010). College students' experiences with diversity influenced their perceptions about a positive multicultural campus climate. Students who had more experiences with diversity issues also

criticized their campus environment more and become more sensitive to developing a positive climate in their campus environments (Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey, 2005).

### *Ethnocultural Empathy: A New Concept Derived From Cultural Empathy*

Not only in higher education but also in each level of education and in work places, professionals have become more aware of the importance of racial differences. Working in multicultural social contexts requires counselors, psychologists, social workers, and other social scientists to be more sensitive to participants' ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. As a result, differing from the traditional empathy literature, a new type of empathy called "cultural empathy" was defined and theorized by some researchers during the last two decades. In Ridley and Lingle's (1996) reformulation, cultural empathy was discussed as a multidimensional and interpersonal process that can be learned by everybody. Ridley and Lingle (1996) defined cultural empathy as the ability to understand an individual coming from another culture with different cultural values, emotions, attitudes, worldviews, traits, thoughts, and behaviors. Cultural empathy comprises cultural empathic understanding and cultural empathic responsiveness. Cultural empathic understanding is a cognitive ability that includes understanding different perspectives and the ability to differentiate a counselor's own cultural self-values from those of his/her clients. Cultural empathic responsiveness is a communicative and affective side of cultural empathy and includes listening to a client's experiences, conveying an accurate understanding toward his/her concerns, and trying to feel how the client feels by putting yourself in another's situation (Ridley & Lingle, 1996).

Following the conceptualization of empathy in a cultural manner, Wang et al. (2003), impressed by Ridley and Lingle's (1996) theoretical frame, defined "ethnocultural empathy" and developed the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (SEE) to measure the construct in

not only a counseling environment but also in general young adult and adult populations. Ethnocultural empathy is defined as a cultural type of empathy that is directed toward individuals coming from various ethnic and cultural groups that are different from one's own ethnocultural group (Rasoal, Jungert, Hau, & Andersson, 2011). A person who has a higher ethnocultural empathy level behaves more positively toward different ethnic group members, has the ability to perceive their feelings, shows respect for their traditions/languages, and protects them against some discriminatory behaviors.

Although cultural empathy and ethnocultural empathy have great importance in understanding ethnic discrimination, cultural harmony, openness to diversity, and other sociocultural issues, they are taken relatively less empiric research attention by the researchers. Brouwer and Boroş (2010) investigated adults' ethnocultural levels and their perceptions of diversity. They found that ethnocultural empathy was clearly related to positive attitudes toward diversity and also had a mediational role between intergroup contact and constructive attitudes toward diversity. This finding showed that increased social contact among various ethnic groups enhanced acceptance of cultural differences and raised ethnocultural empathy levels, encouraging adults to behave positively toward different ethnic group members in the work environment.

Cultural or ethnocultural empathy was also important for minority groups' perceptions about a dominant ethnic group and had a role in the acculturation process. Suanet and Van de Vijver (2009) investigated perceived cultural differences and acculturation processes among exchange students in Russia. They found that participants with greater cultural empathy, open-mindedness, and flexibility also had higher levels of psychological adjustment in their new social contexts. Cultural empathy also reduced exchange students' perceived social distances and increased their ability to live harmoniously in their community. Le, Lai, and Wallen (2009) explored perceived school multiculturalism in minority

youth. They found that adolescents who perceived their school environment as supportive of multiculturalism (school administrators giving importance to equal rights for different ethnicities in a school context) had higher ethnocultural empathy levels; this reflected positively on adolescents' subjective happiness. Other research (Yakunina, Weigold, Weigold, Hercegovac, & Elsayed, 2012) focused on international students' psychological adjustment and found that cultural empathy was positively related to college students' openness of diversity and their adjustment in the United States.

