

**CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT  
AMONG FOREIGN ENGLISH TEACHERS IN NEW ORIENTAL  
EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY**

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To my parents, Cui Xiling, Yan Ying who love me, believe in me, inspire me and have supported me every step of the way.

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## ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to identify the relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) among foreign English teachers in New Oriental Education & Technology Group (New Oriental). Cultural Intelligence includes meta-cognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ and behavioral CQ that are independent variables of this study. The dependent variable is Cross-cultural Adjustment. In this study, survey method was used to collect the data. A total of 155 foreign English teachers from New Oriental answered the online questionnaire that consist of Cultural Intelligence Scales (CQS) and Cross-cultural Adjustment Scales (CCAS). Mean, standard deviation, Pearson Correlation, Multiple Regression are applied to analyse data. Findings shows that foreign English teachers at New Oriental have moderate level of CQ and CCA. The finding of this study indicated that there were positive relationship between each dimension of CQ and CCA. All dimensions of CQ can predict CCA; nevertheless motivational CQ is the most significant predictor to CCA. Meanwhile, this study suggests the organization that consider CQ into their employees' selection and training, and suggest foreign English teacher to improve their CCA through enhance CQ.

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti hubungan antara kecerdasan budaya (CQ) dan kesesuaian silang budaya (CCA) dalam kalangan guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris asing di Pusat Pendidikan dan Kumpulan Teknologi New Oriental. Kecerdasan budaya terdiri daripada meta-kognitif CQ, kognitif CQ, motivasi CQ dan tingkah laku CQ yang berupa pembolehubah bebas dalam kajian. Pembolehubah bersandar adalah penyesuaian silang budaya. Dalam kajian ini, kaedah soal selidik telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data. Sejumlah 155 guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris asing daripada New Oriental menjawab soal kaji selidik atas talian secara sukarela. Soalselidik kajian mengandungi soalselidik skala kecerdasan budaya (CQS) dan skala kesesuaian silang budaya (CCAS). Min, sisihan piawai, korelasi Pearson dan regresi berganda telah diaplikasikan untuk tujuan analisis data. Dapatan menunjukkan, guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris asing di New Oriental berada pada tahap sederhana bagi CQ dan CCA. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa setiap dimensi CQ mempunyai hubungan positif dengan CCA. Semua dimensi CQ boleh digunakan untuk meramal CCA manakala motivasi CQ adalah peramal yang paling ketara terhadap CCA. Di samping itu, kajian ini mencadangkan organisasi supaya mengambil kira faktor CQ dalam kriteria pemilihan pekerja dan latihan kepada pekerja agar guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris asing boleh meningkatkan CCA mereka melalui peningkatan CQ.

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**LIST OF SMYBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CQ	Cultural Intelligence
CCA	Cross-cultural Adjustment
New Oriental	New Oriental Educational & Technology Group
$R^2$	R Square
R	Pearson Correlation
P	Significant
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the introduction of the study briefly from the background, problem statement, research question, objective, scope, significant, and limitation of study. Last but not least, the conceptual definition and operational definition proposed are also included to support this study.

#### **1.2 Background**

The prevalence of cross-cultural interactions on economic, political and social are significantly increases on workforce recently. The overseas business trip, overseas assignments and overseas study facilitate the cross-cultural encounter (Black and Mendenhall, 1990). Once people encounter the unfamiliar environment, they face the difficult in the cultural diversity situation. There are certain behavior,

attitude and value cannot be allowed in their original culture will be allowed in the new culture. Meanwhile, certain behavior, attitude and value may be allowed in the original culture can not be accepted in host country (Black and Gregersen, 1991; Chen et al., 2011). People always feel difficulty in the unconversant background caused by difference between host country and original country on the culture, language, and social system. The insufficient knowledge, communication and awareness of cultural difference lead to lots of cross-cultural misunderstandings and conflicts (Brislin, et al., 2006; Triandis, 2006).

