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Can a multicultural personality profile be identified?

The relationship between Multicultural Competence, Foreign Language Mastery, and Job Satisfaction of Dutch employees working in the educational sector in the Netherlands

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Master's Thesis

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Abstract

Currently, many organization are operating in an international context. As a consequence, the working environment is becoming more multicultural and multilingual for employees. Selecting employees that fit the increasingly internationally focused working environment, may, therefore, be important to organizations. A multicultural effective employee profile that is expected to be able to easily adjust to an intercultural working environment, might be what an organizations are looking for. Multicultural personality dimensions measured with the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ), foreign language mastery, and job satisfaction were found to be relevant concepts linked to multicultural effectiveness. In a Dutch business setting, including Dutch employees working in the educational sector, this current study had the purpose to gain insight into whether a multicultural personality profile could be distinguished among employee groups in different working environments, based on differences in the MPQ personality dimensions and foreign language competencies. Moreover, it was examined whether the MPQ dimensions related to employees' job satisfaction. Results showed non-international employees, being Dutch employees working in an non-international oriented job, to be more cultural empathic compared to international employees, being Dutch employees working in an international oriented job. International employees, on the other hand, showed to be more proficient in foreign languages compared to the other employees. Cultural empathy and foreign language mastery both showed to be predictive of employee group membership. No relationship was found between the MPQ dimensions and foreign languages mastery. Job satisfaction, however, was positively related to most MPQ dimensions. The somewhat surprising results suggest that no particular multiculturally effective employee profile can be differentiated. As no straightforward, ideal employee profile could be distinguished yet, it may be wise for HR managers to carefully consider candidates' multicultural competence individually, in which foreign language proficiency and MPQ dimensions may be interesting criteria in the selection of employees.

Keywords: MPQ, multicultural effectiveness, foreign language mastery, job satisfaction, Dutch employees, multicultural personality profile, HRM

1. Introduction

In the increasingly globalized world, many companies not only operate nationally, but also internationally due to competitive and strategic advantages (Halim, Bakar, & Mohamed, 2019; Harzing & Pinnington, 2015). This means that they have subsidiaries in different countries or work with teams all over the world. Consequently, business interactions with people from different countries with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are increasing and the workplace is becoming more culturally diverse (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010; Henderson, 2005; Van der Zee, Atsma, & Brodebeck, 2004; Van der Zee & Van der Gang, 2007; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). As a result, the working environment within organizations is becoming more multicultural and multilingual (Fitzsimmons, 2013; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). In order to maintain the successful organizational operations, employees' adjustment professionally to the culturally diverse working environment, in terms of speaking foreign languages and understanding different cultural norms and values, seems crucial (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000; Simkhovych, 2009). Selecting candidates with the right (~~multicultural~~) skills that fit the increasing global direction of many organizations is, therefore, important. Matching organizational and employee characteristics, synergize with both organizational and employee performances (Anderson, Flynn & Spataro, 2008; Caldwell & O'Reilly III, 1990; Lee, Mitchell, Wise, & Fireman, 1996). Employees can be seen as organizations' greatest capital, being a strategic and competitive advantage that positively influences organizational outcomes. They should be invested in and carefully selected (Boon, Eckardt, Lepak and Boselie, 2018; Colakoglu, Allen, Miah, & Bird, 2016; Harzing & Pinnington, 2015; Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001).

No understanding of and limited ability to deal with cultural differences, resulting in limited adjustment, may cause discrepancies between employee and organizational characteristics. This, in turn, could hinder employees' job performance outcomes, and eventually, organizational outcomes (Anderson, Flynn & Spataro, 2008; Nishimura, Nevgi, & Tella, 2008; Symkhovych, 2009; Van der zee, Atsma, & Brodbeck, 2004). The behaviour of employees in terms of their adjustment to an intercultural working environment may, therefore, need attention. More understanding of the determining factors for this behaviour may help an HR manager to identify crucial skills, to be able to select highly skilled employees, and to offer support to make employees flourish in their job.

One's personality profile was found to be a determinant in the ability to adjust to an intercultural environment, in that certain personality competencies were expected to facilitate

intercultural adjustment (Arthur & Bennett, 1995; Bhawuk and Brislin, 1992; Hannigan, 1990; Kets de Vries & Mead, 1991; Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Matsumoto, 2002; McCall, 1994; Spreitzer, McCall & Mahoney, 1997). In particular, the personality dimensions Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, Flexibility, and Social initiative, selected by Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001). Based on these dimensions, they developed the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) as a measurement tool to measure one's personality traits that were found to be related to the level of adjustment (Halim, Bakar, & Mohamed, 2019; Dewaele & Stavans, 2012; Harari, Reaves, Beane, Laginess, & Viswesvaran, 2018; Korzilius, Van Hooft, Planken, & Hendrix, 2011; Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Peltokopri & Froese, 2012; Van der zee, Atsma, & Brodbeck, 2004; Van Niejenhuis, Otten, & Flache, 2018).

In addition to the MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery appeared to be related to adjustment as well (Lundell & Sandgren, 2013; Matsumoto, 2000). Evidence was found that foreign language mastery facilitates adjustment and could be related to the MPQ personality dimensions (Dewaele & Van Oudenhoven, 2009; Dewaele & Stavans, 2012; Halim, Bakar, & Mohamad, 2018; Korzilius, Van Hooft, Planken, & Hendrix, 2011; Lundell et al., 2018; Peltokorpi, 2008; Van Niejenhuis, Otten, & Flache, 2018). Personality traits such as open-mindedness and flexibility contribute to language acquisition, pronunciation, and accepting linguistic expressions in a foreign language. Following this logic, speaking foreign languages and proficiency in these foreign languages can be linked to at least a subset of the personality traits selected by the MPQ (Dewaele & Van Oudenhoven, 2009; Dewaele & Stavans, 2012; Halim, Bakar, & Mohamad, 2018; Herfst, Van Oudenhoven & Timmerman, 2008; Korzilius, Van Hooft, Planken, & Hendrix, 2011; Lundell et al., 2018; Peltokorpi, 2008; Van Niejenhuis, Otten, & Flache, 2018). However, more research is necessary to gain understanding of what role multiculturalism and multilingualism play in an organization, with the purpose to gain insight into how organizations can respond to these factors in that it benefits organizational outcomes instead of posing a problem (Fitzsimmons, 2013; Nishimura, Nevgi, & Tella, 2008).