In Wang et al.'s (2003) conceptualization, ethnocultural empathy comprises four dimensions: (a) empathic feeling and expression (the ability to feel the frustrations and discrimination experiences of ethnic groups other than their own, display their reactions to those injustice situations, and express their feeling about those inequalities), (b) empathic perspective taking (the ability to understand other ethnic groups' difficulties caused by their ethnic origins, and put themselves into other ethnicity members' shoes), (c) acceptance of cultural differences (having respect for other ethnic groups' native languages, cultural traditions, and dress), and (d) empathic awareness (the ability to recognize how other ethnic groups are portrayed in their society and understand the struggles that they experience in their social environments). These four dimensions were found at the end of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses; there were high intercorrelations among these four factors. The scale had high validity and reliability scores as presented in the present study's Method section.

As a useful and valid scale, the SEE was translated into Swedish by Rasoal et al. (2011), and its reliability and validity were tested in a relatively large undergraduate student sample ( $n = 799$ ). In the Swedish version of the SEE, some items of the original scale were deleted because of the lower factor loadings, and the final scale had 25 items. Consistent with Wang et al.'s (2003) original scale, the 25-item Swedish version of the SEE had four factors. Although some items

were loaded in different factors in comparison with the original SEE, the Swedish version of the SEE had a high internal consistency ( $\alpha = .88$  for the total scale,  $\alpha = .76$  for empathic feeling and expression,  $\alpha = .71$  for empathic perspective-taking,  $\alpha = .94$  for acceptance of cultural differences,  $\alpha = .62$  for empathic awareness), and convergent validity scores.

### *Gender and Ethnic Group Differences in Ethnocultural Empathy*

With respect to gender differences, many of the previous studies' research results (e.g., Tavakol, Dennick, & Tavakol, 2011; Toussaint & Webb, 2005; Wölfer, Cortina, & Baumert, 2012) exposed the higher levels of general empathy in female participants compared with males. Ethnocultural empathy is a culturally specific empathy and consists of some additional cognitive and emotional abilities, such as recognizing other ethnic group members' perspectives, understanding the difficulties they face because of their ethnicities, and accepting the cultural differences, traditions, and languages of other ethnic group members. There is only one study (Wang et al., 2003) that focused on gender differences of college students' ethnocultural empathy levels. Except for the empathic perspective-taking dimension of the SEE, it was determined that females had higher ethnocultural empathy scores than males. Other research findings demonstrated that females had a higher level of multicultural awareness, sensitivity to racial inequalities, and higher ability to promote racial understanding in their social environments (e.g., Constantine & Gloria, 1999; Mindrup, Spray, & Lambergine-West, 2011; Park & Denson, 2009).

In terms of ethnic group differences, Wang et al. (2003) found that non-White college students had higher ethnocultural empathy levels than White students. Having family members and friends with different ethnic backgrounds and living in neighborhoods with diverse ethnic groups were the factors that facilitated the participants' ethnocultural empathy levels

(Wang et al., 2003). In another study (Segal, Gerdes, Mullins, Wagaman, & Androff, 2011), Latinos were found to have higher levels of social empathy than Caucasian students. Although there are no research findings that specifically address the ethnocultural awareness of various ethnic groups in Turkey, we already know that minority ethnic groups may face some discrimination and difficulties from members of the majority ethnic group (Mazlumder, 2008; Şahin-Fırat, 2010). Some research findings from other ethnically diverse cultures also exposed ethnic discrimination and some social injustice situations that were caused by majority ethnic group members (e.g., Burgos & Rivera, 2009; Pieterse, Carter, Evans, & Walter, 2010). Exposure to ethnic discrimination and other injustice situations because of one's ethnicity might have expanded minority groups' awareness regarding ethnic issues and also increased their ethnocultural empathies.

### *Aims and Hypotheses*

In this study, we first aimed to examine the validity and reliability of Wang et al.'s (2003) "Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy" in Turkey. For this purpose, we translated the SEE into Turkish and made its back translations as explained in the Method section. The Turkish version of the SEE's factor structure was tested and compared with the original version. The SEE's convergent validity with general empathy measures and parental ethnocultural empathy was also intended to be searched. Last, we aimed to understand the role of gender and ethnicity on university students' ethnocultural empathy scores.