To reduce the conflicts and misunderstanding, people must have the awareness of cultural difference and improve the competence to communicate with people who from different culture. Namely, people who adjust better on the difference have the better ability to adjust the environment with cultural diversity. Although, there has been significant increased on research of cross-cultural adjustment, most of the researchers targeted the business people, overseas students, immigrants and tourists as their research samples (Black and Stephens, 1989; Black et al., 1991; Ward et al., 2001). The research on teachers is limited, thus, research should be encouraged on this population.

The demand of learning English are increasing in China due to the globalization. The native English speakers have an extra advantage on teaching spoken English compared to Chinese English teachers. Thus, the demand for foreign English teacher has been growing fast. But most foreign teachers came to China without any experience or knowledge on Eastern culture. They may have some problems on communicating with Chinese people, and this situation may make the foreign English teachers disappointed, anxious and even reject the host culture. Obviously, the foreign English teachers have to face the cross-cultural situation if

they plan to work and live in China. They need to improve their competence on adjustment, communication and understanding of Chinese culture. This is to help them to understand and cope with the conflict in the workplace and society, as well as adapt well in the Chinese cultural environment.

Increasing people's cultural intelligence may elevate their ability on adjustment of work and life, communication with local people, and their capability to adjust the normal conditions in the cultural diversity setting (Lin et al., 2012). The previous researches showed that individual difference might influence the cross-cultural adjustment, such as gender, age, prior experience on host country, language competence and personality (Hechanova et al., 2003; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Ang et al., 2006).

However, there are limited researches on the effect of personal ability on the cross-cultural situation which lead the question that different people have different ability to adjust in cultural diversity setting (Ang et al., 2007; Gabel et al., 2005). Cultural intelligence (CQ) was recognized as crucial and significant factor on cross-cultural effectiveness (Ang et al., 2007; Kumar et al., 2008; Moon, 2010; Ward et al., 2009). Recently, researcher indicated that people who have a higher level of CQ from their original country could not definitely adjust to the culture is different from their own, although they have the chance that adjust the different culture better than people who have lower level of CQ from their original country (Moon, 2010). It is reasonable to propose that CQ might have a significant effect on cross-cultural adjustment (CCA). Therefore, the focus of this study is to explore the relationship between cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment.

### 1.3 Problem Statement

The issue of adjustment for foreign teachers was highlighted by their poor performance and high rate of demission (Yi, 2007). Some of foreign teachers could work only few months in institution, but some of them could work a long time.

With increasing numbers of foreigners working in China, the problem of adjustment was evident among foreigners, due to more and more foreigners quit their job and leave China (Yi, 2007). The high rate demission of foreign English teachers causes organizational loss from both resource and money. Thus, the issue of high rate of demission should be solved.

The divergence of teaching method between foreign English teachers and Chinese English teachers is difficult to manage which is another issue (Lin, 2005). Foreign English teachers think that teaching material is vital in the teaching method. However, Chinese English teacher merely follow the material from the school. For foreign English teachers, their teachings are more flexible, interesting, diverse and able to attract the attention from the students. In terms of materials and teaching method, Chinese teachers are little out of data, which is more inflexible (Yu et al., 2006). Thus, the relationship between Chinese English teacher and foreign English teachers are intense (Yu et al., 2006).

The huge culture difference between China and Western countries may contribute to the high rate of demission and low rate of adaption among the foreign teachers. From the Hofstede's cultural dimensions, China has been categorized as low in the dimension of individualism (20), high power distance (80) (Kaye and Taylor, 1997; Chinta and Capar, 2007; Hofstede, 2001), highest in long-term orientation (118) (Hofstede, 2001; Lee and Dawes, 2005), medium level of masculinity and femininity (66), and low level of uncertainty avoidance (30) (Hofstede, 2001). But, Western countries are higher than China in dimension of individualism, uncertain avoidance, and lower in power distance and long-term orientation. Thus, the huge cultural differences provide difficult to expatriates (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 1984; Hofstede, 2001).

Insufficient cross-cultural experience makes foreigners to become stressful to deal with cultural difference, unfamiliar living conditions and communication with Chinese people. The limited knowledge on a series of information on China, such as Chinese society, legal and economy system make them feel even more difficult to understand the Chinese people.

