Operationalising national identity: the cases of the Scottish National Party and Frisian National Party

ARNO van der ZWET

University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK

ABSTRACT. The article sets out to examine the complexity of national identity and to provide a more nuanced understanding of how inclusive and exclusive characteristics of national identity, which appear theoretically contradictory but show empirically considerable compatibility, relate to each other. In order to empirically investigate the nature of national identity, the article develops a multidimensional model – consisting of an ethnic, cultural, territorial and civic dimension. The article explores the understanding of national identity in two specific groups: members of the Scottish National Party (SNP) in the United Kingdom and members of the Frisian National Party (FNP) in the Netherlands. The evidence presented is based on data from two full membership studies, and the model is operationalised using a confirmatory factor analyses. The conclusion is that national identity can be conceptualised as consisting of one, or several, base layer(s) that can be 'topped-up' with secondary layers.

KEYWORDS: autonomist parties, Frisian National Party, nationalism, national identity, Scottish National Party

Introduction

The novelist William McIlvanney observed that national identity:

is like having an old insurance policy. You know you've got one somewhere but often you are not entirely sure where it is. And, if you're honest, you would have to admit you're pretty vague about what the small print means. (The Glasgow Herald 1999; partially quoted in: Bechhofer and McCrone 2009: 7)

Billig (1995) makes a similar point when he states that national identity cannot just be understood through its 'passionate expressions' but that it is the quieter, more banal, understandings that require consideration. Despite the rather equivocal nature of national identity, the consequences of how it is conceptualised has very significant impacts. National identity is both defined from within – through imagined commonalities (Anderson 1996) – and outside the group (Triandafyllidou 1998). A process of identity formation includes a process of 'othering' by which is meant the establishment of mental boundaries between the in- and out-group. This process occurs as a consequence of a

common recognition of what are perceived as a unique set of characteristics that belong to a certain group. How such characteristics are defined and prioritised determines who belongs and who does not. In other words, we may not give much consideration to the small print on a day-to-day basis, but it certainly matters.

This article sets out to examine the complexity of national identity and to provide a more nuanced understanding of how inclusive and exclusive characteristics, which appear theoretically contradictory, demonstrate empirically considerable compatibility. The theoretical relationships between the criteria through which national identity can be construed are multifaceted (Björklund 2006; Jones and Smith 2001; Kaufmann and Zimmer 2004; Kuzio 2002; McCrone and Bechhofer 2010; Shulman 2002). The classical binary distinction between civic and ethno-cultural national identities (Greenfeld 1993; Kohn 2005; Plamenatz and Kamenka 1975) simplifies the relationship between different characteristics to such extent that makes empirical testing challenging (Björklund 2006; Jones and Smith 2001; Shulman 2002). Moreover, the binary model makes normative assumptions that are considered my many scholars as overly crude (Brubaker 1998; Kuzio 2002; Kymlicka 1999; Shulman 2002).

In order to empirically operationalise national identity, the article develops a multidimensional model – consisting of an ethnic, cultural, territorial and civic dimension. These different dimensions vary in terms of the extent to which they can theoretically be regarded as inclusive or exclusive. As such the model accommodates the ambiguous nature of some of the criteria out of which national identity is constructed. The model also allows for the exploration of the unique and contextual interpretation that groups afford to the characteristics of national identity.

The model is tested using membership data from two civic autonomist political parties: the Scottish National Party (SNP) in the United Kingdom – conducted in 2007 by Mitchell et al. (2012) – and the Frisian National Party (FNP) in the Netherlands – conducted by the author in 2009. The empirical focus has purposefully been narrowed to members of autonomist parties as their membership to parties for which identity is of major concern suggests they can reasonably be expected to be more attuned to issues of national identity than ordinary members of the public. Furthermore, members often take an active role in defining the nation and national identity. The SNP and FNP are both members of the European Free Alliance (EFA), a grouping of mostly civic autonomist parties. The SNP is a large governing party. Its main goal is to establish an independent Scottish state. The FNP is a much smaller party that operates at the provincial level and has a strong focus on cultural and linguistic issues – the latter feature less prominently in the case of the SNP.

The article builds upon previous research undertaken by Mitchell et al. (2012) in their seminal SNP study but is innovative in three ways. First, the comparative approach not only means that valuable insights into the FNP are provided, a party which has, to date, received little attention in academic

literature, but also provides additional robustness in terms of the generalisability of the SNP membership results. Furthermore, by comparing the two cases, it is possible to draw out specific differences and reflect on the origins of such variations. Second, the article explicitly identifies four dimensions and theorises the extent to which each dimension can be considered inclusive or exclusive. It is argued that the relationship between dimensions is non-competitive and more helpfully understood as layered – consisting of a base dimension(s) that can be topped up with others. Third, methodologically, the article uses confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the relationship between different dimensions of national identity. This method provides a theoretically grounded approach.

The article starts by conceptualising national identity and outlining the theoretical relationship between different dimensions of national identity. Next some empirical considerations in relation to operationalising national identity are discussed. Subsequently, a discussion of the analytical framework and the underpinning reasons for methodological choices are elaborated. The following section provides a brief discussion of how national identity is understood at the party level in the SNP and FNP. The penultimate section of the article turns to the individual level and operationalises the concept of national identity using survey data from the SNP and FNP membership studies. The article concludes by contending that national identity should be understood as 'layered' and contextual. It also identifies some potentially fruitful avenues of further research relating to differences in implicit and explicit understandings of national identity and the impact of differences in conceptualisation of national identity in relation to key policy areas.

Theorising national identity

This section focuses on the theoretical relationship between a number of criteria that are considered important characteristics of national identity. It examines to what extent – and under what conditions – these criteria can be considered inclusive or exclusive. The notion of inclusivity and exclusivity is considered as the ability of an individual to adopt a criterion should they choose to do so.