It was hypothesized that (1) the SEE would have high item-total correlations, a similar factor structure with the original scale, and satisfactory item-factor loadings. (2) We predicted that subscales of the SEE, dimensions of general empathy scale, and the parental ethnocultural empathy scale would have stronger correlations with each other with respect to presence of convergent validity. (3) It was also expected that there would be

higher correlations between the first and second applications of the SEE to our college student sample as a proof of test–retest reliability. According to group differences (4) we hypothesized that there would be gender differences for ethnocultural empathy scores, and females were expected to be more ethnoculturally empathetic in comparison with males. Last, (5) It was hypothesized that we could find differences between majority ethnic group Turks and minority ethnic groups. We expected that minority ethnic groups (Kurds and other ethnic origins) would have higher ethnocultural empathy levels than Turks.

## Method

### *Participants and Procedure*

After deleting the missing data, univariates, and multivariate outliers ( $n = 12$ ), a total of 348 undergraduate students (females: 69.8%,  $n = 243$ ; males: 30.2%,  $n = 105$ ) from the sociology, philosophy, and statistics departments participated in this study. Thirty-eight percent of the participants were in their first year, 22% were in their second year, 20% were in their third year, and 20% were in their fourth year at Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University. The participants' ages ranged from 18 through 30 years, and the mean age was 20.6 years. Participants generally came from low-income families, and their total monthly individual expenses were very low ( $M = 475$  TL, approximately 235 Euros,  $SD = 228.2$ ). They also came from families that had 1 to 14 children ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 2.55$ ). Forty-four percent of the participants were firstborns, 20.4% were the second child, 12.4% were the third child, and 23.2% were the fourth child or more of their families. Most of the participants lived in big cities or towns (63.4%), and 46.6% lived in a rural region of Turkey. They were generally living in dormitories (41.2%) or living with friends in a flat (39.5%), while some were staying with their families (9.3%) or living alone in a flat (10.1%). Many of our participants' mothers (45.8%) and fathers (39.7%) had only completed primary school; some mothers (25.1%) and fathers (8.7%)

were illiterate or literate without completing primary school. Very few of the mothers (5.1%) or fathers (11.9%) had a college education; a significant number of the mothers (24%) and fathers (38.8%) had a secondary or high school degree. Most of our participants defined themselves as Turkish (66.7%), while some defined themselves as Kurdish (19.5%); mixed ethnic origins like Turkish Kurdish, Arabic Kurdish, and so on (10.5%); Arabic (2.3%); and Zaza (1%). The participants' mother language was Turkish (79.9%), Kurdish (18.1%), Zazaish (1%), and Arabic (1%). One-half of the participants stated that they lived in a multiracial social environment and that their parents had close relations with other ethnic groups (47.8%). More than half of the participants mentioned that they lived in a social environment that was homogeneous in terms of different ethnicities (52.2%).

To test the test–retest reliability, 208 participants of the total sample ( $n = 348$ ) participated in the second data collection session. Seventy-one percent of the test–retest sample consisted of females, 29% were males. Participants were between the ages of 18 and 30 years ( $M = 20.3$  years). Fifty percent of the participants were in their first year at the university, 20% were in their second year, 20% were in their third year, and 10% were fourth-year students. Ethnic group deviation in that sample was very similar to our initial sample. The majority of participants defined themselves as Turkish (65.4%), while some defined themselves as Kurdish (19.2%); mixed ethnic origins such as Turkish Kurdish, Arabic Kurdish, and so on (12.4%); Arabic (2%); and Zaza (1%).

Participants completed the question forms that included a demographic questionnaire, the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy, Interpersonal Reactivity Index, and Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale in 20 to 25 minutes during classroom sessions. Participation was voluntary; researchers provided information about the participants' rights and guaranteed their privacy. To match the forms with the second application, researchers requested that the participants write a nickname on the second page of the questionnaire. These nicknames

were then used to match the question forms from the first and second applications to analyze test–retest reliability. Participants were cautioned not to provide any personal information, such as a name, when choosing a nickname to use on their question forms. With the exception of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, all other measures that were applied in the first application were used in the second application, administered after a 2-week interval. As an incentive, three credit points were given to participants who participated in both applications.

## Measures

**Demographic Questionnaire.** Information asked of the participants in this questionnaire included gender, department, age, ethnicity, educational levels of their parents, number of children in their families, their birth order, their family's monthly income, individual monthly expenses, their living quarters, where they came from (cities or rural settings), their perceived language accuracy levels in their mother tongue, and their perceived language accuracy levels in other spoken languages.

