LINKING CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND ADAPTIVE PERFORMANCE: DO INTERCULTURAL INTERACTIONS AND HOST UNIVERSITY SUPPORT™ PLAY IMPORTANT ROLES?

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Abstract. Purpose: As the globalization has changed the working environment, organizations need more adaptable individuals who have the abilities to work effectively, deal with unpredictable work situations, and adapt to diverse social contexts. Individuals' international experience such as being enrolled in a study exchange program has been extensively examined as predictors of adaptive performance. In contrast, the role of cultural intelligence in promoting adaptive performance and the quality of experience itself has been overlooked. This study examined the moderating role of host university support in terms of the relationship between intercultural interactions and cultural intelligence towards adaptive performance.

Research Methodology: This study tested its hypothesis with primary data from a sample of 123 university students who have the experience of going abroad as student exchange participants. The primary data was gathered through the structured questionnaires which were sent to the respondents through e-mail, messenger, and social media. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 20 for Windows was used to analyze the data.

Findings: The regression analysis demonstrated that cultural intelligence, together with intercultural interactions and host university support, was an important predictor of adaptive performance.

Research Limitations: All of the data in this study were collected through internet or e-mail which has limited control towards the respondents' answers. Further, this study did not really consider the respondents' scope as we welcome everyone who has the experience of joining a study exchange program to participate in this research.

Practical Implications: The findings suggested the importance of cultural intelligence as a critical predictor of adaptive performance in multicultural contexts, as well as the host university support and intercultural interaction roles for the development of an individual's cultural intelligence.

Originality/Value: This study complemented the previous assumption on universities' crucial role in educating and preparing the students to be a part of the global citizens.

Keywords: cultural intelligence, adaptive performance, student exchange, intercultural interactions, Host University Support.

JEL Classification: J24, M14.

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Introduction

Going global for a firm means that the need to deal with a new environment and culture emerges. Dealing with this condition has also increased the need of the firm to appoint individuals who have the abilities to deftly work across multiple cultures to achieve organizational objectives (Lovvorn & Chen, 2011). Therefore, it forces organizations to look for individuals who have done a series of international assignments with extensive cross-cultural interactions as they are assumed to have a strong rationale for dealing with culturally different others (Yordanova, 2011).

This makes the internationally experienced graduates become highly demanded by firms to fulfil these positions and carry on a wide range of responsibilities in their respective subsidiaries (Elenkov & Manev, 2009). Going through programs such as student exchange is believed to help to prepare individuals to work effectively in a culturally diverse environment. This kind of activity can be considered as a cross-cultural training activity for students to prepare them to become global leaders (Azevedo, 2018). Through the student exchange program, students are trained to develop themselves more holistically by getting exposed to the challenges of living and working in a foreign environment (Leung, Maddux, Galinsky, & Chiu, 2008). Joining the student exchange program will benefit a student with knowledge and experiences in managing cross-cultural differences by getting exposed to the social contexts and authentic activities (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Sharma & Mulka, 1993).

Being sent abroad does not simply mean that individuals could easily get the maximum benefit from it. According to Ang, Rockstuhl, and Tan (2015), it is critical to understand why some people may success in intercultural contexts whereas others do not. Instead, the quality of experience itself which can be measured from the individuals' intensity to interact with people from another culture is the most important factor that can determine whether an individual really takes the benefit from studying abroad. According to Ng, Dyne, and Ang (2012); Solomon and Steyn (2017) approach and method: The research was qualitative in nature, comprising a systematic literature review. The period covered was from 01 January 2002 to 31 May 2015. The final number of included studies was 76, representing 48 different journals. Cultural intelligence hypotheses were identified and thematically categorised. Validated hypotheses constituted truths (i.e. truth statements, the amount of time spent interacting with people from other cultures during the program is critical for the development of the individuals' cultural intelligence. Simultaneously, cultural intelligence (CQ), defined as an individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse contexts (Ang, Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Ng, Dyne, & Ang, 2009b), will play a central role for individuals to help them settle and work effectively in cross-cultural contexts.

