

International Economics

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**CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE
IN UKRAINE**

Abstract

The process of globalization provokes the continuous rise of cultural intelligence (CQ). Article is based on the findings of the CQS research conducted in Ukraine (2012–2013). The research was conducted in three phases. Phase I included the translation and adaptation of the scale to the audience with the use of two focus groups that consisted of 17 respondents. Phase II was about the testing of cultural intelligence scale for larger audiences in Ukraine using the translated scale from Phase I for 300 students. Phase III – The implementation of the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) to approximately 1800 individuals throughout the country. Instrument was translated into Ukrainian and Russian; validity testing was conducted during pilot phase, country-wide CQ of Ukrainians was measured. The research findings made a considerable contribution to the understanding of cultural intelligence in non-American settings.

Key words:

Cross-cultural communication, cultural intelligence (CQ), cross-cultural interaction, Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS), transferability.

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Introduction

As the world becomes increasing borderless, the need for cultural intelligence continues to rise. A particular interest in this regard is the former Soviet Republic of Ukraine, a country which is undergoing a major transition from a communist regime to a new form of democratic and capitalist leadership. In 1991 Ukraine achieved independence with the dissolution of the USSR; however, with a weak understanding of democratic political systems, true independence did not exist (Subtelny, 2009). Even after the fall of the Soviet system, Ukrainians faced corruption at all levels of society and began to question the values previously held in the country, leading to the so called «Orange Revolution» in 2004. More drastic social and political changes took place in Ukraine during Euromaidan (December 2013) and Crimean Crisis (February 2014). Crimean peninsular was annexed by Russia after military invasion and Ukraine signed political part of the European Union Agreement. Social, economical and cultural pattern of Ukraine is changing. Thus, there is a need to research the concept of «cultural intelligence» as it relates to the current context in Ukraine.

Cultural Intelligence in Ukraine

The concept of cultural competence, which is understood as a derivative of cultural education/awareness and cultural sensitivity, is widely used by Ukrainian sociologists who have used it to explain intercultural communication and the population's cultural participation. However, the concept of cultural intelligence is a new field of study in Ukraine. Despite cultural intelligence studies have been conducted in many countries, there are few studies which examine cultural intelligence in former Soviet controlled countries. Delving further into existing literature and research, at this point the researchers have found no literature as it relates to cultural intelligence being studied in Ukraine. This research is the first time that the cultural intelligence scale has been used in sociological research in Ukraine.

This research will add study of an important recently independent geographic region to the literature of CQ. The link to practice is extremely important because Ukraine is a country which has been under authoritarian rule for hundreds of years. The nation is now moving into a global arena where cultural skills and intelligence are essential. Therefore the entire conceptual framework of CQ is a new and intriguing area of study for this country.

Theoretical Background

Many researchers assume that the use of instruments can be used cross-culturally, regardless of where they are developed. Even instruments that have been validated in multiple countries are used outside of the validated study region and often transferability to these other regions is not considered. In reviewing the literature, many cross-cultural studies assume a static reality. This includes Hofstede's values dimensions. However, other literature asserts that cultures are dynamic, fluid and ever-changing. For example, Goh (2009) suggested that concepts and theories are only transferable where cultural norms and values are similar. Understanding the meaning of concepts, ideas, and words will lead to a better understanding of cross-cultural acceptance and worldviews. To narrow the gap of Western assessments being used in Eastern cultures, this study is seeking through qualitative and quantitative research to determine what language must be used to ensure these (Barnes J., Buko S., Johnson B., Kostenko N., 2012).

Cultural intelligence was first introduced in 2003 and is defined as «an individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings» (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008, p. 3). The CQS was developed to test and validate Earley and Ang's (2003) conceptualization of cultural intelligence, which is based upon Sternberg's multiple loci of intelligences. The CQS measures four primary factors which represent distinct CQ capabilities: CQ-Drive, CQ-Knowledge, CQ-Strategy, and CQ-Action. It is a 20-item, Four Factor Scale.

Ang et al. (2007) asserted CQ examines particular spheres in intercultural settings. This multidimensional construct includes four dimensions of cultural intelligence: (a) cognitive – «an individual's cultural knowledge of norms, practices, and conventions in different cultural settings» (Van Dyne et al., 2008, p. 16), (b) metacognitive – «an individual's cultural consciousness and awareness during interactions with those from different cultural backgrounds» (Van Dyne et al., 2008, p. 16), (c) motivational – «an individual's capability to direct attention and energy toward cultural differences» (Van Dyne, et al., 2008, p. 16), and (d) behavioral – «an individual's capability to exhibit appropriate verbal and nonverbal actions when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds» (Van Dyne, et al., 2008, p. 16).