National identity is a person's attachment to a nation and is both defined from within – through imagined commonalities – and from outside the group (Triandafyllidou 1998). As such, all concepts of national identity create boundaries between an in- and out-group (Hjerm 1998). However, the extent to which such boundaries are deemed inclusive and exclusive differs. Many traditional models that conceptualise national identity make a binary distinction between civic and ethno-cultural conceptions. It is generally recognised that binary conceptions of national identity should be considered ideal types and that in practice a subtler combination of the two can be identified (Kiely and Bechhofer 2005: 152). Table 1 contains some of the most influential binary

Table 1. *Different headings for civic and ethno-cultural nationalism and their authors*

Civic	Ethno-cultural	Author
Western	Eastern	Hutchinson 1987; Kohn 1944, 2005; Plamenatz and Kamenka 1975
Staatsnation	Kulturnation	Meinecke 1907, 1970
Civic	Ethnic	Ignatieff 1993; Keating 1996; Smith 2005
Individualistic	Collectivistic	Greenfeld 1993
Jus Soli	Jus sanguinis	Brubaker 1996, 1998
Voluntaristic	Cultural	Ignatief 1993; Kohn 1944, 2005
Territorial based	Descent based	Brubaker 1996
Political	Cultural	Chatterjee 1993; Hutchinson 1987
Liberal	Illiberal	Kohn 1944, 2005
Inclusive	Exclusive	Kellas 1998
Benign	Nasty	Gellner 1983

models in the literature. Although these models differ from each other in important ways, which can lead to variation in categorisations of nations, the overall theoretical and analytical assumptions are fairly consistent.

One of the implications of a dichotomous model is that civic national identities are typified as inclusive and associated with subjective criteria. Individuals theoretically have a choice in terms of belonging (Björklund 2006: 99; Jones and Smith 2001: 50; Keating 1996, 1997). Examples of such criteria may include the feeling of national identity and adhering to laws, values and mores of the country. Furthermore, territorial criteria involving residence are also often considered civic. When such subjective criteria predominate, a national identity can be considered inclusive and belonging to the civic category of the dichotomy. Conversely, ethnic national identities are considered exclusive and associated with objective criteria, meaning that individuals theoretically have no control, or at least limited control, over whether they belong to a nation or not (Björklund 2006: 99; Keating 1996, 1997). Examples of such exclusive criteria are common ancestry, place of birth, race, religion and sometimes language. These models appear to be particularly aimed to explain the normative implications of certain types of national identities.

The binary model has received considerable criticism that emphasise the multidimensional nature of nationalism and national identities; the non-competitively relation between these dimensions; and the contextual interpretation afforded to aspects of these identities (Guibernau 2007). For example, Kymlicka (1999) stresses the non-competitive nature of different dimensions and argues that civic nations must have ethno-cultural elements. A civic commitment to political institutions alone is, in most cases, not enough to be considered a member of a national community. In most cases, a member of the

nation is also required to embrace some of the cultural characteristics the civic nation holds, such as speaking the language or having knowledge of its history and traditions. People do not just accept a person who swears loyalty to the political ethos and institutions as a fellow national. Yack (1999) makes a similar point when he stresses that all nations in the West have their own 'cultural horizon'. Every nation has a set of shared historical myths and values that shape a common identity; this also applies to civic nations (Yack 1999: 201). Kuzio (2002) goes one step further and asserts that civic nations do not only have ethno-cultural characteristics; they also actively impose them. All nations are 'guilty of nation building in which they try to culturally homogenise the community' (Kuzio 2002: 24) or in the words of Brubaker the binary model runs the risk of over-simplifying nations and national identity, presenting them as either 'seething cauldrons' or 'seas of tranquillity'; (Brubaker 1998) both would be a gross misrepresentation of the supposedly civic and ethno-cultural conceptions of nations and national identities.

Thus those nations that are classified as ethno-cultural and are considered to be based on a single homogenised culture are in reality not as homogeneous as is sometimes suggested and have no real hope or desire to become homogeneous, especially in the 'advanced capitalist/late industrialist/post-industrial society [which] generates pressures for massive imports of immigrant labour' (Brubaker 1998: 294). A completely culturally homogeneous society is unattainable as every nation is subjected to external forces. Nieguth argues that to categorise a nation as ethno-cultural implies a degree of homogeneity that is non-existent. The dichotomy assigns certain objective criteria to the group members which, when examining the group closer, do not exist (Nieguth 1999: 161). Smith agrees: 'clearly, we should not overestimate the degree of cultural homogeneity even of modern nations' (Smith 1986: 73). Smith is not specifically referring to either ethno-cultural or civic nations but is arguing that all nations in general are heterogeneous and that their members do not fulfil all the criteria that they are expected to fulfil. In other words, defining a group along cultural lines misrepresents the heterogeneity within that group.

Empirical considerations

Besides the normative limitations binary approaches also demonstrate empirically shortcomings. Despite the findings of some scholars who conclude that with 'minor' adjustments a binary model remains valid (Reeskens and Hooghe 2010), many scholars have noted the multiple, dovetailing identities that people experience and have theorised multidimensional frameworks for national identities (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009; Björklund 2006; Guibernau 2007; Kymlicka 1999; Nielsen 1999; Shulman 2002). For example, Krejči and Velímský (1996, 1981) completed a study of 73 cultural groups in Europe in which they also questioned the empirical validity and usability of a western/civic vs. eastern/ethno-cultural dichotomy. They concluded that England,

France, the Netherlands and Switzerland, all countries identified by Kohn (1944, 2005), Greenfeld (1993) and Plamenatz and Kamenka (1975) as civic nations, had both ethno-cultural and civic characteristics (Krejči and Velímský 1981, 1996: 210). This is not to say that binary models are without merit. In terms of providing a framework for an analysis of the historical development of national identity, the model has much merit. However, in order to operationalise the concept empirically, a binary framework is too rigid.