Professional adjustment of employees to the intercultural working environment could be visible for organizations when looking at job satisfaction. Better adjustment professionally leads to a better psychological well-being for employees (Anderson, Flynn, & Spataro, 2008; Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014 Lin, Yu, & Yi, 2014). As well-being in a job is reflected in job satisfaction (Traynor & Wade, 1993), the latter concept could also be seen as a concept in which adjustment is reflected, and may, therefore, be important in the intercultural business context. More specifically, MPQ personality traits facilitate better adjustment to an intercultural

working environment (Bhawuk and Brislin, 1992; Matsumoto, 2002) in a sense of more positive well-being and job experience, which is reflected in a higher level of job satisfaction (e.g. Halim, Bakar & Mohamad, 2018; Van Oudenhoven, Mol, & Van der Zee 2003). A higher level of MPQ dimensions might mean a higher level of job satisfaction and, therefore, a relationship between these two factors.

This current study will look at the MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and job satisfaction by focusing on two Dutch employee groups mainly working in the educational sector. The first group includes employees working in an internationally oriented job and will be referred to as international employees. The second group includes employees working in a non-internationally oriented job and will be referred to as non-international employees. This study will examine whether, based on employees' personality profile (i.e. MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery), a distinction can be made between international and non-international employees in the form of a multicultural employee profile. On top of that, the potential relationship between the MPQ dimensions and employees' job satisfaction will be examined. Given that the MPQ is limited to hypothetical behaviour and does not measure actual behaviour, this study aims to gain more knowledge of the MPQ as a measurement tool which could contribute to more accurate expectations of employees' behaviour, relevant for HR managers.

1.1 Practical relevance

Many companies are increasingly including an international focus in their strategic plan to maintain their competitive position (Halim, Bakar, & Mohamed, 2019; Harzing & Pinnington, 2015). Selecting employees that fit an increasingly internationally focused working environment, may, therefore, be important. It might be of interest for organizations to know which personality profile is expected to be able to easily adjust to an intercultural working environment, in that there might be a designated multicultural personality profile they can look for. Insight into whether a multicultural personality profile can be distinguished among employee groups in different working environments, based on different MPQ personality traits and foreign language competencies, and whether the MPQ dimensions are related to employees' well-being in the job, reflected in a higher job satisfaction, could be relevant. Organizations might be interested in the effects of multicultural personality traits on job satisfaction as the latter concept could be a reflection of professional adjustment, and is related to job performance outcomes. The HRM department could use this information when carefully considering employees' personality profile that fit the international orientation of many of

today's organizations. This current study has the aim to contribute to their policy with respect to the selection process of multiculturally effective employees which the MPQ could potentially be used for.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Multicultural competence (MPQ) as predictor of intercultural effectiveness

According to Hofstede (2001, p. 9) culture can be defined as 'the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the member of one group or category of people from others'. In order to interact and work effectively with organizations and people from different cultures, successful intercultural adjustment is crucial (Bhawuk and Brislin, 1992; Matsumoto, 2002). Personality appeared to be a determinant in this process of adjustment to other cultures and the different perspectives, norms, and values people may have. In other words, personality competencies appeared to be determinants in one's competence to be interculturally successful (Arthur & Bennett, 1995; Bhawuk and Brislin, 1992; Hannigan, 1990; Kets de Vries & Mead, 1991; Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Matsumoto, 2002; McCall, 1994; Spreitzer, McCall & Mahoney, 1997). In the past years, McCrae and Costa (1987) have laid a foundation to understanding personality as an antecedent for behaviour by developing the Five-Factor model, identifying five main personality dimensions as being important to describe one's character. In the context of intercultural success, the Five-Factor model has been used, but showed a rather general approach (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Reasoning from and building upon this guide to understanding human personality as a determinant of intercultural success, Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001) identified more specific personality dimensions, linked to intercultural success. They developed the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ), which a tool specifically developed to map out one's potential for intercultural success, which they refer to as multicultural effectiveness. Multicultural effectiveness can be defined as "the success in the fields of professional effectiveness, personal adjustment and intercultural interactions" (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p. 293). In other words, multicultural effectiveness not only entails 'the capacity to make things work' in a new cultural environment, but also 'a feeling of psychological well-being in that environment' and 'an interest and ability to deal with individuals from a different cultural background' (p. 293).

The personality dimensions Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001) identified to be underlying multicultural effectiveness are Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, Flexibility, and Social initiative. The MPQ measures one's level of these

personality dimensions (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001). *Cultural Empathy* refers to one's ability to identify with and understand the feelings, views, and behaviours of people from a different culture. *Open-mindedness* holds that one is open and non-judgemental to the ideas and perspectives of people with a different cultural background. *Emotional stability* refers to one's ability to stay calm in a stressful situation and how that affects one emotionally. *Flexibility* can be defined as the ability and tendency to adapt to a different, foreign culture. *Social Initiative* refers to whether one actively engages in social situations and shows initiative in these interactions (see Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001).

As the MPQ was confirmed to be valid and reliable to measure the competencies underlying multicultural effectiveness, by several studies (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013; Peltokorpi, 2008; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2012; Richardson, Tan, & Kiumarsi, 2018; Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van der Zee, 2003), this current study will use the MPQ as a measurement tool. Positive relationships between the MPQ dimensions and multicultural effectiveness were found (Leung, Ang & Tan, 2014; Halim, Bakar and Mohamad, 2018; Peltokorpi, 2008; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2012; Richardson, Tan & Kiumarsi, 2018; Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van der Zee, 2003). The MPQ was even found to be predictive of one's multicultural effectiveness and adjustment interculturally (Halim, Bakar & Mohamad, 2018; Herfst, Van Oudenhoven & Timmerman, 2008; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013; Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van der Zee, 2003). For example, expatriates in Taiwan who scored higher on Emotional stability, Social initiative, and Flexibility in particular, better adjusted to their new environment. In addition, in a study by Halim, Bakar and Mahamad (2018) on Malaysian expatriates, Flexibility was found to be a predictor of adjustment professionally in a new cultural environment as well. With respect to internationally oriented native experts, Herfst, Van Oudenhoven and Timmerman, (2008) found the MPQ dimension Open-mindedness in particular, to be predictive of multicultural effectiveness in Australia, and Cultural empathy in the Netherlands.

Thus, it could be assumed that the MPQ dimensions can be linked to intercultural adjustment professionally, and that at least a subset of the personality traits measured by the MPQ could predict multicultural effectiveness. It could be expected that individuals who possess a higher level of the MPQ dimensions, are more likely to adjust interculturally and are more multiculturally effective than an individual with lower MPQ scores. Given the evidence of a relationship between, or even a predictive ability of the MPQ dimensions for adjustment, a relation between MPQ and multicultural effectiveness among native employees in a business employees is likely. Globalization may hold that native business professionals also need to work

in a more intercultural working environment in terms of being in contact with international business contacts, and international colleagues. In other words, as their job may have gotten a more international focus, multicultural effectiveness might have become relevant among native business professionals as well. It may be of interest whether native business professionals also show differences on the MPQ dimensions, and whether this plays a role in identifying a multicultural personality profile. Since being in contact with different cultural and linguistic environments has a positive effect on the extent one is open and sensitive to other cultures and its differences, and the willingness to respect and adjust to this culture (Bhawuk and Brislin, 1992; Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven, 2009), it could be expected that the international employees in this study display a higher level of the MPQ dimensions compared to non-international employees.