Ott and Michailova (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of a number of 73 published articles from 2002 to 2015 related to CQ and showed that research interests in cultural intelligent were growing from time to time. Simultaneously, cultural intelligence (CQ), defined as an individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse contexts (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008; Earley & Ang, 2003), will play a central role for individuals to help them settle and work effectively in cross-cultural contexts. Cultural intelligence is an important skill of effective leadership within the intercultural environment (Ziyatdinova, 2017). Based on the

results of a literature review, Azevedo (2018) concluded that CQ provides many benefits to both individuals and teams in the form of psychological outcomes, behavioural outcomes and performance outcomes.

In consequence of the effort of developing CQ, the desired outcome of an individual's ability to adapt well with any kind of work environment is expected to be displayed during their real practice at the workplace. With the significant changes in today's organization, the importance of an individual's adaptive performance in the work environments has been significantly increased (Pulakos, Plamodon, & Donovan, 2000). This kind of ability is necessary and required by global firms as they need more adaptable employees who can work creatively, learn new skills, and adapt to diverse social and work environments. The CQ itself has been viewed as a critical predictor of an individual's adaptive performance in multicultural contexts (Shain & Gürbüz, 2014).

Therefore, the role of university becomes critical for supporting and preparing the individuals to be able to make positive contributions in the culturally diverse contexts (Crossman & Clarke, 2010). The existence of student exchange programs provided by the universities has received growing attention from the students. According to Solomon and Steyn (2017) approach and method: The research was qualitative in nature, comprising a systematic literature review. The period covered was from 01 January 2002 to 31 May 2015. The final number of included studies was 76, representing 48 different journals. Cultural intelligence hypotheses were identified and thematically categorised. Validated hypotheses constituted truths (i.e. truth statements, the individual opportunity to obtain international experience such as a student exchange will result in cultural intelligence on these individuals. However, While many streams of research offer the developmental perspective of international experience, only a few have directly addressed and treated the intercultural interactions as one of the most important aspects of it (Ng, Dyne, & Ang, 2012). Responding to the gap, this study addresses a question on whether or not the individual's interactions during study abroad program have an impact on the development of individual's CQ.

Moreover, there is no particular research that has assured the role of university in supporting and moderating the impact of individuals' intercultural interactions during studying abroad on their level of CQ, even though university has long been seen as a bridge for individuals to engage with the international and cultural exposures (Albach & Teichler, 2001; Williams, 2005). Besides that, this research is aimed at complementing the existing researches on exploring the ways that CQ predicts the adaptive performance. In a study done by Shain and Gürbüz (2014), researchers have examined the interactive effect of CQ and self-efficacy on adaptive performance. Based on the background above, this study has several objectives that should be fulfilled, including: (1) to find out the impact of individual's intercultural interactions when studying abroad on the development of their CQ, (2) to discover the impact of CQ on the level of individual's adaptive performance, and (3) to test the role of host university support in moderating the relationship between intercultural interactions and CQ.

1. Literature review

1.1. Intercultural Interactions and CQ

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is defined as a specific form of intelligence focused on the individual's capabilities to grasp, reason, and behave effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity (Ang et al., 2007; Thomas, 2006; Triandis, 2006). It has largely been argued that individuals with a bunch of international experience are more likely to acquire greater CQ (Ng, Dyne, & Ang, 2012). However, it is also important to note that the amount of time spent interacting with people from other cultures during the programs affected the rate of CQ development (Ng et al., 2012). Without a doubt, having frequent interactions with people from a different culture is the best method to enhance one's overall level of CQ (Yordanova, 2011). Recently, there are some researchers who have already examined the impact of intercultural contact or interactions on an individual's development of CQ. One of them, Crowne (2008) found in her study that individuals who stayed in hostels and ate with local residents developed greater CQ than those who stayed in expatriate compounds, where opportunities for contact with locals were significantly lower. Jyoti and Kour (2017) the role played by experience and perceived social support between CQ and CCA has also been assessed. Design/methodology/approach Data were collected from 342 managers working in nationalized banks in J&K (India, found that cross-cultural adjustment mediates the relationships between cultural intelligence and job performance of the sample studied.