The empirical findings of this previous research are not surprising because the elements of which national identity is composed are theoretically ambiguous in terms of their inclusivity and exclusivity. The list of characteristics through which national identity can be construed is infinite, but previous research (Björklund 2006; Jones and Smith 2001; Krejči and Velímský 1981, 1996; Shulman 2002) commonly includes the following criteria: place of birth; ancestry; language; residence; political commitment; and psychological attachment.[1] The relationships between these variables are multifaceted. Many criteria can be simultaneously inclusive and exclusive depending on the context in which they are used. As a consequence, there is little agreement on the designation of many of the criteria from which national identity is construed (Brubaker 2004: 137; Jones and Smith 2001; Nieguth 1999).

Language as a criterion illustrates well how some criterion can theoretically belong to both sides of the dichotomy. On the one hand, the idea of one language and one culture is often associated with 19th century ethno-cultural nationalism (Wright 2008) and as Hjerm asserts, 'all modern national cultures are in some sense based on a single national language' (Hjerm 1998: 336). When language is defined more broadly and includes an understanding of cultural contextual nuances, it imposes certain restrictions on individuals, for it implies that language cannot be learned but a person has to be brought up with it. Therefore, a person has no control over whether they can fulfil the criterion in order to adopt a national identity. On the other hand, an individual can choose to learn a language, which makes it an inclusive criterion as it is open to personal choice and can in many cases be a vehicle for civic integration. In this sense, language is a less restrictive criterion and can be associated with civic nationalism.

Location of birth as a criterion appears to be more objective and restrictive in terms of an individual's ability to choose to adopt them, but even here there are ambiguities. Birth as a criterion for belonging to a nation can be interpreted differently in certain contexts. If the territory into which one is born incorporates a diverse range of cultures, then the criterion of birth as a requirement for belonging to a nation can be interpreted as inclusive. Hence some scholars have regarded this criterion as belonging to the civic side of the dichotomy (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009; Björklund 2006). On the other hand, location of birth as a criterion for belonging to the nation evidently excludes others. For example, under these circumstances, first-generation immigrants are not able to acquire a national identity of which location of

birth is an ascriptive requirement. Thus even in the case of a seemingly objective criteria such as birth, the context is important in terms of how they are interpreted (Jones and Smith 2001: 47).

Similar to place of birth, ancestry as a criterion for national identity is not as exclusive as it may at first appear. The definition of who can claim an ancestral lineage can change over time and national identity claims based on ancestry can be ambiguous (Bryant 2002). Furthermore, ancestral conceptions of national identity can be inclusive. For example, until fairly recently Germany considered Germans who lived in Eastern Europe and who were able to demonstrate ancestral links as fellow nationals (as such they were offered citizenship) (Brubaker 1996). From the perspective of these East European Germans, the ancestral criterion of national identity can be considered inclusive.

These problems of ambiguity do not confine themselves to the sphere of culture or ethnicity. Territorial/residence criteria can also be regarded as both inclusive and exclusive, depending on the context. Krejči and Velímský (1981, 1996) classify variables associated with residence and territory as ethno-cultural and exclusive, whereas Shulman (2002) and Smith (2005) regard these as civic and inclusive. If it is argued that anybody who lives in a certain territory can become a member of the nation and movement to that territory is unrestricted, then this can be considered inclusive. However, this is hardly ever the case. The concept of national territory manifests itself through boundaries and frontiers and is therefore necessarily exclusive. Nevertheless, territorial criteria are often associated with civic conceptions of national identities despite their apparent exclusivity (Kaufmann and Zimmer 2004: 73–4).

Respecting a country's political institutions, rules, mores and laws is in many cases considered inclusive, as an individual can choose to conform to such requirements and therefore it is associated with civic or political conceptions of national identity (Smith 1991). On the other hand, laws and institutions are set within a cultural context and require historical justification in order to create the necessary emotional attachment (Kaufmann and Zimmer 2004). If the laws and institutions are the results of cultural and historical processes, it can be difficult for individuals from other backgrounds to accept them. Thus, the distinction between what is a subjective criterion and what is objective is also in this case somewhat blurred.

One view is that the ultimate determinant of someone's national identity is whether a person feels the identity. Renan (1882, 1996) is the most often quoted exponent of the view that such an attachment can be the only basis on which a person's national identity can be determined. Smith (1991) and others have pointed out that a psychological attachment to the nation originates through recognising other, more objective, criteria. Smith proposes that all national identities have an 'ethnie', which he defines as a set of core characteristics of a group that consists of six components: a collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history, a distinctive shared culture, an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity (Smith 1986:

22–30). Thus, although psychological attachment may be the ultimate measure, certain preconditions have to be fulfilled in order for a person to adopt a national identity. Nevertheless, taken on its own, a criterion of psychological attachment allows an individual to decide whether they are part of the nation or not and is therefore fully inclusive.

Analytical framework

The discussion above demonstrates the multidimensional nature of national identity. The criteria of which national identities are constructed can be organised according to their inclusivity and exclusivity, creating a model in which some dimensions are more 'adoptable' than others. However, it also recognises the theoretical ambiguity concerning all measures of national identity. The proposed model for national identity includes four dimensions. The ethnic dimension contains those criteria over which individuals have very limited choice such as place of birth and ancestry. Although these criteria appear to be prescribed, they are to a certain extent context dependent and the definition of the criteria can be altered in order to make them more or less inclusive.

The model contains two dimensions that can be considered the most ambiguous in terms of their inclusivity or exclusivity. A cultural dimension can be identified consisting of a language variable (Kymlicka 1999; Nielsen 1999; Shulman 2002) and a dimension that contains criteria associated with residence and territory (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009; Björklund 2006). For both these dimensions, individuals may have some choice on whether they adopt the criteria, but this can be severely restricted. A final dimension contains criteria that can be considered more subjective and include criteria such as feeling an emotional attachment to a nation and respecting the laws, rules and institutions of a nation.[2] The above outlined model leads to the following conceptual question: what are the relations between the different dimensions? The model is tested using data from an SNP and FNP membership studies.