This current study addresses this gap by looking at Dutch international employees and Dutch non-international employees in organizations operating in the educational sector in the Netherlands. The purpose is to get more information on multicultural effectiveness in a business setting involving native employees, which is useful for the recruitment and selection of new employees. This present study will examine whether international employees and non-international employees display differences on the MPQ dimensions and whether the level of MPQ dimensions could predict employee group membership.

2.2 The relationship between multicultural competence (MPQ) and foreign language mastery

Working in an intercultural environment often also requires speaking a foreign language (Matsumoto, 2000). Using at least one foreign language in professional contexts is currently the rule rather than the exception in many organizations (Henderson & Louhiala-Salminen, 2011; Janssens & Steyaert, 2014). Adequate foreign language skills and knowledge could, therefore, also be seen as an important competence to have for employees to optimally function in an intercultural working environment (Dewaele & Li Wei, 2012; Saarentalo-Vuorimäki, 2019). Matsumoto (2000) suggested, based on a review of existing models assessing intercultural effectiveness, that language, in combination with one's personality competencies, also is an important factor for multicultural success. This suggested interconnection between personality and language competence could be explained by the fact that language and verbal expressions can be specific to a certain culture, meaning that speaking a foreign language a foreign language could contribute to accepting and understanding that specific culture (Lundell, Eyckmans, Rosiers, & Arvidsson, 2018; Halim, Bakar, & Mohamad, 2018). Lundell and

Sandgren (2013) argue that personality traits linked to cultural learning, such as Open-mindedness (i.e. that one is open and non-judgemental to the ideas and perspectives of people with a different cultural background (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001)) and Flexibility (i.e. the ability and tendency to adapt to a different, foreign culture (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001)), in turn, contribute to language acquisition, pronunciation, and accepting linguistic expressions in a foreign language. In this sense, it could be assumed that language competence and the MPQ personality dimensions are connected. The specific language skills of speaking one or more foreign languages and foreign language proficiency, often appeared to be linked to the MPQ personality competencies in the process of measuring multicultural effectiveness (Dewaele & Van Oudenhoven, 2009; Dewaele & Stavans, 2012; Halim, Bakar, & Mohamad, 2018; Herfst, Van Oudenhoven & Timmerman, 2008; Korzilius, Van Hooft, Planken, & Hendrix, 2011; Lundell et al., 2018; Peltokorpi, 2008; Van Niejenhuis, Otten, & Flache, 2018). This current study will therefore, look at either the number of foreign languages spoken and Foreign language proficiency. Altogether, these two language competencies will be referred to as foreign language mastery, adopted from Korzilius et al. (2011).

In a business context, foreign language mastery and the MPQ dimensions were analysed in terms of its relation to intercultural adjustment professionally by relatively few studies, but showed mixed results (Halim, Bakar, & Mohamad, 2018; Herfst, Van Oudenhoven & Timmerman, 2008; Korzilius et al., 2011; Peltokorpi, 2008). Moreover, the specific interaction between language mastery and the MPQ dimensions was scarcely addressed within this context.

With respect to expatriates, Peltokorpi (2008) examined the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in Japan. Results showed that Emotional stability, Cultural empathy, and foreign language proficiency positively related to and are important for general and work adjustment. The potential correlation between the MPQ personality traits and foreign language proficiency was not analysed. Even though a relationship between the latter two variables was not examined, the preliminary result could suggest a relationship. Additionally, in a study by Halim, Bakar and Mohamad (2018), language ability (i.e. foreign language proficiency) surprisingly, appeared not to play a role at all in the adjustment of expatriates, while the MPQ dimensions did.

With respect to native employees, only two studies seemed to have examined the relation between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery. The first study, conducted by Herfst, Van Oudenhoven and Timmerman (2008) on internationally oriented native employees in Western immigrant countries like Germany, The Netherlands, and Australia,

found partial evidence of a relationship between the number of foreign languages spoken and the MPQ dimensions. Speaking one foreign language positively correlated with professional adjustment (i.e. multicultural effectiveness predicted by the MPQ dimensions). However, speaking more than one foreign language did not. In the second study, Korzilius et al. (2011) examined the relationship between the MPQ dimensions and both sub-variables of foreign language mastery looking at international and non-international employees in a Dutch agricultural multinational company. Meaning they did not specifically look at expatriates, but primarily at native employees in a Dutch agricultural organization. Results showed that international employees, being native employees who had international contact on a regular basis, scored higher on the MPQ dimensions Open-mindedness and Flexibility compared to non-international employees, being mainly native employees who did not have international contact on a regular basis. International employees also reported speaking more foreign languages. The number of foreign languages spoken by the latter employee group positively correlated with Open-mindedness. Foreign language proficiency showed a significant but low positive relationship with the MPQ dimension Cultural empathy only. Moreover, whereas Emotional stability showed to be a predictor for international employee group membership, the number of foreign languages showed to be a predictor for the international employee group.

Thus, even though a relationship between (at least one sub-variable of) foreign language mastery and the MPQ dimensions in adjustment professionally to a new cultural environment would be likely, results of previous studies are mixed. In addition, many studies in a business context have only included expatriates and few studies looked at native business professionals. This current study, therefore, aims to get insight into the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery of native Dutch employees working in Dutch organizations by building upon the study by Korzilius et al. (2011). Compared to Korzilius et al. (2011) who conducted their study in a Dutch agricultural organization, this current study will examine the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery in a different business sector, mainly including Dutch educational institutions. In addition, this current study will only include native employees with different job orientations and exclude any foreign nationalities, which is also different from Korzilius et al. (2011). With the aim to expand the study by Korzilius et al. (2011), differences in personality profile with regard to MPQ dimensions and foreign languages of the two employee groups will be examined, and whether these variables can discriminate between the two employee groups to identity a typical multicultural employee profile. Furthermore, this current study will look at the relation between the MPQ dimensions and language mastery since, in a business context, this has scarcely been done. In order to do so, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: To what extent is there a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery?

RQ2: To what extent do the two employee groups (international and non-international) display differences in MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery?

RQ3: To what extent do the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery predict employee group membership (international and non-international)?