Therefore, this study suggests that by interacting with someone from a different culture, a person can become familiar with another culture. The intercultural interaction is needed by individuals as their tool to get engaged to the other cultures. As a result, the intercultural interactions will function as a bridge to develop their ability on obtaining a new cultural understanding which will eventually lead to a higher or greater level of CQ (Crowne, 2008). Therefore, based on prior studies, this study proposed a hypothesis as follows:

H_1: Intercultural Interactions will positively influence the Individual's Cultural Intelligence.

1.2. Adaptive performance and CQ

Using CQ as the primary variable in this study, we can expect some explanations on why some individuals are more capable of coping with, adapting to and performing more effectively than others (Chen, Wallace, & Brian, 2005).

Cultural Intelligence is believed related with performance outcomes such as job performance (Azevedo, 2018; Barakat, Lorenz, Ramsey, & Cretoiu, 2017; Diemer, 2016; Jyoti & Kour, 2017; Nunes, Felix, & Prates, 2017), and Job satisfaction (Barakat et al., 2017; Diemer, 2016), effective intercultural negotiations (Azevedo, 2018), Individual creativity (Yunlu, Clapp-Smith, & Shaffer, 2017).

Adaptive performance, which is measured by the capability of individuals to display appropriate behaviours in dealing with a variety of complex and novel environments, seems conceptually relevant to CQ (Williams, 2005). A study conducted by Chen, Wallace, and Brian (2005) found that there is a positive link between CQ and adaptive performance. Another

study conducted by Oolders et al. (2008) also found that there is a positive relation between CQ and adaptive performance. Recently, a study conducted by Shain and Gürbüz (2014) had demonstrated a result that CQ offers additional explanatory power in the prediction of individuals' adaptive performance in a multicultural environment. Al Shdaifat, Ramalu, and Subramaniam (2016) found that cultural intelligence is a cross-culture competence that has an influence on the adaptive performance of military leaders. Moreover, according to Azevedo (2018), individuals with high CQ are more capable because they have a proficiency in changing one's behaviour to fit the demands of the environment or the specific situation, or in other words they have high adaptive performance. In line with the statement above, this study proposed a hypothesis as follows:

H_2: Cultural Intelligence will positively influence the level of Individual's adaptive performance.

1.3. Host University Support as a moderating variable

As the globalization has promoted the importance of university's role in preparing students to be a part of the global citizens, universities have responded to this issue clearly by providing students with chances to get their international experience (Crossman & Clarke, 2010). Universities mobilize their students to get the international experience as a means of increasing knowledge transfer and graduate "competencies" or "skills" required by the 21st century's global firms (Chan & Dimmock, 2008). With the reported impacts of international education (overseas study) as one of the best ways for individuals to get such an international experience which can develop and improve their cultural intelligence, social support such as host university support is crucial in facilitating students with the experience of being exposed to the cultural differences (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2005). Jyoti and Kour (2017) found that Social support plays an important role in affecting cultural intelligence and then will impact on job performance Conceptual Model.

Therefore, this makes the mediating role of student buddies and international lecturers in the host university become important to help initiate the intercultural interactions with the students, as well as the existence of courses provided in English and local language which acts as the media for students to interact with each other. Accordingly, this study argues that host university support is important to help initiate the intercultural interactions among the students participating in such activities like student exchange or volunteering program which as a result will help strengthen the influence of intercultural interaction in developing the individual's CQ. Therefore, this study proposed a hypothesis as follows:

H_3: Host University Support will moderate and strengthen the relationship between Intercultural interactions and the Individual's CQ.

The three hypotheses developed for this study can be described in the conceptual model Figure 1 below.