Of the two parties, the SNP is a relatively large (current membership of around 20.000[3]) governing party that strives for Scottish independence from the United Kingdom. The FNP is active in the province of Friesland in the north of the Netherlands. It is much smaller (current membership around 1,300[4]) and has – unlike the SNP – a strong cultural/linguistic dimension. Both parties are part of the EFA. The SNP can be considered to belong to big EFA, which includes those autonomist parties that represent the bigger sub-state nations[5] and that have often far-reaching constitutional objectives.[6] The FNP belongs to what is colloquially called little EFA, a group of autonomist parties that represent smaller territories, consisting of parties that are more concerned with cultural/linguistic protection and have characteristics that place them more in the realm of political movements rather than political parties. As such the parties can be placed on the opposite ends of what is a very diverse autonomist party family.[7]

In order to operationalise national identity, two party member surveys were conducted. The questions were largely based on the the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) national identity module. The SNP survey was developed by a team of researchers from the University of Strathclyde and the University of Aberdeen and was conducted in 2007 (Mitchell et al. 2012). The response rate was 53.9 per cent (N = 7,112).[8] The FNP survey was developed by the author and conducted in 2009. The response rate was 47.9 per cent (N = 579).[9] The FNP provided financial assistance in relation to the mailing and the translation of the survey, but the survey design and analysis was carried out independently by the author.

The results are analysed using CFA. CFA is considered a more robust and grounded method for theory testing than exploratory factor analysis. CFA requires the exact specifications regarding 'the number of factors, which variables reflect given factors and whether the factors are correlated' (Thomson 2004). This means that CFA allows the researcher to test theoretical models and quantify the degree to which the model fits. In other words, the model's stability can be tested.[10]

National identity in the Scottish and Frisian National Parties

The memberships of the FNP and SNP form the empirical base for the findings in this article. In order to fully interpret the findings and the differences between the two parties, this section provides a brief overview of the goals of the parties that are closely linked to their sense of national identity. Members of autonomist parties can reasonably be expected to afford priority to their national/regional identity. This is partly what makes this group such a compelling case study. However, the extent to which party members prioritise their national identity varies. Among SNP members, around 80 per cent regard their national identity as their first or second most important identity (Mitchell et al. 2012). Among FNP members, this is considerably lower at 35 per cent (van der Zwet 2011). This is perhaps due to the somewhat ambiguous status of Frisianness as a national identity. Many members may regard it a regional identity rather than national identity. Nevertheless, both among SNP and FNP members, national identity is the most often chosen primary territorial identity. It is of course not surprising that members of autonomist parties prioritise their national identity, and it is precisely for this reason that members of such parties make interesting case studies; the primacy of national identity means that it can reasonably be expected that members will have given some thought to how this identity is construed.

The Scottish national movement as a whole, including the SNP, is considered by most scholars to be civic (Hearn 2000: 59–66; Hepburn 2009; Keating 1997: 694; Mitchell et al. 2012). It is often the SNP's inclusive offer of Scottish citizenship as part of its proposal for an independent Scotland that leads commentators and scholars to conclude that the SNP is civic in its outlook. The

white paper – Scotland's future – published by the Scottish Government in the run up to the independence referendum in 2014, outlines the SNP's vision of an independent country, and states that citizenship will be offered to all British citizens resident in Scotland and Scottish-born British citizens living outside Scotland will be considered. Furthermore, following independence, other people will be able to apply for Scottish citizenship (Scottish Government 2013). However, the SNP is a broad church and its members, voters and supporters do not have a uniform understanding of Scottish national identity. There are fringe elements within the party that do not always reflect the party's official civic doctrine. It should be stressed that in the last couple of decades such voices have been rather inconspicuous (van der Zwet 2012).

The FNP is also considered a civic autonomist party by most scholars and commentators. However, in the FNP's case, this view is somewhat more complex. As the party predominant focus is on language, it would be difficult (but not impossible) to imagine that people would become a party member without having a strong affiliation with Frisian as a language. This does not mean that the FNP argues that membership of the Frisian nation is exclusively reserved for Frisian speakers; there are many Frisians who do not speak Frisian but do regard themselves as Frisian. The FNP's conception of Frisian nationalism is that:

[Friesland is a] cultural and linguistic unit . . . It is a nationalism based on the historic development of our country, that is based on self-confidence, self-respect and self-awareness of the Frisian people, however that is influenced and based on indisputable rights to exist freely, to express opinion and to some form of territorial autonomy. (FNP 1988 – on citation)

The FNP agenda regarding the preservation of 'Frisianness' can be summarised as follows: preserve the Frisian language and culture, protect the Frisian countryside, focus on agriculture and small-scale development in industry, recreation and housing (Hemminga 2006: 152). The FNP propagates an inclusive definition of 'Frisianness'. Its goal is to protect 'Frisianness', not to exclude outsiders. Evidently, not all Frisians support the FNP's conception of Frisianness, and many Frisians are uncomfortable with the party's emphasis on language and culture (van der Zwet 2011).

Both the FNP and SNP are self-styled civic autonomist parties. Both parties are conscious and protective of their civic image (van der Zwet 2012). Neither party ascriptively excludes anybody from becoming a member of the nation or the party on grounds of religion, ethnicity, place of birth, ancestral links or cultural background. Both parties conceptualise the nation in such a manner that there are no definitive objective criteria for 'outsiders' or 'newcomers' to become members of the nation.

Operationalising national identity

In order to operationalise national identity, members of the SNP and FNP were asked a set of questions in relation to what they considered to be true

components of their national identity. The frequencies in Table 2 seem to justify typifying the SNP as a civic party. The criteria 'to feel Scottish' and 'respecting Scottish institutions' are considered important by almost all respondents and receive high mean scores; 96 per cent of the members surveyed consider feeling Scottish to be important or very important and 93 per cent find 'respecting Scottish political institutions and laws' important or very important. Residence, which is also often associated with civic conceptions of national identity, is also considered an important part of national identity. Despite the fact that language does not play a major role in Scottish nationalism, it remains for many members a central part of Scottishness. 'Ancestry' and 'birth' are considered somewhat less important but for many remain important criteria of national identity. All criteria receive mean scores of above 2.5 – the midpoint. Such results make the distinction of a rigid civic vs. ethno-cultural dimensions doubtful.