2.3. The relationship between multicultural competence (MPQ) and job satisfaction

In the process of adjustment, psychological well-being is an important aspect, in that better adjustment professionally suggests a higher well-being (Anderson, Flynn, & Spataro, 2008; Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Lin, Yu, & Yi, 2014). Psychological well-being in a job is also often referred to as job satisfaction (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011; Halim, Bakar & Mohamad, 2018; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2014; Van Oudenhoven, Mol, & Van der Zee 2003; Peltokorpi, 2008). According to Traynor and Wade (1993), job satisfaction can be defined as one's job experience in which important job values can be fulfilled resulting in a pleasurable or positive emotional state of well-being. Halim, Bakar and Mohamad (2018) even consider professional adjustment and job satisfaction to be synonyms. It was also associated with the feeling of a better fit between employee and the job or organization, which positively affects employee job performance outcomes (Anderson, Flynn, & Spataro, 2008; Caldwell & O'Reilly III, 1990; Judge, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Lee, Mitchell, Wise, & Fireman, 1996; Lin, Yu, & Yi, 2014; Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). Job satisfaction may, therefore, be important in the intercultural business context.

One's personality was found to contribute to better dealing with new circumstances and, therefore, a higher level of well-being in a job (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Tasios & Giannouli, 2017). High scores on the MPQ dimensions had for example a positive effect on expatriates psychological well-being and mental health (Anderson, Flynn, & Spataro, 2008; Leung, Ang & Tan, 2014; Lin, Yu, & Yi, 2014; Mol, Van Oudenhoven, & Van der Zee, 2001; Peltokorpi, 2008; Van Oudenhoven, Mol, & Van der Zee, 2003). As job satisfaction basically reflects one's well-being in a job, in which one's personality plays an important role, it could suggest a relationship between the MPQ personality dimensions and job satisfaction. Spector (1985) developed the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) to measure employees' satisfaction about the nature of work, supervision, coworkers, and communication in the social service sector.

However, he argues that the JSS can be used for different sectors as well. As reliability and validity was confirmed, the JSS can be used for measuring perceived job satisfaction (Van Saane, Sluiter, Verbeek, & Frings-Dresen, 2003), and will, therefore, also be used in this current study.

Several studies have looked into measuring job satisfaction, but only a few have looked into personality as a determinant for job satisfaction. Nevertheless, it is supported that personality in terms of the Five-Factor model (Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; Furnham, Eracleous & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2009; Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002), and more explicitly, the MPQ personality dimensions (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011; Leung, Ang & Tan, 2014; Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van der Zee, 2003; Peltokorpi, 2008; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2014), are positively associated with job satisfaction.

When looking at the MPQ dimensions, a positive relationship appeared to be present. Leung, Ang and Tan, (2014) found a positive relationship between psychological well-being of expatriates and MPQ dimensions. This is supported by Froese and Peltokorpi (2011), who found a positive relationship between Cultural empathy and job satisfaction. Furthermore, Peltkorpi and Froese (2014) also showed a positive relationship between all MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction. Moreover, the MPQ dimensions Flexibility, Emotional Stability, and Cultural Empathy even appeared to be predictive of job satisfaction of expatriates, according to Van Oudenhoven, Mol and Van der Zee (2003), Peltokorpi (2008), and Halim, Bakar and Mohamad (2018). This strengthens the assumption that the MPQ multicultural personality dimensions could be related to job satisfaction of native employees as well.

However, still few studies have analysed the relationship between MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction. To the best of my knowledge, this relationship has not been addressed when looking at native employees. Therefore, the current study will examine this relationship since it can be of high relevance to organizations. To address the gap concerning the relationship between MPQ multicultural personality dimensions and job satisfaction, the following research question was formulated:

RQ4: To what extent is there a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction?

3. Method

3.1. Instruments

In this study, a questionnaire was used in English (Appendix A) and Dutch (Appendix B) that included the MPQ, items to measure self-assessed Foreign Language Mastery, the JSS, demographic questions.

The MPQ, adopted from Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001), consisted of 78 items followed by 5-point Likert scales ranging from 'totally not applicable' to 'completely applicable' and measures the five MPQ dimensions Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, Flexibility, and Social initiative. The MPQ included both positively (+) and negatively (−) formulated items.

Cultural empathy (14 items) was operationalised by Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) as "the capacity to clearly project an interest in others as well as obtain and to reflect a reasonably complete and accurate sense of another's thoughts, feelings, and/or experiences" (p. 293) and "the ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts and behaviour of members of different cultural groups" (p. 294). Items included: Understands other people's feelings (+) , and Finds it hard to empathize with others (−). The reliability for Cultural empathy was good ($\alpha = .85$).

Open-mindedness (14 items) was defined as ''unreserved and unprejudiced attitude towards out-group members and towards different cultural norms and values'' (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p. 294). Items included: Is interested in other cultures (+), and Finds other religions interesting (+). The reliability for Open-mindedness was good ($\alpha = .87$).

Emotional stability (20 items) was defined as "the tendency to remain calm in stressful situations versus a tendency to show strong emotional reactions in stressful situations" (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p. 294). Items included: Remains calm following misfortune (+), and Is nervous (−). The reliability for Emotional stability was excellent ($\alpha = .91$).

Flexibility (13 items) was seen as "the ability to switch easily from one strategy to another, because the familiar ways of handling things will not necessarily work in a new cultural environment" (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p. 295). Items included: Likes routine (−), and Avoids surprises (−). The reliability for Flexibility was acceptable ($\alpha = .73$).

Social initiative (17 items) combines action orientation and attraction to the unknown and experience that as a challenge. It was seen as the tendency to (pro-)actively engages in social situations and show initiative in these interactions (cf. Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven,

2000, pp. 294, 305). Items included: Is easy-going in groups (+), and Finds it difficult to make contacts (−). The reliability for Social initiative was good (α = .89).

Language mastery consisted of two elements: the number of foreign languages spoken and foreign language proficiency. *Number of foreign languages spoken* was defined as speaking one or more foreign languages. *Foreign language proficiency* was operationalised as the level of skills in the foreign languages. Means were computed for the number of foreign languages respondents spoke. With respect to respondents' self-assessments of their foreign language proficiency, the highest proficiency in a foreign language was used for the analyses. Items included: How would you rate your proficiency level in the foreign language(s) you speak? followed by a 5-point Likert scales ranging from 'poor' to 'native-like'. For all scales and variables used, high scores indicate that respondents possessed the characteristic to a greater extent.

Job satisfaction was operationalised as one's job experience in which important job values can be fulfilled resulting in a pleasurable or positive emotional state. Job satisfaction was measured with the JSS, adopted from Spector (1985). The original JSS measures nine constructs consisting out of 36 items followed by 6-point Likert scales ranging from 'disagree very much' to 'agree very much' and included both positively (+) and negatively (−) formulated items. For this current study, only the items that measured the constructs Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communications were used. In order to be able to look at correlations between the MPQ and JSS, the original 6-point Likert scales was reduced to a 5-point Likert scales, again ranging from 'disagree very much' to 'agree very much'. Items included: Sometimes feel my job is meaningless (−), and Feel a sense of pride in doing my job (+). The reliability for job satisfaction was good (α = .83).