**The Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy.** The SEE was developed by Wang et al. (2003) to measure ethnocultural empathy levels of various ethnic groups and is composed of 31 items. The SEE uses a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree that it describes me* to 6 = *strongly agree that it describes me*) and was applied on 323 undergraduate students in the United States. The results of exploratory factor analysis exposed four factors that explained 47% of the total variance. Cronbach's alpha scores for the 31 item total scale was .91, and other internal consistency estimates for each of the four factors were as follows: (a) empathic feeling and expression (EFE),  $\alpha = .90$ ; (b) empathic perspective taking (EP),  $\alpha = .79$ ; (c) acceptance of cultural differences (AC),  $\alpha = .71$ ; and (d) empathic awareness (EA),  $\alpha = .74$ .

Wang et al. (2003) also applied confirmatory factor analysis on the SEE by collecting data from another undergraduate sample

( $n = 364$ ) and found that a four-factor model provided a better fit to the data and that four factors explained approximately 81% of the total variance. The researchers who developed the SEE (Wang et al., 2003) also measured discriminant and concurrent validity of the scale, which displayed higher validity in these two validity types. All four dimensions of SEE were highly correlated with general empathy (in the empathic concern and perspective taking dimensions). Test–retest reliability was also effective in the original scale, and the 2-week test–retest reliability scores were given as follows: SEE total ( $r = .76$ ), EFE ( $r = .76$ ), EP ( $r = .75$ ), AC ( $r = .86$ ), and EA ( $r = .64$ ).

In the present study, the scale was translated into Turkish by the authors; two psychology academicians checked the language acceptability. The Turkish version of SEE was back-translated into English by an academician studying in the field of English Language and Literature, and her back-translation was found by two other linguistic scientists to highly overlap with the Turkish version of the SEE. International Test Commission's guidelines for translating and adapting tests were followed to reach a proper test adaptation (International Test Commission, 2010). The final Turkish version of the SEE had 31 items that were applied to the present study's sample. The results of validity and reliability analyses of the SEE will be provided in this article's Results section.

**Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI).** A 5-point Likert-type scale (0 = *does not describe me well* to 4 = *describes me very well*) measured the general empathy in adolescents and adults. This was developed by Davis (1983) and had four subscales (perspective taking, fantasy, empathic concern, and personal distress). In the present study, according to our research purposes, only two subscales of IRI (perspective taking and empathic concern), comprising 14 items, were used. IRI was first translated to Turkish by Kumru, Carlo, and Edwards (2004), and the Cronbach alpha scores were .83 for empathic concern and .81 for perspective

taking in a study that was applied on a relatively large adolescent and emerging adult sample (Sayıl, Kumru, Bayraktar, Kindap, & Özdikmenli-Demir, 2008). In the present study, we found that in the 14 items, item–total correlations were higher than .30, and exploratory factor analysis with a promax rotation determined that two factors that had eigenvalues above 1.0. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) was also high (.91). These two factors accounted for 53% of the total variance. Cronbach’s alpha for the 14-item total scale was .90, for empathic concern .87, and for perspective taking .83.

**Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale.** This is a short measurement comprising 10 items, and it was developed by the researchers for use in the present study. This scale used a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *it is absolutely not true* to 5 = *it is absolutely true*) and measures emerging adults’ perceptions about their parents’ attitudes toward people of different ethnicities. Researchers of the present study examined some scales and inventories (e.g., Bogardus, 1947; Smith & Moore, 2000), which measured social distances between ethnic groups and interracial closeness to constitute the Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale’s items. The scale had 4 normal and 6 reverse items. Higher scores indicated higher perceived parental ethnocultural empathy of the participants. Some items were given in parenthesis (e.g., *My parents support people from other ethnic origins toward using and improving their native languages* and *My parents wanted me to be respectful to people coming from different ethnic origins*). Item–total correlations of each item of the scale were higher than .30, and the results of exploratory factor analyses executed only one factor that had an eigenvalue higher than 1. One factor structure explained the 47% of total variance (KMO = .90). Internal consistency for the 10 item scale was  $\alpha = .88$ . After applying that scale to 348 participants, we retested it on some of the same participants ( $n = 208$ ) 2 weeks later and found high test–retest reliability ( $r = .82$ ) for the scale.