The research model above proposed that intercultural interaction will significantly be related to cultural intelligence (H_1), and then Cultural intelligence will influence adaptive performance (H_2). In this research model, Host University Support is proposed as a moderating variable in the relationship between cultural interactions and cultural intelligence.
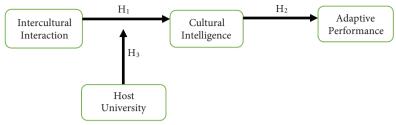
Figure 1. Conceptual research model

2. Methodology

As this study tends to be associated with analyses and to examine the relationship of each variable in terms of statistic procedure, quantitative studies with causal research design were used in this research. According to the International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences Indonesia, there are around 70.000 Indonesian students were estimated to have studied or currently studying abroad. Those Indonesian students were then chosen as this research's population. More specifically, the respondents are individuals who have the experience of joining at least one student exchange program in many countries within the last 5 years (2011–2016). Therefore, the judgmental sampling technique is used in the study. During a month of research, there were 123 respondents participated in the study.

The respondents were dominated by females (68.3%) and most respondents were currently in the age of 21–23 (69.1%), and the research was dominated by those who were still pursuing their bachelor degree on the undergraduate level (66.7%). About 79 of them (64.2%) claimed that they do their exchange programs in countries such as South Korea, Japan, China, and Taiwan. This figure was then followed by universities in the region of South East Asia (21.1%), universities in the region of Europe, Northern America and Australia (14.7 %).

There were several scales used to measure variables in this study, as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Variable measurement (source: Pulakos et al. (2000), Anderson et al. (2005), Ang et al. (2007), Crowne (2008))

Number	Variable	Scale	Σ items	Cronbach α
1	CQ	Ang et al. (2007), 20-item of CQ scale	20	0.72–0.86
2	Intercultural Interactions	Crowne (2008)	8	0.82
3	Adaptive Performance	Pulakos et al. (2000), 8-dimension taxonomy of Adaptive Performance	8	0.92–0.97
4	Host University Support	Anderson et al. (2005)	8	0.78

This study used the primary data gathered through the questionnaires which consisting of 44 structured question items with answer choices using a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaires were sent to the respondents through e-mail, messenger (Line, Kakao Talk, and Whatsapp), and social media (Facebook and Instagram) with the attachment of an application called Google form.

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 20 for Windows was used to analyze the data. Several tests are conducted in an effort to analyze the data. Those tests comprise of (1) Data validity test which including validity and reliability test, (2) Classic assumption test that aims to test the normality of data, and (3) Hypothesis test which including individual significant parameter test or T-test and simultaneous significant test or F-test.

3. Results

The result of the testing of hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 are presented in Table 2 below.

According to Table 2 above, Variable X (Intercultural Interactions) has a significance level of 0.000 and t-value 14.033. The result shows that there is a positive and significant impact on Intercultural Interactions to CQ. Based on the F-Test, it can be identified that F-value has a score of 196.93 while F-table with a probability level of 10 per cent is valued at 6.85. It means F-value is greater than F-table (196.93 > 6.85). Then, it can be seen from the table above that coefficient ß which represents the simple correlation is valued at 0.787, and it indicates a high degree of correlation. Then, the value of Adj. R square in this model summary is 0.616 or 61.9%, which means that 61.9% of the total variables in the dependent variable (CQ) can be explained by the independent variable (Intercultural Interactions). The measurement proves that Intercultural Interactions has a positive and significant impact on CQ, which indicates that the Hypotheses 1 is supported in this study.

The test of hypothesis 2 shows that coefficient ß which represents the simple correlation is valued at 0.736, and it indicates a high degree of correlation with the significance level of 0.000 and t-value of 11.968. The F-Test results in F-value with a score of 143.23, which shows F-value is greater than F-table (143.23 > 6.85). The value of adj. R square in this model summary is 0.542 or 54.2%, which means that 54.2% of the total variables in the dependent variable (Adaptive Performance) can be explained by the independent variable (CQ). The result proves that there is a positive and significant impact between CQ towards Adaptive Performance. It supports the second hypothesis (H_2) in this research which argued that CQ will positively influence the level of Individual's adaptive performance.

Hypothesis Testing for Intercultural Interactions to CQ Moderated by Host University Support shows the result as follows.