The latest concept of cultural intelligence (CQ) is referred to an individual's ability to interact effectively in culturally diverse situation (Earley and Ang, 2003). In the cross-cultural background, CQ was believed to predict the effectiveness of cross-cultural adjustment to a certain degree. People with high level of CQ might have better ability to deal with the unfamiliar information and interact with people from different cultural background. Thus people with better CQ are flexible in cross-cultural adjustment (Earley and Ang, 2003).

Based on Four-Factor model of cultural intelligence, cultural intelligence (CQ) is a multi-dimensional concept that could be divided into four factors, which are meta-cognitive, CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioural CQ (Earley and Ang, 2003). There is a few researches reported that the dimension of CQ have significant relation with cross-cultural adjustment (Ang et al., 2004. Earley and Peterson, 2004).

Based on the problem and gaps stated above, this study intends to explore the relationship of cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on the problem statement, the aim of this research is to explore the relationship between cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment, and this may be achieved through the following research question:

1. What is the level of Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA) among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China?
2. What is the level of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China?

3. What is the relationship between Meta-cognitive CQ and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China ?
4. What is the relationship between Cognitive CQ and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China?
5. What is the relationship between Motivational CQ and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China?
6. What is the relationship between behavioral CQ and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China?
7. Are there four dimensions of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) as predictor to Cross-cultural Adjustment (CCA) among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China?

### **1.5 Objectives**

In addressing the underlying issues in this study, the following objectives are:

1. To find out the level of Cross-cultural Adjustment (CCA) among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China.
2. To find out the level of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China.
3. To identify the relationship between Meta-cognitive CQ and Cross-cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China.
4. To identify the relationship between Cognitive CQ on Cross-cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China.
5. To identify the relationship between Motivational CQ and Cross-cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China.
6. To identify the relationship between Behavioral CQ and Cross-cultural Adjustment among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China.
7. To identify whether four dimensions of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) as predictor to Cross-cultural Adjustment (CCA) among foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental in China.



## 1.6 Scope of the Study

In this study, the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) includes meta-cognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ and behavioral CQ were measured by Cultural Intelligence Scales (CQS) (Ang et al., 2007). Cross-cultural Adjustment (CCA) in this study was measured by Cross-cultural Adjustment Scales (CCAS) (Black and Stephens, 1989).

This study focuses on the relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Cross-cultural Adjustment (CCA) among foreign English teachers in New Oriental Education & Technology Group in China. The respondents of this study are foreign English teachers who work in New Oriental Education & Technology (New Oriental) in China.

New Oriental as the unique research organization in this study has important position in private educational organization in China, especially in the English training field of China. It is the largest educational service in China, which was established in 1993, until 2012 New Oriental has 55 schools in 49 cities, more than 600 learning centers, and had around 15 million student and 17,700 teachers. New Oriental provides lifelong learning, from POP kids English (age4-12) to adult English, like listening and oral English, including the vocational training, and overseas test, such as IELTS, BET, GRE, GMAT, and TOEFL. The organization provides the professional and comprehensive English education.

## 1.7 Significant of Study

Most of the university departments and English institutions in China in an ongoing trend recruit foreign professionals to teach English (Chang, 2006). Limited knowledge is known about the adjustment problems experienced in China among foreign professionals and the knowledge that they need to acquire in order to be successful. It is the responsibility of these universities and institutions to help these teachers to adapt well in an unfamiliar cultural setting.

The result of this study provided the greatly significant mean to the foreign teachers who work in China, the Chinese government and educational company and the home countries of the foreign teachers. As suggested by Helmer and Eddy (2003) when one understands the different values and beliefs that a person has, it enhance our ability to work with learners from different cultures. Warger and Burnette (2000) believed that is important for teachers to recognize the implications of language and cultural diversity in the context of teaching and learning.

Although there are numerous researches focused on the cross-cultural adjustment, the study of relation between the foreign English teachers' cultural intelligence and their cross-cultural adjustment is still limited. The relationship between cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment among foreign English teachers can be utilized to assist China institutions to select and recruit foreign English teachers. On the other hand, it can help to identify the cultural intelligences that are important and basis for foreign professional to adapt in China. By

identifying the factors related to cross-cultural adjustment, the employers could help the foreign English teacher in China cope better with their cross-cultural issues and potentially decrease the turnover rate.