3.2. Respondents

A total of 141 respondents completed the questionnaire. After leaving out 21 respondents due to a first mother tongue other than Dutch and an educational level lower than higher education, the data of 120 respondents were used for the analyses (age: M = 46.10, SD = 12.87; range 22-78; 65.8% female; 34.2% male). Respondents in this study were employees of the higher educational institutions HAN University of Applied Sciences (28.3%), Radboud University (RU) (21.7%), and other internationally oriented organizations in the Netherlands (50.0%), mainly involving educational institutions as well. The organizations involved in this study were mainly located in the Province of Gelderland, the Netherlands. All respondents were highly educated with a higher professional education (41.7%) being the most frequent educational

level, followed by an academic Bachelor's Degree (28.3%), an academic Master's Degree (22.5%), and PhD (7.5%).

Two employee groups (non-international employees versus international employees) were distinguished based on the frequency of speaking a foreign language in a professional context. A Median split was used to identify the both employee groups. In this study, there was a total of 60 non-international employees and 60 international employees. For non-international employees, the frequency of speaking a foreign language in a professional context ranged from 'never' to '1-3 times per week'. They are, therefore, expected to minimally work in an international context. For international employees, the frequency of speaking a foreign language in a professional context ranged from '4-6 times per week' to 'daily', which made them, therefore, expected to work in a highly international context. All employees that filled out the questionnaire indicated Dutch as their first mother tongue and had a Dutch nationality. An independent samples t-test showed a significant difference in the frequency employees used foreign languages in a professional context (t (78.52) = 27.83, p < .001). On average, international employees used a foreign language daily (M = 1.12, SD = .32), whereas non-international employees used a foreign language only once a week (M = 4.17, SD = .79).

An independent samples t-test showed that international employees (M = 3.83, SD = 1.36) used a foreign language in triple as many professional areas (i.e. communication with colleagues, business partners, manager, and in email, conference calls) than non-international employees (M = 1.17, SD = 1.59) (t (118) = 9.90, p < .001). More specifically, the English language appeared to be significantly more used in professional areas (i.e. communication with colleagues, business partners, manager, and in email, conference calls) by international employees (M = 3.52, SD = .89) compared to non-international employees (M = .90, SD = .1.19) (t (109.46) = 13.63, p < .001).

Moreover, an independent samples t-test showed a significant difference between the two employee groups with regard to the time spent abroad for studies (t (106.55) = 3.16, p = .002). International employees (M = 23.97, SD = 30.54) appeared to have spent almost triple as many weeks abroad for studies compared to non-international employees (M = 8.31, SD = 22.45). No significant difference between the two employee groups was found with respect to the weeks spent abroad for holidays (t (114) = .77, p = .444), work (t (65.17) = 1.91, p = .061), or something other than work, holidays, and studies (t (84.23) = 1.59, p = .115).

A Chi-square test showed no significant relation between membership of an employee group and gender ($\chi2$ (1) = .93, p = .336) or membership of an employee group and educational level ($\chi2$ (4) = 8,99, p = .061). The international employees (M = 40.78, SD = 11.89) were

younger than the non-international employees ($M = 51.42$, $SD = 11.64$) (t (118) = 4.95, $p <$ .001). This could be explained by the fact that globalization is a relatively recent development. Logically, older generations have less been in contact with international parties or have a less international interest than younger generations. However, the potential influence of this difference on this study will be discussed in the discussion section.

A Chi-square test showed a significant relation between employee group and the organisations they work at ($\chi2$ (2) = 23.57, $p < $ .001). Employees working at the RU were relatively more represented in the international employee group (88.5%) and relatively less represented in the non-international employee group (11.5%) compared to employees from the HAN and other organisations. Employees from the HAN were relatively less represented in the international employee group (52.9%) and relatively more in the non-international group (47.1%). Employees working in other organisations were also relatively less represented in the international employee group (31.7%) and relatively more in the non-international employee group (68.3%). This could be explained by the fact that the RU is highly internationally oriented due to research purposes worldwide. Again, the potential influence of this on this study will be discussed in the discussion section at the end of this study.

3.3. Procedure

The Dutch educational institutions HAN and RU were contacted and permission was asked whether the questionnaire could be distributed among employees. In addition, employees working in other organizations in the Netherlands were derived from a personal network and contacted to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed via email and could be completed online. The questionnaire was made available in two languages; Dutch and English. The MPQ (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001) and the JSS (Spector, 1985) were already available in both languages and its equivalence was checked. The data was collected in May 2019. Respondents were informed that filling out the survey was confidential, voluntary, and that they were free to quit at any moment without penalty. They were asked to answer the questions related to the MPQ multicultural personality dimensions, their job satisfaction and language mastery. At the end, questions about respondents demographics were included in the survey. It took respondents about 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

3.4. Statistical treatment

First of all, polarity of the negative formulated items were recoded. To examine a potential relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery, correlations were