Unsurprisingly, FNP members (Table 3) consider language very important or important for the Frisian identity. Additionally, 'feeling Frisian' and 'to respect rules and political institutions' receive very high scores. The more exclusive markers of ancestry and place of birth receive higher scores than in the SNP's case; this is particularly the case for ancestry. FNP members consider territorial criteria in terms of residence in Friesland to be slightly less important than in the SNP's case. Overall, a roughly similar pattern to that which can be seen in the SNP emerges, although it is slightly more blurred. Civic criteria in the form of 'feeling Frisian' and 'respecting Frisian rules and institutions' (to a lesser extent), together with linguistic criteria, are considered important by a vast majority of the membership. However, the other criteria are also considered important or very important by a majority of the membership.[11]

Binary model

In order to understand the underlying structures of the results presented in Tables 1 and 2, two CFAs were carried. In the first model, the model is tested using a binary civic vs. ethno-cultural model. The results for the SNP and FNP are presented in Figure 1 (S = SNP scores, F = FNP scores). The CFA structure consists of two latent variables (LVs) (represented by ovals), an 'ethno-cultural' LV and a 'civic' LV. Both are constructed from observed variables (OVs) (represented by rectangles). The two LVs are intercorrelated, represented by the double-headed arrow. If the intercorrelation between the LVs is negative, it means that if members report a high score on one LV, they are more likely to find the other LV less important. In other words, two distinctive groups can then be identified. However, if the intercorrelations have very high positive scores, both items are essentially identified as important by the same respondents and are considered non-competitively. As all items refer to criteria of national identity, some positive correlation between LVs is to be expected.[12] If there are distinct groups in the parties, intercorrelation between both LVs

Table 2. Responses to the question: 'Some people say the following things are important for being truly Scottish. Others say they are not important. How important do you think each of the following is?'

	Not at all important (%)	Not very Important (%)	Important (%)	Very Important (%)	Mean* 1–4
To have Scottish ancestry	17	27	32	24	2.64
To have been born in Scotland	15	22	30	33	2.81
To be able to speak English, Gaelic or Scots	10	17	34	39	3.01
To live in Scotland now	6	15	32	48	3.2
To have lived in Scotland for most of one's life	9	26	37	28	2.85
To respect Scottish political institutions and laws	2	6	34	59	3.5
To feel Scottish national identity	1	3	18	78	3.73

*The mean is the average score for each category. If a respondent regarded a variable as 'not at all important', they received a score of 1; if they considered it not important, they received a score of 2 and so on.
Source: Mitchell et al. 2012.

Table 3. *Responses to the question: 'How important are each of the following aspects for being truly Frisian?'*

	Not at all important (%)	Not very Important (%)	Important (%)	Very Important (%)	Mean* 1–4
To have Frisian ancestry	4	28	37	32	2.97
To have been born in Friesland	12	32	32	24	2.68
To speak and understand Frisian	0	0	20	80	3.78
To live in Friesland now	7	27	31	34	2.92
To have lived in Friesland for most of one's life	6	34	35	25	2.78
To respect Frisian political institutions and rules	3	16	47	34	3.11
To feel Frisian national identity	0	3	22	76	3.72

*The mean is the average score for each category. If a respondent regarded a variable as 'not at all important', they received a score of 1; if they considered it not important, they received a score of 2 and so on.
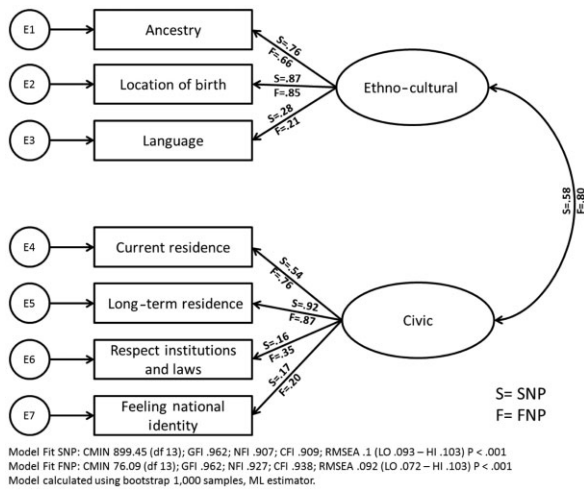*Source*: FNP survey 2009.

Figure 1. Binary model national identity.

should at least be low. The uniqueness associated with each OV (E1–E7) is uncorrelated. The model also includes the standardised regression scores for each item, which are included on the arrows that represent the loading paths. In order to calculate the regression weights, at least one parameter needs to be fixed. In this case it is the LV variance parameter that is fixed at 1.

The models are recursive with a sample size of 7,112 (df 26) for the SNP and 579 (df 26) for the FNP. The results of a binary structure for items representing national identity proved to fairly unstable in both the SNP and the FNP's case. The global fit indices were only barely acceptable. Furthermore, some of the regression weights are worryingly low for some items and cast the consistency of each construct into doubt. Finally, the high intercorrelation between factors in both the FNP and the SNP makes it difficult to speak of distinguishable groups. All in all, the results in relation to a two-dimensional model appears to be unsatisfactory.