Finally, the results of the study could help cross-cultural trainers to improve their programmes and make the programmes more effective.

## **1.8 Limitations**

In this study, all respondents are from one educational organization named New Oriental Education & Technology Group (New Oriental). Thus, this study does not represent all other organization. New Oriental is a private organization which cannot represent the public organization and non-profit organization. And all respondents are foreign English teachers that as a specific group have the specific situation, which means that the result of study can only represent the foreign English teacher, cannot represent the people from other field and work in other country.

This study demonstrated limitations on its method that the questionnaire is the only method to collect data. Multiple method was suggested to study the phenomenon in multi-perspectives, and improve accurate of information.

## **1.9 Conceptual Definition**

The key variables in this study are Cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) and Cultural intelligence (CQ). Their definitions are presented as below:

### **1.9.1 Cross-cultural Adjustment**

Cross-cultural adjustment is “the individual’s affective psychological response to the new environment and its variables” (Black, 1990). Then, the cross-cultural adjustment is individual’s psychological state that can be considered from the presentation on the unfamiliar culture (Black, 1990; Searle and Ward, 1990). Cross-cultural Adjustment (CCA) also can be consider as the process of adjustment on the aspect of work and living condition in the unfamiliar environment. And it is the extent of perceived mental comfort and familiarity once face the culture on host country (Black, 1988; Black et al., 1991).

## **1.9.2 Cultural Intelligence (CQ)**

Cultural Intelligence (CQ)'s definition was proposed by Earley and Ang (2003) "individual's ability to adjust effectively to new cultural situation which is a form of situated intelligence where intelligently adaptive behaviors are culturally bound to the values and beliefs of a given society or culture" (Earley and Ang, 2003). Cultural intelligence(CQ) as a multidimensional construct comprises of meta cognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral component (Earley and Ang, 2003).

### **1.9.2.1 Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence**

Meta-cognitive CQ is defined as cultural consciousness from individual level in cross-cultural setting, and it shows psychological process in understanding knowledge of culture (Ang and Dyne, 2008). People with high level of meta-cognitive CQ usually aware the cultural difference and adjust the cross-cultural environment with positive attitude (Ang and Dyne, 2008).

### **1.9.2.2 Cognitive Cultural Intelligence**

Cognitive CQ is defined as cultural knowledge from individual level, which include the society system, such as economic system, political system, educational system, marriage system. People with higher level of cognitive CQ have better capability to communicate with people from different society system (Ang and Dyne, 2008).

### **1.9.2.3 Motivational Cultural Intelligence**

Motivational CQ is defined as the desire to adapt the environment that in cultural diversity setting, and communicate with people who from different cultural background. People who have higher level of motivational CQ have more interest and confidence in the cross-cultural interaction (Ang and Dyne, 2008).

### **1.9.2.4 Behavioral Cultural Intelligence**

Behavioral CQ is defined as capability to select the appropriate behavior which include both verbal and nonverbal action when communication with people from different cultural background. People with high level of behavioral CQ is

easier to success in interacting with people from different cultural setting (Ang and Dyne, 2008).

### **1.10 Operational Definition**

Cross-cultural Adjustment (CCA) in this study is defined as a process of adjustment from work, interaction and general aspect, when an individual cope with unfamiliar and cross-cultural environment.

Cultural intelligence (CQ) is referred to the people's ability of adjusting themselves in the cross-cultural environment, and could explain from four sub-concept, which are meta-cognitive cultural intelligence, cognitive cultural intelligence, motivational intelligence and behavioral intelligence.

Meta-cognitive CQ is higher-order mental ability to aware cultural difference. Cognitive CQ is referred to the individual's cultural knowledge in specific norms, tradition, and customs on other culture. Motivation CQ is referred to the individual's desire to interact with people from different cultural background. Behavioral CQ is referred to the people's appropriate behavior in cross-cultural interaction.

## **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter provides an orientation to the study by giving an introduction on the problem background, which leads to the problem statements. Based on the problem statement, the research questions and objectives were developed. The scope of the research was also stated with brief discussions on the significance of the study.



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