## Results

### Testing Reliability and Validity of the SEE for Turkey

**Factor Structure of the SEE in Turkey.** With the exception of Item 16 (“I rarely think about the impact of a racist or ethnic joke on the feelings of people who are targeted”), item–total correlations of the 31-item Turkish translated version of the SEE were higher than  $r = .30$  for each item. After deleting Item 16, which had a lower correlation ( $r = .13$ ) with total score, an initial confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied through the LISREL 8.7 to test whether or not the four-factor original structure of the SEE would be confirmed. Because of the nonnormality of our data, we used the robust maximum likelihood method for our initial CFA analyses. The results indicated that the four-factor structure was confirmed, just as in the original English version of the SEE (Satorra–Bentler scaled [ $399, N = 348$ ] = 775.39,  $p < .001$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.94$ ; non-normed fit index [NNFI] = .97; normed fit index [NFI] = .95; comparative fit index [CFI] = .97; incremental fit index [IFI] = .97; root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .052). The fit indicators generally exposed that the original four-structured model had a good fit with the data. However, we were not completely satisfied with this fit of the model because the RMSEA value was greater than .05 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; best if .05 or less). Therefore, to find the number of factors, we applied a principal components analysis with an oblique rotation. Different from the original scale, we found three factors that had eigenvalues higher than 1.00 for the 30-item Turkish version of the SEE. All the items’ factor loading, means, and standard deviations are given in Table 1. As Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) found acceptable, items with loadings of .32 and above were interpreted in this study. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was found to be .93 and reflected a good factorability of the scale. In our Turkish version of the SEE, Factor 1 (empathic feeling and expression—11 items) accounted for 34%, Factor 2 (empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural



**Table 1.** Factor Loadings, Mean Scores, and Standard Deviations of the Turkish Translated Version of the SEE.

Item	Factor loading	M	SD
Factor 1: Empathic Feeling and Expression			
15. I get disturbed when other people experience misfortunes due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds.	.86	4.38	0.84
11. When I know my friends are treated unfairly because of their racial or ethnic backgrounds, I speak up for them.	.73	4.24	0.98
23. When other people struggle with racial or ethnic oppression, I share their frustration.	.72	3.80	1.01
12. I share the anger of those who face injustice because of their racial and ethnic backgrounds.	.71	4.14	0.93
14. I feel supportive of people of other racial and ethnic groups, if I think they are being taken advantage of.	.67	3.80	1.12
22. When I see people who come from a different racial or ethnic background succeed in the public arena, I share their pride.	.61	3.86	1.02
18. I express my concern about discrimination to people from other racial or ethnic groups.	.54	3.98	1.01
3. I am touched by movies or books about discrimination issues faced by racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	.51	3.50	1.23
13. When I interact with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds, I show my appreciation of their cultural norms.	.50	3.76	1.04
21. I don't care if people make racist statements against other racial or ethnic groups. (R)	.45	4.04	1.10
17. I am not likely to participate in events that promote equal rights for people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. (R)	.36	3.89	1.23
Factor 2: Empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences			
28. It is difficult for me to put myself in the shoes of someone who is racially and/or ethnically different from me. (R)	.75	3.43	1.24
29. I feel uncomfortable when I am around a significant number of people who are racially/ethnically different than me. (R)	.73	3.54	1.35
27. I do not understand why people want to keep their indigenous racial or ethnic cultural traditions instead of trying to fit into the mainstream. (R)	.69	3.73	1.26
I feel annoyed when people do not speak standard Turkish. (R)	.66	2.78	1.42
10. I feel irritated when people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds speak their language around me. (R)	.64	3.30	1.54
2. I don't know a lot of information about important social and political events of racial and ethnic groups other than my own. (R)	.52	3.50	1.12
5. I get impatient when communicating with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds regardless of how well they speak Turkish. (R)	.49	4.30	1.06
8. I don't understand why people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds enjoy wearing traditional clothing. (R)	.44	3.95	1.14
31. It is difficult for me to relate to stories in which people talk about racial or ethnic discrimination they experience in their day to day lives. (R)	.43	3.43	1.27
9. I seek opportunities to speak with individuals of other racial or ethnic backgrounds about their experiences.	.43	3.99	0.93