calculated. In order to get insight in whether the two stakeholder groups (international versus non-international) display differences in their profile with respect to the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery, independent samples t-tests were carried out. A binomial logistic regression analysis was run to determine to what extent employee groups membership could be predicted based on the level of the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery. A correlation was calculated to determine to what extent there was a relationship between job satisfaction and the MPQ dimensions.
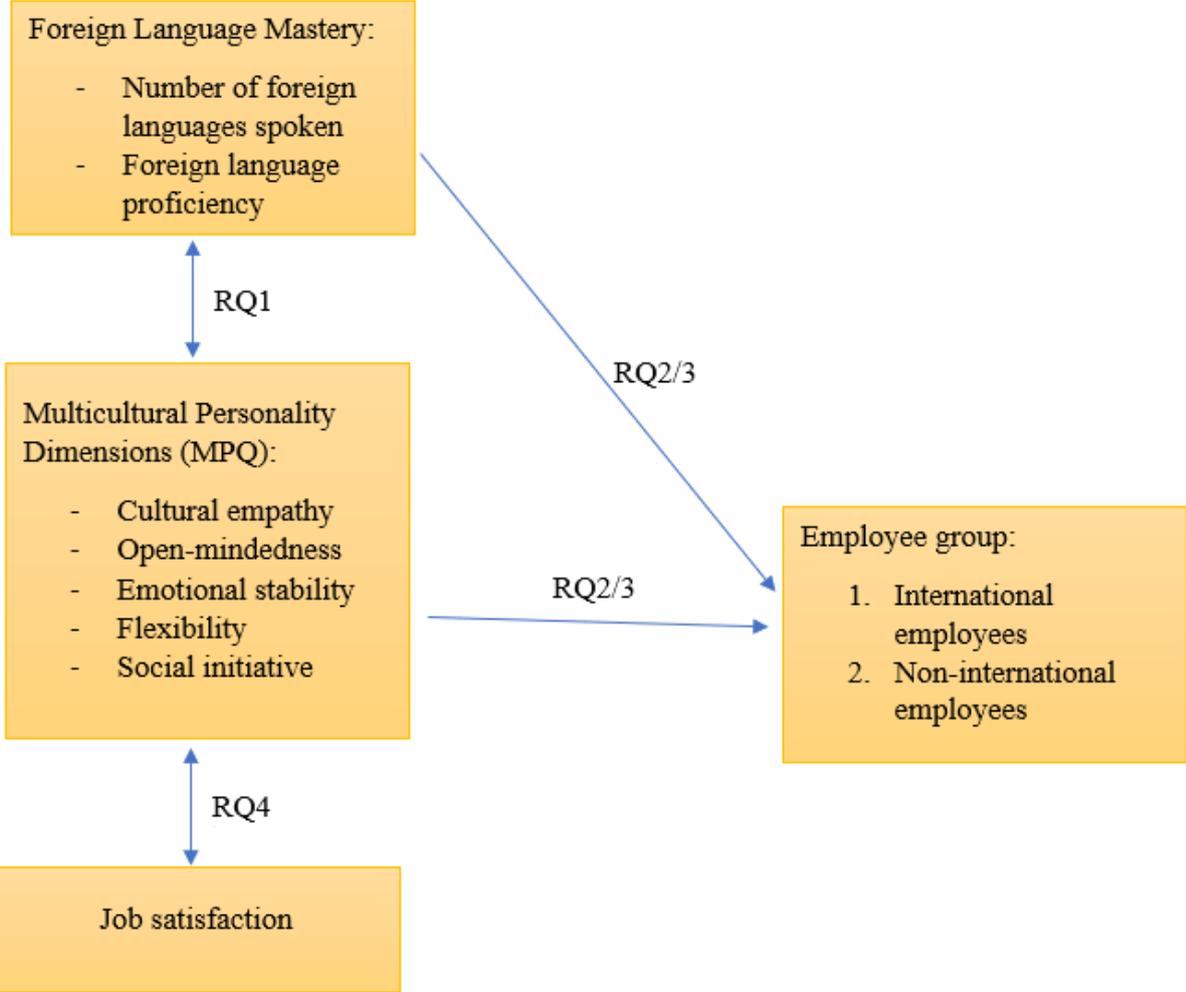

Figure 1. Conceptual model and research questions

4. Results

4.1. The relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery

First of all, in order to examine a potential relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery, correlations were calculated, also presented in Table 1 below. No significant relation was found between all five MPQ dimensions and the number of foreign languages spoken (Cultural Empathy (r (120) = .01, p = .948); Open-mindedness (r (120) = .17, p = .059); Emotional Stability (r (120) = .09, p = .310); Flexibility (r (120) = .15, p = .092); Social Initiative (r (120) = .01, p = .928)) (all p > .59) nor the MPQ dimensions and self-assessed foreign language proficiency (Cultural Empathy (r (120) = -.04, p = .637); Open-mindedness (r (120) = .15, p = .104); Emotional Stability (r (120) = .10, p = .268); Flexibility (r (120) = .09, p = .358); Social Initiative (r (120) = .01, p = .909)) (all p > .104).

Table 1. Correlations between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery (number of foreign languages spoken and foreign language proficiency) (N = 120)

	Cultural empathy	Open-mindedness	Emotional stability	Flexibility	Social initiative	Number of foreign languages	Foreign language proficiency
Cultural empathy		.58**	.02	.11	.33**	.01	-.04
Open-mindedness	58**		.23*	.34**	.38**	.17	.15
Emotional stability	.02	.23*		.45**	.39**	.09	.10
Flexibility	.11	.34**	.45**		.30**	.15	.09
Social initiative	.33**	.38**	.39**	.30**		.01	.07
Number of foreign languages	.01	.17	.09	.15	.01		.33**
Self-assessed foreign language proficiency	-.04	.15	.10	.09	.07	.33**	

* p < .050, ** p < .010

4.2. The difference between the two employee groups (international and non-international) on MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery

4.2.1. MPQ dimensions

An independent samples t-tests was done to determine to what extent the two employee groups display differences in their MPQ and foreign language mastery profile. The MPQ dimension Cultural empathy appeared to be significantly different between international and non-international employees (t (114.17) = 2.54, p = .012). International employees (M = 4.04, SD = .40) displayed a significantly lower level of Cultural empathy compared to non-international employees (M = 4.24, SD = .48). However, no significant difference between international and non-international employees was found with respect to the MPQ dimensions Open-mindedness (t (118) = .09 p = .926), Emotional stability (t (118) = .12, p = .908), Flexibility (t (118) = 1.22, p = .225), and Social initiative (t (118) = 1.14, p = .259). Both the significant and non-significant effects with respect to the MPQ dimension are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2.　　MPQ dimensions in function of the employee groups (international/non-international) (1 = totally not applicable, 5 = completely applicable)

	International n = 60 *M (SD)*	Non-international n = 60 *M (SD)*
Cultural empathy	4.04 (.40)	4.24 (.48)
Open-mindedness	3.93 (.45)	3.92 (.48)
Emotional stability	3.56 (.62)	3.55 (.56)
Flexibility	3.21 (.46)	3.11 (.48)
Social initiative	3.64 (.57)	3.75 (.55)

4.2.2. Foreign language mastery

An independent samples t-tests showed no significant difference between international and non-international employees with regard to the number of foreign languages spoken (t (118) = 1.33, p = .186), also presented in Table 3.

Table 3.   Number of foreign languages spoken in function of the employee groups (international/non-international) (1 = speaking one foreign language, 5 = speaking five foreign languages)

	International n = 60 M (SD)	Non-international n = 60 M (SD)
Number of foreign languages	2.78 (1.09)	2.53 (.97)

An independent samples t-tests showed a significant difference between international and non-international employees with regard to the foreign language proficiency (t (118) = 5.63, $p <$ .001, d = 1.03, r = .460), also presented in Table 4. International employees (M = 4.40, SD = .74) were shown to have a higher foreign language proficiency compared to non-international employees (M = 3.62, SD = .78). The effect size can be considered as large, based on Cohen (1977).