Table 2. T-Test Result for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis	Coeff ß	t Value	Sig.	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
H_1: Intercul Int → CQ	.787	14.033	.000	.616	196.93	.000
H_2: CQ → Adapt. Performance	.736	11.968	.000	.538	143.23	.000

Table 3. T-Test Result for Intercultural Interactions to CQ Moderated by Host University Support

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T Value	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Intercultural Int	.436	.196	.567	6.033	.000
Intcult x Host University Support	.531	.100	.607	9.327	.000
Adjusted R Square: 0.623					
F test: 101.947 Sig. .000					

According to Table 3 above, the result proves that there is a positive and significant impact between Intercultural Interactions to CQ moderated by Host University Support. It supports the third hypothesis (H$_3$) in this research which argued that Host University Support helps moderate and strengthen the relationship between intercultural interactions and the Individual's CQ.

4. Discussion

Being sent abroad for study means that individuals have to deal and engage in a culture that they are unfamiliar with, both in college and their daily life. Therefore, building good relations with local or foreign people is a must for them in order to survive as they are living far away from home. As time passed, they will become familiar with the products, norms, values, and assumptions of other cultures. The findings of this study indicated that intercultural interactions give a positive impact on the development of individual's CQ. It means by having frequent interaction with someone across cultures, individuals could understand better and become familiar with other cultures. Moreover, according to Solomon and Steyn (2017), experiential learning such as student exchange abroad will stimulate cultural intelligence, which based on the experiential theory, and contact theory (Kurpis & Hunter, 2016). The international experiences such as student exchange will lead to a perceived increase in cultural knowledge, motivation, and confidence in the students' ability to communicate with people from other cultures.

In short, being consistent with the existing literatures (Ng, Dyne, & Ang, 2009a; Ng, Dyne, & Ang, 2009b; Yordanova, 2011), the findings of this study provided support for an argument that proposes frequent interaction with people from different cultures as one of the best methods to enhance one's overall level of CQ. In a theory developed by Crowne (2008), intercultural interaction is believed to be needed by individuals as their tool to get engaged with other cultures.

The higher level of CQ is found to have a greater impact on the level of percentage for an individual's capability to meet the demands in the new environment. The results of this study show that an individual's level of CQ will define their ability to adapt and settle with a new working environment. That is because students who have studied abroad are believed to have a higher level of CQ which allows them to demonstrate the expertise in handling stress as they are getting used to being placed in a culturally novel environment. Exposure

to these kinds of the condition will give the chance for individuals to develop a set of skills and knowledge on how to display an appropriate behaviour when dealing with uncertainties.

This finding is then proven to be consistent with the result demonstrated by Shain and Gürbüz (2014), in which they discovered a positive link in the relationship between CQ and Adaptive Performance. The results of this study also support what Azevedo (2018) said, that CQ has an effect on performance outcomes. This is because someone who has CQ is able to adapt to a new culture and atmosphere that can ultimately improve their performance (Nunes et al., 2017).

It is discovered that individuals with high CQ are able to adjust their behaviour appropriately when working with different people. The significant impact of CQ on the individual's ability to adapt effectively in the new environment that has been found out in this study also gives a strong empirical support to Shain and Gürbüz (2014), in which they mentioned that CQ offers additional explanatory power in the prediction of individuals' Adaptive Performance in a multicultural environment.

On the earlier part of this study, it is assumed that universities play a crucial role in helping to prepare the individuals to be ready to compete in today's diversified workforce. This assumption is then proved to be extremely true as the study participants admitted the moderating roles of host university support in helping to strengthen the relationship between intercultural interactions and the individual's level of CQ. It can be explained from the findings that strong support from the host university will increase the students' intention to build the interactions with people from a different culture as it brings them closer with the experience of being exposed to the cultural differences. Host university support is crucial in facilitating students with the experience of being exposed to the cultural differences (Anderson et al., 2005) and this finding is in line with the results of a study by Jyoti and Kour (2017) which concluded that social support plays important roles in affecting cultural intelligence.