(continued)

**Table 1. (continued)**

Item	Factor loading	M	SD
19. It is easy for me to understand what it would feel like to be a person of another racial or ethnic background other than my own.	.42	3.61	1.08
Factor 3: Empathic Awareness			
7. I am aware of institutional barriers (e.g., restricted opportunities for job promotion) that discriminate against racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	.76	3.40	1.30
25. I am aware of how society differentially treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	.69	3.69	1.14
20. I can see how other racial or ethnic groups are systematically oppressed in our society.	.62	3.45	1.32
4. I know what it feels like to be the only person of a certain race or ethnicity in a group of people.	.60	2.85	1.53
6. I can relate to the frustration that some people feel about having fewer opportunities due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds.	.57	3.56	1.29
24. I recognize that the media often portrays people based on racial or ethnic stereotypes.	.51	4.10	0.88
26. I share the anger of people who are victims of hate crimes (e.g., intentional violence because of race or ethnicity).	.44	3.47	1.24
30. When I hear people make racist jokes, I tell them I am offended even though they are not referring to my racial or ethnic group.	.41	3.88	1.03

Note. SEE = Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy.  $N = 348$ , 30 items.

differences—11 items) 6%, and Factor 3 (empathic awareness—8 items) 5% of the total variance. The 30-item SEE accounted for 45% of the total variance.

A second CFA was applied for testing the adequacy of the exploratory principal components analysis and evaluating whether or not our 3-factor structure had a good fit with the data. The 3-factor model had a good fit with the data according to seven indices: (Satorra-Bentler scaled [ $402, N = 348$ ] = 683.99,  $p < .001$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.70$ ; NNFI = .98; NFI = .95; CFI = .98; IFI = .98; RMSEA = .045). According to these results, the second CFA model had a better performance than the initial CFA for our 30-item Turkish version of the SEE.

**Validity of SEE in Turkey.** To test the convergent validity of the SEE, correlation analyses were applied on each of the following three factors: the total 30-item SEE, the IRI, and the Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale. There

were significant correlations ranging from low to moderate among the 30-item total SEE, the three dimensions of the SEE, the subscales of IRI, and the Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale's total scores. This is presented in Table 2.

**Reliability of the SEE in Turkey.** To test the reliability of the 30-item Turkish version of the SEE, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for our three dimensions. Cronbach's alpha was .93 for the total scale, .87 for empathic feeling and expression, .85 for empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences, and .81 for empathic awareness in our 30-item Turkish version of the SEE. Cronbach's alpha for the original 31-item U.S. version of the SEE was found to be .91 for the total scale, .90 for empathic feeling and expression, .79 for empathic perspective taking, .71 for acceptance of cultural differences, and .74 for empathic awareness.

**Table 2.** Intercorrelations Between 30-Item Total SEE, Its Three Subscales, Subscales of IRI, and Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale.

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Empathic Feeling and Expression	—	.69**	.64**	.89**	.34**	.29**	.56**
2. Empathic Perspective Taking and Acceptance of Cultural Differences		—	.60**	.89**	.23**	.20**	.63**
3. Empathic Awareness			—	.83**	.25**	.22**	.46**
4. 30-Item Total SEE				—	.31**	.27**	.64**
5. IRI Empathic Concern Subscale					—	.64**	.17**
6. IRI Perspective Taking Subscale						—	.19**
7. Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale							—

Note. SEE = Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy; IRI = Interpersonal Reactivity Index.  $N = 348$ .

\*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 3.** ANOVA Results of Sex Differences for 30-Item SEE and Its Three Subscales.