Table 4.   Foreign language proficiency in function of the employee groups (international/non-international) (1 = poor, 5 = native-like)

	International n = 60 M (SD)	Non-international n = 60 M (SD)
Foreign language proficiency	4.40 (.74)	3.62 (.78)

4.3. The prediction of employee group membership (international and non-international) on the basis of MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery

A binomial logistic regression analysis was performed to assess the impact of the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery on the likelihood that employees could be identified as international or non-international employees. The model contained 7 independent variables (Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, Flexibility, Social initiative, number of foreign languages spoken, foreign language proficiency). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant ($\chi2$ (7) = 38.15, $p <$ .001), indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents working internationally and non-internationally. The model as a whole explained between 27.2% (Cox & Snell R Square) and 36.3% (Nagelkerke R

Square) of the variance in employee group membership, and correctly classified 72.5% of the cases. As shown in Table 5, only two of the independent variables have been shown to be a significant predictor of employee group membership, namely Cultural empathy (b = 1.52, Wald χ^2 (1) = 5.31, p = .021) and foreign language proficiency (b = -1.36, Wald χ^2 (1) = 18.65, $p <$ .001), with the strongest predictor of reporting being the MPQ dimension Cultural empathy. For each unit Cultural empathy increased, the odds of belonging to the international employee group decreased with 4.55. The lower one's level of Cultural empathy, the more likely they were to work internationally. With respect to foreign language proficiency, for each unit foreign language proficiency increased, the odds of belonging to the international stakeholder group also increased with .26. The higher one's foreign language proficiency, the more likely they were to work in an internationally oriented job.

Table 5.   Results of logistic regression predicting the   likelihood of employee group membership (international/non-international)

	b	SE b	Odds ratio
Cultural empathy	1.52	.66	4.56*
Open-mindedness	-.53	.62	.59
Emotional stability	.33	.46	1.39
Flexibility	-.83	.56	.44
Social initiative	.35	.47	1.42
Number of foreign languages	.15	.23	1.17
Foreign language proficiency	-.1.05	.32	.26**

Model

Likelihood ratio test	($\chi 2$ (7) = 38.15, p < .001)	
R^2 Cox an Snell	.27	
R^2 Nagelkerke	.36	

Correct-classifications:

n group, *n* correct, % correct

International employees	60, 45, 75
Non-international employees	60, 42, 70

*p < .05, ** $p < .$ 001

4.4. The relationship between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction

Correlations were calculated to determine whether there was a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction. As presented Table 6, a significant positive correlation was found between job satisfaction and the four MPQ dimensions Cultural empathy (r (120) = .29, p = .001), Open-mindedness (r (120) = .27, p = .002), Emotional stability (r (120) = .31, p = .001), and Social initiative (r (120) = .27, p = .003). Except for the MPQ dimensions Flexibility, no correlation was found (r (120) = .14, p = .119). Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness and Social initiative showed a small positive correlation with job satisfaction. Emotional stability showed a moderate positive correlation with job satisfaction. Thus, job satisfaction was related to Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, and Social initiative.

Table 6. Correlations between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction (N = 120)

	Cultural empathy	Open-mindedness	Emotional stability	Flexibility	Social initiative	Job satisfaction
Job satisfaction	.29**	.27**	.31**	.14	.27**	

* p < .050, ** p < .010

5. Conclusion and discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery on the one hand, and job satisfaction on the other hand, of Dutch employees mainly working in Dutch educational institutions in the Netherlands. Two different employee groups were distinguished based on the likelihood to be multiculturally effective (international employees and non-international employees). Differences in their level of MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery were examined, and whether these two factors could predict employee group membership. On top of that, this study also had the aim to determine whether there was a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction.

5.1. The relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery (RQ1)

First of all, this study examined a potential relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery. Results showed no correlation between all five MPQ dimensions

(Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, Flexibility, and Social initiative) and foreign language mastery, consisting out of the two sub-variables number of foreign languages spoken and foreign language proficiency. This means that according to this study, the MPQ dimensions are not related to foreign language mastery and that they may not be interconnected in the process of professional adjustment.

This is in contrast with suggestions in literature that personality traits linked to cultural learning (i.e. MPQ dimensions), are related to language acquisition, pronunciation, and accepting linguistic expressions in a foreign language (Dewaele & Li Wei, 2012; Lundell & Sandgren, 2013; Matsumoto, 2000; Saarentalo-Vuorimäki, 2019), which make foreign language mastery (i.e. number of foreign languages spoken and foreign language mastery) likely to be related to the MPQ dimensions. In contrast to Korzilius et al. (2011) who found evidence for such relationship between foreign language mastery and the MPQ dimensions, this current study did not. Whereas Korzilius et al. (2011) showed a positive relationship between the number of foreign languages spoken and MPQ dimensions Open-mindedness and Emotional stability, and a low, but positive relationship with Cultural empathy, no relationship between these two variables was present in this current study. Even though Lundell, Eyckmans, Rosiers and Arvidsson (2018) and Halim, Bakar and Mohamad (2018) argue that language and verbal expressions are specific to a certain culture, in that language competence in a foreign language could also make one accept that specific culture more easily and contribute to a higher level of one's multicultural personality traits, the current study's findings in which no relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery was found, may imply these variables are two separate concepts.

First of all, this could be due to the complexity of the human brain. How language acquisition works in a human brain and how concepts are related may be complex and are influenced by many factors. This goes beyond the abilities of this current study. More research is necessary to look at the potential relationship between language competence and personality dimensions in more detail.

Secondly, this study only included native Dutch employees, working in Dutch organizations, meaning they were working in their own cultural environment. In contrast to expatriates who may be in a higher need of developing competencies in a foreign language and adjusting to a new culture, the Dutch employees were subject to a relatively less extreme situation, which could have influenced their level of MPQ dimensions. On top of that, this study was mainly conducted in Gelderland, the Netherlands. This part of the Netherlands may not be as multicultural as the Western part of the Netherlands for example. Participants may, therefore,

not have been highly multicultural in general, as they are not exposed by a highly multicultural environment either. Participants may therefore, not have displayed extreme levels of multicultural personality dimensions to be able to measure a relationship with foreign language mastery.

Finally, Dutch highly educated people may in general have a high foreign language mastery as at least one foreign language is taught in high school and for many university programmes, sufficient English mastery is required. Altogether, these factors could function as an explanation for not finding a pattern between the levels of foreign language mastery and the MPQ dimensions and why a relationship was left out.

To conclude, based on the results reflecting no evidence of a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery only, it may suggest that the two concepts are not related. Results on foreign language mastery and MPQ dimensions have been mixed in previous literature, which shows the complexity of a relationship between foreign language mastery and multicultural effectiveness (i.e. MPQ dimensions). More research is, therefore, necessary in which any potentially influential factors are excluded.