Cultural intelligence is vital for any individual interacting with a diverse population. Cultural intelligence «is needed to manage the stress of culture shock and the consequent frustration and confusion that typically result from clashes of cultural differences» (Joo-seng, 2004, p. 19). As former Soviet-ruled countries have opened their borders to Asia, Western Europe, and the US, assessments used to prepare in-country nationals and expatriates must be transferable across cultures. Ukrainian CQS adaptation research project started in summer 2012 as

joint US-Ukraine Project of Dr Boyd Johnson and Dr Joanne Barnes of Department of Organizational Leadership at Indiana Wesleyan University (Indiana, USA) and Institute of Sociology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv, Ukraine). Cross-cultural interaction and processes were basically not reflected and analyzed in Ukraine through the lenses, terms and definitions of «cultural intelligence». At the same time «cultural competence» concept which is understood as a derivative of «cultural education/awareness» and «cultural sensitivity», is widely used by Ukrainians sociologists (Ruchka, Kostenko, 2002, 2008, 2010).

Research Project Overview

The research in Ukraine was conducted in three phases: Phase I – Translation and adaptation of the scale to the audience using two focus groups (17 respondents). Ukrainian sociologists followed up with the pilot test results with Phase II (fall 2012/winter 2013): testing of cultural intelligence scale for larger audiences in Ukraine using translated scale for 300 students. Phase III – The administration of the CQS to approximately 1800 individuals throughout the country, including its every region.

The general objectives of the three phases were: 1) to describe general scale perception based on participants' reaction to questionnaire and further discussion within Ukrainian audience sample; 2) to identify understanding and perception barriers of the scale questions of Ukrainian participants; detect characteristics of their attitudes towards cross-cultural interaction; 3) test understanding of the translated scale among pilot population of students 4) measure cultural intelligence of Ukrainians via national wide monitoring survey (Monitoring Ukrainy's'kogo Suspil'stva).

Relevance

Ukrainian society is undergoing major changes due to political and social restructuring in the light of Euromaidan Events and Crimean Crisis 2014. Signing the Ukraine–European Union Association Agreement will allow the country to have a closer cooperation with EU as a strategic political partner. Thus, both parties will become committed to work together on the issues of the legislation policy convergence. Taking into the consideration the political situation in the country with regards to occupation and annexation of Crimea by Russia, the EU relations are to be beneficial regarding the modernization of the country. Open borders with European Union will lead to more exposure, cross-cultural communication and more frequent interaction with other cultures.

Research Method (Phase One)

The Phase One as the initial research began with focus groups discussions research method. The method helped to define participants' understanding of cross-cultural interaction issues as well as their interpretations of the CQS questions, participants were able to base their answers on their personal assessments as well as the dominant culture's standards and patterns; and the discussions partially shaped the flow of cross-cultural interaction. After the preparatory stage of the research instrument adaptation, two different focus groups were conducted. Participants were members of the general public representatives (GP) and leaders (L), who work in different non-governmental organizations. An important consideration in this research was the so called «language law», which was a major debate in the Ukrainian Parliament around the time of the focus groups. The data (17 questionnaires) were processed by SPSS. Correspondence analysis was used as a tool for data grouping, and the results were used to formulate hypotheses.

Research Method (Phase Two)

Phase Two involved a pilot test with 341 students from Taras Shevchenko National University in Kyiv, Ukraine. These included students from the first to fifth year of studies, in a wide range of degree programs, with 96 males and 245 females. Both versions (Russian and Ukrainian) were randomly distributed, as all the students spoke both languages fluently. In this pilot test additional data was also of interest: thus three hypotheses about relations between CQ and selected external concepts were tested. H1: International experience will positively relate to met cognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ. The pilot group was asked various questions regarding travelling or living abroad, whether they have any friends who moved from Ukraine abroad and the means and frequency of communication with them. To obtain an International Experience Index, the answers to the questions above (0 – no, 1 – yes) were tabulated (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.6), and the cumulative International Experience Index was calculated with the five scores.