Measure	Male		Female		<i>F</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Empathic Feeling and Expression	45.55	7.75	42.47	7.32	12.45*
Empathic Perspective Taking and Acceptance of Cultural Differences	43.01	8.70	38.05	7.98	26.78*
Empathic Awareness	31.05	6.65	27.22	6.04	27.75*
30-Item Total SEE	119.62	20.87	107.75	18.13	28.63*

Note. SEE = Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy.  $N = 348$  participants (male = 105, female = 243).

\* $p < .001$ .

To investigate the test–retest reliability of the Turkish version of the SEE, we retested it on a part of the same participants ( $n = 208$ ) 2 weeks after the first application, and we found a high test–retest reliability ( $r = .89$ ) for the 30-item SEE.

**Group Differences.** To determine the relationships between some demographic variables and both the total 30-item Turkish version of the SEE and its three factors, we conducted a one-way ANOVA test. In terms of gender differences, the results revealed significant group differences between female and male participants. Males had higher scores compared with females for both the three dimensions of ethnocultural empathy and the total ethnocultural empathy scale (see Table 3).

To investigate the ethnic group differences, we grouped our data according to participants' ethnic backgrounds (Group 1: 66.7% Turks, Group 2: 33.3% Kurds and

other ethnicities) and applied a one-way ANOVA test. In terms of ethnic group differences, we found that Turks scored significantly lower than Kurds and other ethnicities for the three dimensions of ethnocultural empathy and the total ethnocultural empathy scale (see Table 4).

## Discussion

The aim of this article was to translate Wang et al.'s (2003) SEE in Turkish and test its reliability and validity in Turkey. Except for one item (Item 16), all items of the original SEE had satisfactory item–total correlations. However, the original four-factor solution of the U.S. version of the SEE was not fully confirmed in our Turkish sample as a result of the first confirmatory analyses. To define the factor structure of SEE in our culture, we examined exploratory factor analyses and found a three-factor solution that explained 45% of

**Table 4.** ANOVA Results of Ethnicity Differences for 30-Item SEE and Its Three Subscales.

Measure	Turks		Kurds and Others		F
	M	SD	M	SD	
Empathic Feeling and Expression	41.17	7.36	47.87	5.86	72.91*
Empathic Perspective Taking and Acceptance of Cultural Differences	36.40	7.59	45.83	6.56	130.19*
Empathic Awareness	26.18	5.72	32.78	5.61	104.07*
30-Item Total SEE	103.76	17.21	126.48	15.29	144.84*

Note. SEE = Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy.  $N = 348$  participants (Turks = 232, Kurds and others = 116).

\* $p < .001$ .

the total variance. Similar to the original 31-item SEE, Factor 1 (empathic feeling and expression) consisted of 11 items and only 3 items (Items 9, 26, and 30) were loaded in different factors from the original U.S. version. This can be seen in Table 1. Different from the four-factor structured U.S. version of the SEE, in the Turkish version the items of two factors (empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences) were generally loaded into a single factor. We named this factor “empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences” (Factor 2). In the original version of the SEE, the empathic awareness factor had four items. In our Turkish version, those four items were highly loaded in that factor and were consistent with the original version, but we found a total of eight items that loaded in the single factor. We named Factor 3, “empathic awareness,” as previously described in the original scale. Although they found a four-factor solution, such item-factor mismatches were also present in the 25-item Swedish version of the SEE (see Rasool et al., 2011). Those dissimilarities might be related to cultural differences among the three cultures. In our Turkish sample, participants might have perceived empathic perspective taking as much more related to acceptance of cultural differences. Empathic perspective taking is an emotional and cognitive ability. Therefore, participants who have respect for other racial groups’ native languages, traditions, and customary clothing may also be more prone to know the difficulties that members of other ethnic groups experienced because of their ethnicities.