Multidimensional model

A multidimensional framework not only unpacks national identity conceptually and provides space to analyse the different dimensions and their impact but also 'untangles' criteria that are theoretically ambiguous in terms of their inclusiveness and exclusiveness. The model in Figure 2 contains four dimensions. The civic dimension is made up of more or less inclusive criteria, whereas the ethnic dimension contains objective criteria. The other two, culture, consisting of the language variable, and territorial dimensions, consisting of residence criteria, are more ambiguous. The three LVs have two OVs.[13] This means the results should be treated with caution as factors with fewer than

Model Fit SNP: CMIN 213.16 (df 9); GFI .992; NFI .978; CFI .979; RMSEA .056 (LO .050 – HI .63) P < .001
Model Fit FNP: CMIN 38.48 (df 9); GFI .981; NFI .963; CFI .971; RMSEA .075 (LO .052 – HI .101) P < .001
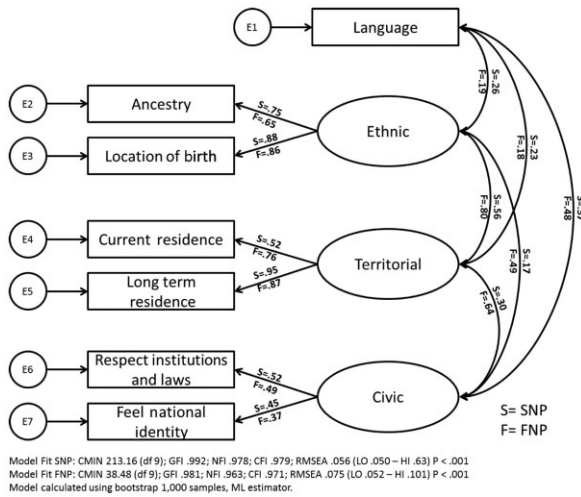Model calculated using bootstrap 1,000 samples, ML estimator.

Figure 2. Multidimensional model national identity.

three items can be considered unstable (Kline 1998). As there is only one cultural variable – language – there is no latent construct for this dimension in the model.

In the model, all the dimensions are also intercorrelated. Both models are recursive with a sample size of 7,112 (df 9) for the SNP and 579 (df 9) for the FNP. The global fit indices indicate that for both the SNP and FNP, the model can be considered a good fit of the data (Figure 2). Although the model fits the SNP data slightly better than is the case for the FNP, in both cases all global fit indices are considerably better for the multidimensional model than they are for the binary model. In fact, all indices indicate that the models are a good to very good fit of the data. As said, global fit indices alone are not enough to judge whether a theoretical model fits empirically. It is when the models are considered in more detail that the complex relations between LVs and variables become apparent. In the SNP's case, the civic dimensions is fairly weak, and the variables that load on to it have low regression weights.[14] The same can be said for the FNP's civic dimension. However, for both the SNP and FNP, the model contains two dimensions that have two variables with regression scores > .6 (ethnic). For both parties, the civic dimension shows positive correlations scores with the other dimensions. The intercorrelation scores reinforce the uncertainty about the strength and independence of these dimensions. As noted above, if different dimensions of national identity were prioritised by different groups, the intercorrelation scores between these groups would be low or negative. The positive intercorrelation scores confirm that also in a multidimensional model, members use variables non-competitively.

In case of the SNP, the language variable demonstrates strong intercorrelations with particularly the civic dimension perhaps suggesting that party members regard language as a minimum requirement for being part of the civic nation. The correlation between the civic and ethnic dimension – the most inclusive and exclusive dimension – is particularly low in the case of the SNP. These relatively low intercorrelation scores are significant in that they indicate that despite all the problems the model faces these dimensions are relatively distinctive constructs and that there is merit in distinguishing between these two different dimensions of national identity once the whole concept has been unpacked.

The FNP results show an even more complex picture. Language (culture) exhibits a high intercorrelation with the civic construct which, similarly to the SNP's case, can perhaps also be explained in that language can be interpreted as the minimum requirement for civic participation. The territorial dimension has a high intercorrelation with both civic and ethnic dimensions, but the construct itself is strong. The intercorrelation between 'civic' and 'ethnic' dimensions is higher than in the SNP, indicating that FNP members find the civic and ethnic dimensions more compatible than SNP members do.

Closer inspection of the modification indices show that, were ancestry and feeling Frisian allowed to correlate, this would improve the model, which could be indicative of the following linkage; in order to feel Frisian one would need to have Frisian ancestors. A possible explanation for this could be that as many Frisians live outside Friesland and further afield, a stronger emphasis on ancestral links would include this Frisian diaspora as fellow nationals. Such an emphasis on ancestral links can be of considerable benefit to the Frisian case, as the 'indigenous' Frisian population is smaller than in the Scottish case and therefore the inclusion of ancestry makes the nation more viable. Overall, there seems to be less ground to distinguish between groups of members that define national identity along inclusive/civic and exclusive/ethnic lines in the FNP than in the SNP. However, it is not completely without merit.

In order to understand whether the models are similar across the two parties or whether they are country/party specific a multi-group analysis was carried out in which the SNP and FNP membership results were compared. Table 4 provides the unstandardised regression weights for the model as well as the associated P value. The regression weight for each of the LV in the prediction of the OV is significantly different from 0.001. The critical ratios (z-scores) can be used to calculate significant differences between groups on each of the path of interest (Byrne 2010). The significant z-scores – either at the .05 or .01 level – indicate a significant difference between the groups for that path. Thus for the FNP the effect of birth and in particular ancestry on the ethnic dimension is weaker than is the case for the SNP. The effect of current residence on the territorial variable is stronger in the FNP when compared with the SNP, whereas the long-term residence variable is weaker. All in all, based on these data, it can be concluded that constructs of conceptions of identity are not analogous across groups.

Table 4. *Multigroup model*

			SNP		*FNP*		
OV		*LV*	*Estimate*	P	*Estimate*	P	*z-score*
Birth	←	Ethnic	0.900	0.000	0.811	0.000	−2.15*
Ancestry	←	Ethnic	0.746	0.000	0.551	0.000	−5.247**
Feeling ID	←	Civic	0.244	0.000	0.190	0.000	−1.7
Respect inst.	←	Civic	0.342	0.000	0.369	0.000	0.516
Living now	←	Territorial	0.458	0.000	0.706	0.000	6.567**
Living long term	←	Territorial	0.853	0.000	0.760	0.000	−2.546*

Noes: **P-value < 0.01; *P-value < 0.05.
Estimates are unstandardised regression weights.

