

**University-Based Approaches for Developing Students' Cultural
Competences: A Review of Recent Empirical Studies**

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The rapid increase of globalization processes resulted in record numbers of individuals who have been socialized in different cultures working with each other on a daily basis. The need for greater understanding of cross-cultural dynamics lead to a proliferation of teaching and educational activities world-wide where business schools and companies sought to respond to the training demands of present and future expatriates.

Following globally increased workforce immigration and mobility, organizations have been increasingly recognizing that intercultural competence is crucial for high performance in domestic environments. At the same time, many universities experienced rapid growth of undergraduate and postgraduate Cross-Cultural Management (CCM) courses, with the explicit or implicit aims of increasing students' intercultural competences.

This growth in CCM educational activities brought about a plethora of approaches to teaching CCM in business schools and spurred many discussions and debates on what approach should be taken. Such debates have also a strong applied aspect: as management academics, it is our responsibility to assess the relative efficacy of various CCM approaches and to use evidence-based management as the basis for academic programs' evaluation.

An important development in the area of cultural competence was the establishment of the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) concept (Earley & Ng, 2006; Thomas & Inkson, 2004). The development of valid and reliable CQ measures several years

ago enabled the CCM competences research field to make a significant step forward and we saw a growth in empirical studies using CQ as the criterion for evaluating effectiveness of cross-cultural learning. Most studies on CQ use the CQS (Ang et al., 2007), which is a theoretically anchored self-report measure based on the work of Ang, Van Dyne and their colleagues. CQ includes four related but distinct dimensions: Metacognitive, Cognitive, Motivational and Behavioural.

The present paper describes and synthesizes recent empirical studies, which examined the impact of various educational processes on business students' cultural competences, focusing on examining impacts on CQ. Findings indicate that, overall, university CCM courses can increase students' CQ. However, studies pointed out to moderating, mediating and differential effects of training and teaching on CQ.

Reviewing the studies indicate that the impact of traditional class-based academic courses is more pronounced on the cognitive and metacognitive CQ dimensions than on the motivational and behavioural CQ dimensions (Eisenberg et al., 2011; Van Dyne et al., 2008). On the other hand, academic training that emphasizes experiential learning approaches tend to impact more behavioural and motivational dimensions (MacNab, 2012; Van Dyne et al., 2008).

We also learn that both longer as well as short-term intensive CCM courses can positively impact students' CQ (Eisenberg et al., in press) and, furthermore, this CQ gain lasts after the intervention ended for at least half a year (Erez et al., 2013).

Preliminary findings suggest that some students may benefit more than others from CCM courses: Eisenberg et al. (2013) reported that less internationally experienced students gained significantly more in CQ change, following CCM

courses, compared to their peers who had more experience of living abroad when taking the courses.

MacNab, Rosenblatt, and Worthley (2012) investigated how experiential learning elements of CCM interventions affect CQ and found several moderating and mediating variables. They found that contact type during the educational program was indirectly related to increases in CQ. Specifically, changes in students' stereotype awareness lead to increases in metacognitive CQ while increases in stereotype alteration affected behavioural and motivational CQ.

Lastly, a recent theme in cross-cultural teams' research is the impact of virtual and geographically dispersed settings on teams' processes and performance. We learned that working in multi-country virtual student collaboration team project lead to significant learning gains at the cognitive and attitudinal levels, as assessed through CQ and course assignments, as well as improved performance (Taras & Sarala, 2013). Moreover, Erez et al. (2013) investigated the effects of participating in a month-long project where graduate business students worked on joint projects in 312 virtual multicultural teams. Results revealed that the multicultural team project increased participants' cultural intelligence and global identity when teams experienced moderate to high trust levels, but not when trust was low.

The presentation concludes with recommendations on how to design educational and learning interventions in order to increase students' cultural competence.

References are available on request from the author.