Correlation analysis exposed evidence of convergent validity for the 30-item Turkish version of the SEE. The IRI and its two dimensions (empathic concern and empathic perspective taking) were used to see the correlations between general empathy and ethnocultural empathy. We also developed a new 10-item scale, the Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale, and found significant correlations ranging from low to moderate among the 30-item total SEE, the three dimensions of the SEE, the subscales of IRI, and the Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale. Consistent with the convergent validity results of the original 31-item U.S. version of the SEE, the highest correlations were detected between two dimensions of IRI and the empathic feeling and expression dimension of the SEE. Concentrating on the 11 items in that factor, it is possible to say that having the ability to feel the strains other racial groups feel in society had a relatively strong link to the general empathy levels of the participants. The Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale also had moderate correlations among three factors of the 30-item Turkish version of the SEE. That scale had high reliability and validity scores in the present study. Thus, the Parental Ethnocultural Empathy Scale can be used in various samples to measure the young participants’ perceptions about their parents’ attitudes toward other ethnic groups. The scale also helps understand their parents’ ethnocultural empathy levels, which are expected to be highly correlated with their offspring’s ethnocultural empathy levels. In the Turkish version of the SEE, moderate intercorrelations

between three factors were found (.60 to .69). The highest correlations were between 11-item Factor 1 (empathic feeling and expression) and 11-item Factor 2 (empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences). These two factors had the highest number of items in the total scale, and their items also measure some similar feelings and behaviors toward racial problems. The 30-item Turkish version of the SEE was also a reliable scale with high Cronbach alpha for total scale and its three dimensions. The scale's test-retest reliability was also high. These high reliability and validity results display its applicability in young adult samples.

Group comparisons showed that male college students had higher levels of ethnocultural empathy than females. Although there were relatively fewer studies that compared gender differences and explored the reason for those gender differences, our findings were in contrast with other research findings in this field. For instance, Wang et al. (2003) found that women scored higher than men on the total ethnocultural empathy scale and other dimensions of the SEE, except for the empathic perspective taking dimension. Mindrup et al. (2011) also reported that females had higher levels of multicultural awareness. Our results also contradicted some other previous studies that put forward the leading role of females as being more sensitive to racial inequalities and intending to promote racial understanding in their social environments (e.g., Constantine & Gloria, 1999; Park & Denson, 2009). Although females were also found to have higher levels of general empathy (e.g., Tavakol et al., 2011; Toussaint, & Webb, 2005; Wölfer et al., 2012), ethnocultural empathy has different characteristics compared with general empathy. Ethnocultural empathy is more connected with participants' social awareness and their tendency in involving social and political issues in their society. Such social tendencies may facilitate young people's awareness to other racial groups' problems in their social environments. In the Turkish culture, men may have a higher concern in social and political issues. They may also have larger social networks composed of various peer groups from different

ethnicities compared with female students. To interpret the gender differences more correctly, we need to have a more heterogeneous (coming from different socioeconomic groups and educational levels) and larger sample with equal numbers of participants from two gender groups.

Another important research result about group comparison put forward that dominant ethnic group members (Turks) had lower ethnocultural empathy scores compared with other groups (Kurds and others) in our college sample. Although we had no previous literature about this ethnic difference in Turkey, the finding was consistent with some previous research results that applied to other multiracial countries. For instance, Segal et al. (2011) reported that Latinos had higher levels of social empathy than Caucasian students. In many cultures, research has exposed that minority groups face ethnic discrimination and experience social injustice situations by majority ethnic group members (e.g., Burgos & Rivera, 2009; Pieterse et al., 2010). Such encounters might have made minority group members more sensitive to social inequalities in their societies as well as helped them develop a better understanding of the different ethnic group members' difficulties that they similarly experience in their daily lives because of their ethnicities.

There were some limitations in this present study. First, using a more representative, large, and heterogeneous college sample coming from varied universities in Turkey, with several ethnic groups, could have given a better understanding for our research findings. Second, it would have improved a second study that had been conducted among a different college sample for investigating exploratory and confirmatory analysis separately. Despite these limitations, the SEE is a useful, reliable, and valid scale for measuring participants' beliefs, emotions, and empathy levels toward diverse ethnic groups in Turkey. Future researchers and professionals in psychology, sociology, social work, education, and counseling could concentrate on detecting the relations between ethnocultural empathy and some personal and social variables. The Turkish version of the SEE can also be a good

measure for investigating the impact of multicultural awareness educations in college contexts or other institutions (e.g., schools, hospitals, military services) where people have relationships with the members of various ethnic groups.

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