Cultural Intelligence (CQ) in Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni: an exploratory study on the levels and antecedents of CQ

Introduction

1. Differences in the Ages of respondents vary between 22 and 74 years old (mode = 53 years and mean = 43.4 years; standard deviation = 10.5); most of respondents are mainly required to have international experience rather than nationality or training. However, open-end replies provided us with a deeper insight on why training seems to be so ineffective in developing CQ. This is a longitudinal study that uses self-reporting measures; also, questionnaire were conducted in English, which was not the mother tongue of most of the respondents. This work is consistent with the CQ literature, however we argue that training mentioned by respondents systematically fails to meet some of the literature's functional conditions for effective CQ training and provide clues for the implementation of more successful initiatives. With an exceptionally diverse sample, this study contributes to the understanding of mechanisms of developing CQ among EMM and international students. Results can be useful for selection process, training/development of CQ and reducing diaspora flows.

Sample

The present study is based on a sample of 626 participants from 108 different countries, encompassing 6 continents. Age of respondents only varies between 12 and 76 years old (mean = 43.4 years; standard deviation = 10.5); most of respondents are mainly required to have international experience rather than nationality or training. However, open-end replies provided us with a deeper insight on why training seems to be so ineffective in developing CQ. This is a longitudinal study that uses self-reporting measures; also, questionnaire were conducted in English, which was not the mother tongue of most of the respondents. This work is consistent with the CQ literature, however we argue that training mentioned by respondents systematically fails to meet some of the literature's functional conditions for effective CQ training and provide clues for the implementation of more successful initiatives. With an exceptionally diverse sample, this study contributes to the understanding of mechanisms of developing CQ among EMM and international students. Results can be useful for selection process, training/development of CQ and reducing diaspora flows.

Analysis

Data analysis was performed using SPSS-15. The analysis included Pearson’s correlation, ANOVA, T-tests, and GM procedures. In this study we are mainly interested in getting a general glimpse of the levels of CQ in Erasmus Mundus Students and reducing the influence of demographic variables in this sample.

Results

The following results compared in non significant results. There were no statistically significant findings reported in this study between:

- Males and females
- Subjects with and without prior training in intercultural competences
- Subjects with and without assistance in intercultural issues during the master course
- Subjects with and without classimates from the same country as them.

Like many models of CQ, it is multidimensional construct, with 6 dimensions and is an add-on to the construct development. In a recent meta-analysis of CQ, Van Dyne proposed a scale that intends to capture the self-rated ability to perform and adapt with different cultural contexts and therefore has much potential as a diagnostic tool for intercultural success (Hall and Henman 2006).

The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) is a 3-train instrument that uses a 7-point Likert type scale and subjects respond whether or not the items statements describe how they are, for example, in a set of items that are included in this tool. This is a short version before intercultural success, checking assumptions during an newcomer, and adjusting mental maps when new situations differ expectancies.

CQ: Knowledge or Cognition is a person’s understanding of how cultures are similar and how cultures are different. It reflects general knowledge structures and mental models about culture. It includes knowledge about economic and legal systems, norms for social interaction, religious beliefs, aesthetic values, and language in different cultures.

CQ: Motivation is a person’s interest in experiencing other cultures and interacting with people from different cultures. Multidimensional CQ is magnitude and direction of energy applied to learning about and functioning in cross-cultural situations. It includes the intensity with which people plan on culturally diverse interactions as well as their sense of confidence that they can function effectively in settings characterized by cultural diversity.

CQ: Behavior is a person’s capability to adopt verbal and nonverbal behavior so as to be appropriate for different cultures. Includes having a flexible repertoire of behaviors that are appropriate in a variety of situations and having the capability to modify both verbal and nonverbal behavior based on these involved in a specific interaction or in a particular setting.

Discussion & Conclusions

In this exploratory study we have found that gender and previous training do not seem to influence CQ; whether or not the subject have others from their own country in their master programs seems not to make a difference in this aspect as well. However, CQ seems to be associated with age, especially in terms of CQ strategy, and behavior, whereby older respondents tend to exhibit higher CQ. As one would expect, students that have a preference for dealing with others from their own culture report lower CQ motivation. Using in another country prior to the EM experience seems to be positively related with CQ, globally and especially CQ strategy. The EM experience seems to affect all dimensions of CQ positively except motivation which remains unchanged. These findings suggest that the EM experience has an impact on CQ, more than simply living abroad. We argue that training mentioned by respondents systematically fails to meet some of the literature’s functional conditions for effective CQ training, namely the use of specific situations that subjects are facing as well as a longer accomplishment of subjects so as to help them integrate their experience with the knowledge acquired in training. With an exceptionally diverse sample, this study contributes to the understanding of mechanisms of developing CQ among EMM and international students. Results can be useful for selection process, training/development of CQ and reducing diaspora flows.

References