Research Method (Phase Three)

Phase Three of the research involved the administration of the CQS to approximately 1800 individuals throughout Ukraine, including every region of the country. A wide sample of occupations, income levels and educational attainment was used. As in the pilot study, the instrument was used in both Ukrainian and Russian, as appropriate for the region and selected by the participants. Additional demographic information was gathered as well. The research was done as part of an annual sociological review carried out by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

Findings

Phase One

According to the respondents' CQS answers, three domains emerged, linked to different intercultural communication styles. The domains were labeled pragmatic and behavioral style, projective, and value and cultural. The Pragmatic and Behavioral style domain is grounded primarily in the behavioral questions from the CQS; The Projective domain is grounded primarily in the cognitive and motivational questions from the CQS; and the Value and Cultural domain is primarily grounded in the metacognitive questions from the CQS. Of particular interest, the projective domain appeared to demonstrate a high degree of cognitive behavior. In contrast, the value and cultural domain appeared to have a lower association with metacognitive behavior (Buko, Johnson, 2013).

The respondents in both groups more often identified the guidelines for intercultural interaction in terms of understanding, tolerance, personal development; the «leaders» emphasized more often the role of knowledge and interaction while «the general public» emphasized respect toward other cultures». The majority of respondents agreed that knowledge and skills in the intercultural interaction should be referred as cultural awareness/conscience, taking into consideration the cognitive and emotional aspects.

Phase Two

Almost all the students answered that they speak at least one foreign language at a level sufficient for communication. But the difference of CQ across groups of students who speak and do not speak a foreign language was statistically significant. Although there do not appear to be studies on the correlation of CQ and xenophobia, it is of interest to see if a high level of xenophobia is indeed linked to a low level of CQ.

In testing the hypotheses the set of predictors was statistically insignificant. For example, the results that support Hypothesis H1 are as follows: international experience positively relates to metacognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ. International experience is the significant predictor for all four dimensions of CQ and for CQ in general; it positively relates to all four dimensions of CQ and to CQ in general.

At the same time, the results also support Hypothesis H2: Language skills (if one speaks a foreign language) positively relates to cognitive CQ. Language skills act as a significant predictor for Cognitive CQ which positively relates to Cognitive CQ. Moreover, Language skills are seen as a significant predictor for Metacognitive CQ and Motivational CQ and for CQ in general. However, the re-

sults do not support Hypothesis H3: The level of xenophobia negatively relates to CQ in general. The level of xenophobia (measured on the basis of the Bogardus scale) is not a significant predictor of CQ in general and of CQ separate dimensions.

Phase Three

Overall, the lowest scores that were found in Cognitive CQ suggest that the respondents disagreed that they knew about other's legal / economic systems; language rules; cultural values; marriage systems; art; and non-verbal rules (41% – 52%). The aforementioned results could be interpreted because of the historical isolation of the Kiev-Russ empire and the Soviet Union, as well as the lack of accessibility to other cultures (i.e. travel outside the country was/is restricted).

The lowest scores that were found in Metacognitive CQ suggest that over 30% of the total respondents did not feel they were conscious of their cultural knowledge, did not adjust or apply this in interacting with other cultures, and didn't check the accuracy of their cultural knowledge in dealing with different cultures. Possible interpretation of these results is as follows: 1) the invasion by other surrounding countries has lessened the desire to develop strategies to relate these cultures to protect their own culture; and 2) the move from ethnocentric to ethnorelative is not as evident.

In Motivational CQ, there were fewer respondents on the ends of the scale, except for «I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me» where 43% strongly disagreed or disagreed. And in the Behavioral CQ, many (about a third) disagreed that they changed their verbal behavior, rate of speaking, non-verbal behavior or facial expressions when in a cross-cultural situation. These results can be explained by the lack of direct exposure to other cultures, and there have not been many opportunities for building relationships, which may result in a lack of trust.

A more detailed review of five demographic variables (gender, age, education, language, and region of residence within Ukraine) tested against the 20 CQS questions resulted in several findings. One clear discovery in cross tabulation of the results revealed that gender differences were not statistically significant. Both men and women answered all the questions in relatively similar ways. Although there were some variations in the numbers that chose different options on the scales for each question (most notable in the responses to the statement, «I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me»), as noted these were not statistically significant.

However, the other four demographic variables showed evident differences when using non-parametric correlation tests (Spearman rho), with a 0.05 significance level. For the age variable, the results demonstrated that in

every question this variable *did* matter. There was a negative correlation between increased years and the respondents' agreement level with the 20 questions, meaning that the older the participants were, the less likely they were to demonstrate «cultural intelligence» as measured by the CQS instrument.