Conclusion

Most people give little thought to the meaning of their national identity (McCrone and Bechhofer 2010) and regard it as self-evident and banal (Billig 1995). However, once we scratch the surface the contradictions and ambiguities become apparent, making a consistent theory that can be empirically operationalised challenging. The aim of this study is to explore the complex nature of national identity. It sets out to develop a multidimensional model of national identity that aims to capture implicit understandings of national identity. Drawing from a range of other studies (Björklund 2006; Brown 1999; Jones and Smith 2001; Kaufmann and Zimmer 2004; Krejči and Velímský 1981, 1996; Shulman 2002), the model identifies four dimensions – ethnic, cultural, territorial and civic – of national identity. As such the article contributes to a well-established literature that challenges binary models.

The empirical part of this paper operationalises the model using data from two autonomist party membership surveys – the SNP and FNP – and demonstrates that a multidimensional model is a more accurate fit to the data than a binary model. The results show that the four dimensions are non-competitively related to each other. Furthermore, it recognises that the interpretations of the characteristics that form the basis of a national identity as well as the linkages that are made between the different characteristics are contextual and likely to vary from group to group.

Nevertheless, some generalisations can be made. For one, the dimensions in the multidimensional model are fairly stable, at least in comparison with a binary model. Moreover, the results seem to suggest that it is helpful to think of national identity as consisting of 'layers', a base layer that is made up of criteria on which almost everybody agrees. For the SNP, the base layer is clearly civic as is the case for the FNP, but in the latter case language also forms a base layer. These base layers can be 'topped up' with other dimensions that are less universally supported. Most significantly, in both the SNP and the FNP, there are a considerable number of members that are willing to also

include and ethnic dimension. This finding does not strictly support a binary model, as it does not pitch civic against ethnic per se; instead the division is made between those who include ethnic aspects and those that do not. That said, at least in the SNP's case, a fairly clear distinction between the 'unpacked' civic and ethnic dimension can be made. For the FNP, it is more difficult to speak of distinct groups.

These findings lead to a number of further research questions. First, further research could involve an examination of the incongruities between implicit and explicit understandings of national identity. The model is empirically tested using membership data from two civic autonomist parties: the SNP and FNP. However, a considerable number of members consider ethnic type of variables to be part of their conception of national identity. Such a finding raises interesting questions about to what degree there is coherence between the implicit and explicit formulation of national identities in these parties. Both the SNP and FNP are self-styled civic autonomist parties and – especially in case of the SNP – are generally recognised as such in the scholarly literature (Hearn 2000: 59–66; Keating 1996: 694; McCrone 1998; Mitchell 2008). Although the findings do not question the explicitly formulated inclusive nature of national identity that are strongly supported in party manifestos and policy statements, it does raise questions about whether they concord the views of at least some of their members.

Second, in order to assess the impact of including different dimensions in a person's understanding of national identity in more normative terms, further research could explore how different dimensions relate to attitudes in certain policy areas. Here we can think of policy areas that relate to attitudes towards 'outsiders'. Evidently, one the most obvious avenues for enquiry would be attitudes towards immigrants and minorities. This line of enquiry has also previously been followed by a number of scholars (Bechhofer and McCrone 2009; Brubaker 1992; Hussain and Miller 2006) but not in relation to autonomist parties. For these parties, immigration and minorities can be a particularly precarious topic, precisely because of the negative linkages that can be made to ethnic conceptions of nationalism.

Another example of a possible field of enquiry is the relation between different dimensions of national identity and attitudes towards European integration that can also tell us to what extent different conceptions of national identity lead to inward or outward looking positions. Particularly in the case of parties that have secessionist goals – as is the case in the SNP – such research would be highly relevant. Recent research has demonstrated the importance of Scottish national identity in terms of attitudes towards the European integration and how this could impact attitudes towards independence (Henderson 2014). However, the research considers Scottish identity as a homogeneous concept rather than recognising the different dimensions outlined in this article, applying the latter approach could provide valuable insights in terms of which conceptions of Scottishness are positively or negatively linked to the idea of European integration.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1 These criteria are used to measure cross country differences of national identity in the International Social Survey Programme. However, numerous other variables can be identified including race, religion, views on autonomy, political rights, other specific cultural features such as myths and references to history, and many more.

2 It should be noted that the criteria that make-up the dimensions can be extended. For example, the ethnic dimensions could include race; the cultural dimensions could include traditions and historical knowledge; etc.

3 At the time of survey the membership was around 15,000.

4 At the time of surveying the membership was around 1,200.

5 Consisting of Scotland, Flanders, Basque Country, Catalonia and Wales.

6 Usually federalism, con-federalism or Independence.

7 It is precisely because of this diverse nature that some authors do not regard the autonomist parties as a family.

8 For full details, see Mitchell et al. (2012).

9 For full details, see van der Zwet (2011).

10 For more information on the methodology, please refer van der Zwet (2011).

11 One possible explanation for such high scores in all categories is that there is a positive bias. Since all subjects were members of autonomist parties, there is a strong incentive to define national identities in the broadest and strongest terms possible, including as many characteristics as possible.

12 Particularly when we consider the possible positive bias that applies to members of autonomist parties.

13 An LV structure with three OVs is desirable as it is considered more stable. However, due to data limitations, this is not possible.

14 Regression scores >.6 are generally considered good loading variables.

References

Anderson, B. 1996. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* Revised edn. London: Verso.

Bechhofer, F. and McCrone, D. 2009. *National Identity, Nationalism and Constitutional Change.* Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan.

Billig, M. 1995. *Banal Nationalism.* London: Sage.

Björklund, F. 2006. 'The East European "ethnic nation" – myth or reality?', *European Journal of Political Research* 45: 91–121.

Brown, D. 1999. 'Are there good and bad nationalisms?', *Nations and Nationalism* 5, 2: 281–302.

Brubaker, R. 1992. *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brubaker, R. 1996. 'Civic and ethnic nations in France and Germany' in J. Hutchinson and A. D. Smith (eds.), *Ethnicity*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.