Conclusions

This study has discovered some important findings which suggest a new direction for another research in this field. First, like Ng, Dyne, and Ang (2012) pointed out that the quality of experience could be as important, if not more critical than quantity. This study offers another perspective as it emphasizes more on the quality of experience which is described as the individuals' intensity to interact with people from another culture. It complements the previous perspective on the importance of international experience by focusing on the individual's intercultural interactions during the overseas study as one way to increase the level of CQ.

In addition, the results of this study show that maximizing the quality of experience when studying abroad through constant interactions with the other groups of people is proven to be beneficial for the individuals' adaptive performance. More importantly, this study also found out that host university support moderated the relationship between intercultural interactions and CQ, on how the relationship was stronger for those who were given maximum support by their host university, and weaker for those who were given minimum support by their host university.

The findings of this study complemented the previous assumption on universities' crucial role in educating and 'preparing the students to be a part of the global citizens (Ng, Dyne, & Ang, 2009b; Williams, 2005). Also, since there were only a few studies which have examined the issue, this study has suggested exciting opportunities for further research to take a look further on this issue.

Limitations and future research

Despite the strength of the model used in this study and support for the predictions, this study has limitations that should help guide future research. First, given the fact that there is only a limited amount of research which proposes and tests an integrated model of host university support that moderated the relationship of intercultural interactions with CQ, the model is necessarily incomplete. This study may not consider other elements in host university support that might be as important, if not more critical than the other elements mentioned in this study. Some elements, such as the opportunity to join in any student organizations at the host university, are considered as not influential by the respondents. The researcher recommends future studies to take a deeper examination on each element that is going to be used in the questionnaire, in order to reduce the response biases.

Second, this study did not really consider the respondents' scope as we welcome everyone who has the experience of joining a study exchange program to participate in this research. There are 5 major locations of the host university which were mentioned by the respondents in this study. Looking at the study's results, we understand that each location has its own uniqueness and characteristic which made the answers given by the respondents were too varied and it potentially decreased the answers' validity. For instance, those who studied in the South East Asian countries gave a relatively poor appraisal rate towards the element of student buddies, while those who studied in the other regions did the opposite. Due to this problem, the researcher recommends a future study to narrow the respondents' scope and take the sample from only one specific region.

Third, all of the data in this study were collected through internet or e-mail which has limited control towards the respondents' answers. While using this kind of method to collect the data was viewed to be effective in reducing the time, unfortunately, it is found out to be vulnerable towards the response biases. Because of the response biases, it is possible that some study results are due to a systematic response bias rather than the hypothesized effect. That is why for further study, the researcher recommends using a more conventional way to collect the data such as paper-based questionnaire and develop some proper screening questions which are believed to be able to reduce the tendency of respondents answering the questions untruthfully. In addition, the number of respondents is small compared to the relatively large population. As a result, there is a possibility that the hypothesis test as well as the research model, have not yet produced strong results. Future research is suggested to test the same model with a larger number of samples.

Finally, adaptive performance is a multidimensional concept that includes a number of different dimensions such as creatively solving problems, dealing with uncertain workable situations, earning new tasks, technologies, and procedures, interpersonal adaptability

demonstrating, demonstrating cultural adaptability, and demonstrating physically oriented adaptability. Therefore, in measuring adaptive performance, the concept should be adjusted with clear contexts and boundaries, in order to determine the right measurement indicators (Pulakos, Plamodon, & Donovan, 2000). In this study, the intended adaptive performance of students who have participated in the overseas student exchange program is actually the ability to demonstrate cultural adaptability, which in more detail can be interpreted as simply learning about a new culture or environment. According to Pulakos, Plamodon, and Donovan (2000), the key aspect of this type of adaptive performance involves successfully integrating into a new culture or environment, fully understanding and willing to behave in accordance with the accepted customs or values in the new environment. However, in this study, adaptive performance measurement uses several indicators that are more suitable for measuring the concept of adaptive job performance. For this reason, for future research, the measurement of adaptive performance for students in the context of demonstrating cultural adaptability, the predictor measures of the concept need to be developed that are more in line with the research context.

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