This finding could also be attributed to the fact that older Ukrainians have been more isolated from foreign influences during their lifetime, and have had fewer options to travel outside of their country. Even with increased freedom, it appears that – as a group – they haven't engaged in as many cross-cultural interactions. Younger Ukrainians have been more exposed to global media (especially through the Internet) since 1991, and have had increased opportunities to visit other countries. They also have been able to study in other cultures, which also can make a large impact on their openness to other social practices and ideas.

A similar result occurred for education levels. In this area there was a positive correlation between more education and all elements of cultural intelligence (as measured by the CQS). This was tested at a 0.01 significance level, which makes the results even stronger than those involving the age variable (i.e. a 99% confidence in the finding). This was especially evident in responses to the statement, «I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me» – which would seem to be a logical link. Individuals with higher levels of education would generally be exposed to ideas from other cultures and this in itself may develop a receptivity and willingness to learn how other people live. While this doesn't mean that there is necessarily a casual relationship between education and cultural intelligence, it raises interesting questions about why this positive correlation exists.

The respondents were also asked to identify their primary language to use in the questionnaire: Russian or Ukrainian. A comparison of these two groups' responses also revealed important differences. In about two-thirds of the questions, the Russian speakers had higher levels of (self-reported) cultural intelligence. However, in questions that measured flexibility in altering verbal behavior in cross-cultural encounters, and in knowledge of non-verbal behavior, the Ukrainian speakers scored higher. They also scored higher in their response to the statement, «I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures». And yet the Ukrainian speakers were significantly lower in their response to the statement, «I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me».

These findings may appear somewhat contradictory, but again historical factors may be relevant. Ukrainian speakers have had to adjust their verbal behavior due to periods of linguistic suppression, and this may have been subtly passed on to current speakers of the language. It certainly could have been a useful adaptive feature when dealing with surrounding countries and shifting national borders.

Finally, the research tested the responses divided into four regions of Ukraine: center, south, east and west. Although these geographical regions are not precise, the results showed that there were consistent differences between the southern part of the country and the other three regions. In about two-thirds of the questions, the center, east and west were closer in their mean scores, which were lower than the southern region. The exception was in the questions that measured flexibility in altering verbal behavior in cross-cultural encounters, and in knowledge of non-verbal behavior – which were roughly consistent with the findings for language. In those answers, the west and center had higher mean scores, (as did the Ukrainian speakers). However, the west and south were virtually the same in the response to the statement, «I am sure I can deal with stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me».

As the south region has the highest percentage of Russian speakers, it might be expected that the findings would be similar to the pattern observed in the language results. But there is one exception. In the response to the statement, «I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds,» the east region had significantly higher mean scores.

All the findings from this national sample in Phase Three demonstrate that cultural intelligence is a concept that can be studied in Ukraine, with results that are relevant from sociological, historical and even psychological perspectives.

Conclusions

The research thus far confirms that the CQS is valid and reliable in two languages in Ukraine (Russian and Ukrainian). This is important because the concept of cultural intelligence is new to Ukraine. In Phase One, the focus groups raised issues about their understanding of the concept, as well as cross-cultural ideas relevant to cultural intelligence in general. In addition, the focus groups provided specific feedback on the questions themselves and factors that could impact the understanding of the tool. The majority of respondents converged on the acceptability of knowledge and skills in the intercultural interaction as «cultural awareness/conscience,» taking into consideration the cognitive and emotional aspects in regulating intercultural practices. According to the participants in the qualitative research phase, it is not mandatory to be an intellectual if one is a culturally sensitive [aware] person.

In Phase Two, a pilot study was done, with over 300 respondents. In addition to taking the survey, their responses were analyzed in regard to international experience and language proficiency. Positive correlations to the first two variables with CQ were found.

In Phase Three, the CQS was administered to over 1800 individuals from every region of Ukraine, for a much broader sample. The main findings are interpreted within the frames of the cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral CQ. The received data in Phase Three from this large nation-wide sample showed that while gender was not a significant variable in the responses, the variables of age, education, language and region were. This may be attributed to the cultural, historical, and geographical peculiarities of Ukraine; however, age, education, language and region factors need to be examined in more detail.

All of the aforementioned findings made a considerable contribution to the understanding of cultural intelligence in non-American settings. At the same time, there is a need for further research taking into consideration territorial, linguistic and age-specific mediums.

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