Brubaker, R. 1998. 'Myths and misconceptions in the study of nationalism' in J. Hall (ed.), *The State of the Nation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Brubaker, R. 2004. *Ethnicity without Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryant, C. G. A. 2002. 'Either German or Czech: fixing nationality in Bohemia and Moravia 1939–1946', *Slavic Review* 61, 4: 383–706.

Byrne, B. 2010. *Structural Equation Modelling with Amos, Basic Concepts, Applications and Programming*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Chatterjee, P. 1993. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

FNP-haadbestjoer. 1988. *Mei de FNP de takomst treast*. Available in the FNP archive Ljouwert.

Gellner, E. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Glasgow Herald. 1999. Freeing Ourselves from Inner Exile, 6 March 1999.

Greenfeld, L. 1993. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Guibernau, M. 2007. *The Identity of Nations*. London: Routledge.

Hearn, J. 2000. *Claiming Scotland*. Edinburgh: Polygon.

Hemminga, P. 2006. 'The Fryske Nasjonale Partij: Frisian and federal in the Netherlands' in L. De Winter et al. (eds.), *Autonomist Parties in Europe: Identity Politics and the Revival of the Territorial Cleavage*. Barcelona: Institut de Cičncies Polítiques i Socials.

Henderson, A. 2014. 'National Identity Plays a Key Role in Voters' Views on Europe'. http://www.futureukandscotland.ac.uk/sites/default/files/news/nationalidentity_0414.pdf

Hepburn, E. 2009. 'Regionalist party mobilisation on immigration', *West European Politics* 32, 3: 514–35.

Hjerm, M. 1998. 'National identity, national pride and xenophobia: a comparison in four western countries', *Acta Sociologica* 41, 4: 335–47.

Hussain, A. and Miller, W. 2006. *Multicultural Nationalism, Islamophobia, Anglophobia and Devolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hutchinson, J. 1987. *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism, the Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation*. London: Allen and Unwin.

Ignatieff, M. 1993. *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. New York: Farrar.

Jones, F. and Smith, P. 2001. 'Diversity and commonality in national identities: an exploratory analysis of cross-national patterns', *Journal of Sociology* 37, 1: 45–63.

Kaufmann, E. and Zimmer, O. 2004. 'Dominant ethnicity and the "ethnic–civic" dichotomy in the work of A.D. Smith', *Nations and Nationalism* 10, 1–2: 63–78.

Keating, M. 1996. *Nations Against the State: the New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia, and Scotland*. Basingstoke: MacMillan Press.

Keating, M. 1997. 'Stateless nation-building: Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland in the changing state system', *Nations and Nationalism* 3, 4: 689–717.

Kellas, J. 1998. *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*. Basingstoke: MacMillan.

Kiely, R. and Bechhofer, F. 2005. 'Birth, blood and belonging in post-devolution Scotland', *The Sociological Review* 53, 1: 150–71.

Kline, R. B. 1998. *Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling*. New York: Guilford Press.

Kohn, H. [1944] 2005. *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background*. New York: MacMillan.

Krejči, J. and Velímský, V. [1981] 1996. 'Ethnic and political nations in Europe' in J. Hutchinson and A. D. Smith (eds.), *Ethnicity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kuzio, T. 2002. 'The myth of the civic state: a critical survey of Hans Kohn's framework for understanding nationalism', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25, 1: 20–39.

Kymlicka, W. (ed.). 1999. *Misunderstanding Nationalism*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

McCrone, D. 1998. *The Sociology of Nationalism*. London: Routledge.

McCrone, D. and Bechhofer, F. 2010. 'Claiming national identity', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33, 6: 921–48.

Meinecke, F. [1907] 1970. *Cosmopolitism and the National State*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mitchell, J. 2008. 'Myths Shattered about SNP Membership', Holyrood Magazine.

Mitchell, J. et al. 2012. *The Scottish National Party, Transition to Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nieguth, T. 1999. 'Beyond dichotomy: concepts of the nation and the distribution of membership', *Nations and Nationalism* 5: 155–73.

Nielsen, K. 1999. 'Cultural nationalism neither ethnic nor civic' in R. Beiner (ed.), *Theorizing Nationalism*. Albany, NY: State of New York Press.

Plamenatz, J. (ed.). 1975. 'Two types of nationalism' in Kamenka, E. (ed.), *Nationalism, the Nature and Evolution of an Idea*. London: Edward Arnold.

Reeskens, T. I. M. and Hooghe, M. 2010. 'Beyond the civic–ethnic dichotomy: investigating the structure of citizenship concepts across thirty-three countries', *Nations and Nationalism* 16, 4: 579–97.

Renan, E. [1882] 1996. 'What is the nation?' in S. Woolf (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe 1815 to the Present*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Scottish Government 2013. 'Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland'. http://82.113.138.107/00439021.pdf

Shulman, S. 2002. 'Challenging the civic/ethnic and West/East dichotomies in the study of nationalism', *Comparative Political Analysis* 35: 554–85.

Smith, A. 1986. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Smith, A. 1991. *National Identity*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.

Smith, A. 2005. 'Civic and ethnic nationalism' in P. Spencer and H. Wollman (eds.), *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Thomson, B. 2004. *Exploratory and Confirm Factor Analysis, Understanding the Concepts and Application*. Washington, DC: American Psychology Association.

Triandafyllidou, A. 1998. 'National identity and the "other" ', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, 4: 593–612.

van der Zwet, A. 2011. A comparison of Civic and Ethnic National Identities in the Scottish National Party and Frisian National Party and their Impact on Attitudes towards European Integration, Immigration and Multiculturalism. PhD Thesis, University of Strathclyde.

van der Zwet, A. 2012. To see ourselves as others see us: Nationalism and attitudes towards 'others' in the Scottish National Party and Frisian National Party. CRONEM 2012. University of Surrey.

Wright, S. 2008. 'Citizenship tests in Europe – editorial introduction', *International Journal on Multicultural Societies* 10, 1: 1–9.

Yack, B. 1999. 'The myth of the civic nation' in R. Beiner (ed.), *Theorizing Nationalism*. Albany, NY: State of New York Press.