5.2. The difference between the two employee groups (international and non-international) in MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery (RQ2)

5.2.1. MPQ dimensions

Secondly, differences in the level of MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery between international and non-international employees were analysed. With regard to the MPQ dimensions, no differences were found except for the dimension Cultural empathy, which showed to be different between the two employee groups. Non-international employees displayed a higher level of Cultural empathy compared to international employees. This is in contrast with Korzilius et al. (2011), who found higher scores of the MPQ dimensions Open-mindedness, Flexibility and Emotional stability among international business professionals compared to non-international business professionals.

The finding of non-international employees scoring higher on Cultural empathy is surprising. Being in contact with different cultural and linguistic environments on a regular basis has a positive effect on the extent one is open and sensitive to other cultures and its differences, and the willingness to respect and adjust to this culture, according to Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) and Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven, (2009). Following this line of reasoning, it could be expected that international employees who spent almost triple as many weeks abroad

for studies compared to non-international employees, tend to score higher on the MPQ dimensions.

An explanation for the unexpected result with respect to Cultural empathy in this current study could be employees' self-assessments of the MPQ personality dimensions. Less competent people tend to assess their abilities overly favourable, due to their lack of knowledge, according to Kruger and Dunning (1999). As Cultural empathy refers to one's ability to identify with and understand the feelings, views, and behaviours of people from a different culture (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001), employees with less international knowledge and experience, and therefore, presumably less multicultural competence, might assess themselves as more cultural empathic, compared to employees with more experience and knowledge, so more competence. In the current study, international employees have spent almost triple as many weeks abroad for studies compared to non-international employees. Due to more knowledge, international employees working in the educational sector may be able to better recognize their own competence due to the ability to put their professional skills in perspective, which may lead to a lower, but more nuanced, self-assessed competence.

In addition, more international experience and knowledge of the international employees, may include negative experiences. This could have affected their attitude towards other cultures and might have led to a lower cultural empathy, since Peltokorpi (2008) argues that negative experiences can lead to a more negative attitude towards the new culture. Despite of possible negative experiences, it may not necessarily make them less multicultural competent compared to non-international employees. The influence of potential negative experiences on the MPQ scores has not been addressed in this current study. Further research could take this into consideration.

Another explanation could be due to the fact that the current study mainly included organizations in the educational sector. This means that participants were likely to work with students and were exposed to a great diversity of people due to their job. Hereby, participants, including non-international employees, may have developed personality competencies to be able to work with a great variety of people. As the MPQ is based on general personality models (i.e. Five-Factor model) they may overlap to some extent. Developed general personality competences could, therefore, also be expressed in the form of multicultural personality competencies. Following this line of reasoning, this could also be an explanation for the non-international employees scoring higher on Cultural empathy and the absence of differences on all other MPQ dimensions.

5.2.2. Foreign language mastery

With respect to foreign language mastery, no difference was found between the employee groups based on the sub-variable number of foreign languages spoken. Meaning that the international employee group did not speak significantly more foreign languages compared to non-international employees and vice versa. With regard to foreign language proficiency, a significant difference between the international and non-international employees was found. Given the large effect size, the international employees evidently had a better foreign language proficiency compared to non-international employees. In the context of business professionals, the results on both sub-variables are in contrast with Korzilius et al. (2011), who found international business professionals to be speaking more foreign languages than non-international business professionals, but found no differences with respect to foreign languages proficiency.

The finding of no differences in the number of foreign languages spoken could be explained by the fact that in the Netherlands, one or more foreign languages are taught in high school. Dutch people, highly educated in particular, are therefore likely to speak multiple foreign languages, leaving their proficiency out of consideration.

The higher proficiency of the international employees, however, could be due to their more frequent use of foreign languages. In the sense that working in an international context may often entail using a foreign language on a regular basis (Henderson & Louhiala-Salminen, 2011; Janssens & Steyaert, 2014; Matsumoto, 2000), and international employees in this study also reported speaking foreign languages more often and in more professional situations than non-international employees, makes the higher proficiency of international employees no surprise.

Looking at both differences on MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery together, the heterogeneity of the employees might have had an influence on the results. Even though the majority of employees worked in the educational sector a small area of the Netherlands, and could be considered as homogeneous, they still worked in a broad range of organizations and were also not equally represented in each employee group. In the international employee group, employees mostly worked at the RU. The non-international employee group mainly included employees working at the HAN or other organizations. This could have resulted in personal differences and interpretations between employees and organizations, and could have caused the absence of differences.

Moreover, the contrast between the definition of multicultural competent and less multicultural competent individuals may have faded. Over the past years, not only the workplace, but life in general may have become more multicultural and multilingual, meaning that people in general may be more multiculturally competent. This could explain the limited results of this current study, and often contrasting findings compared to Korzilius et al. (2011).

Furthermore, as cultural empathy showed to be higher for non-international employees, the findings of the current study are also in contrast with previous studies who suggest a relationship between foreign language mastery and the MPQ dimensions (Halim, Bakar, & Mohamad, 2018; Peltokorpi, 2008), and Cultural empathy in particular (Korzilius et al., 2011). However, the higher scores on Cultural empathy for non-international employees on the one hand, and the higher foreign language proficiency scores for international employees on the other hand, follow logically from the fact that this current study also did not find a relationship between foreign language mastery and the MPQ dimensions (RQ1). So within the scope of this current study, non-international employees could be considered as more cultural empathic, whereas international employees are more proficient in foreign languages.

5.3. The prediction of employee group membership (international and non-international) on the basis of the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery (RQ3)

Cultural empathy and foreign language proficiency were found to predict employee group membership. Logically following from the results of RQ2, the higher employees scored on Cultural empathy, the more likely it is they were part of the non-international employees. Also, the better the foreign language proficiency of employees, the more likely it is they were part of the international employee groups. All other MPQ dimensions and number of foreign languages spoken did not show to be predictive of employee group membership.

On the one hand, this is in contrast with Korzilius et al. (2011) who found the number of foreign languages spoken to be predictive of international employee-group membership, and the MPQ dimensions Emotional stability to predict non-international employee group membership. On the other hand, since all MPQ dimensions are viewed to be related (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013; Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001; Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van der Zee, 2003) non-international employees being more cultural empathic can be considered to be in line with Korzilius et al. (2011). Even though it concerns a different MPQ dimension, the fact that non-international employees reported being more emotionally stable compared to the other stakeholder group in Korzilius et al. (2011), is

as surprising as this current study's findings that non-international employees reported being more cultural empathic. A possible explanation could be, again, the lack of knowledge and international experience of non-international employees. This could make them curious in ways of putting more effort into learning about and understanding other cultures. As they may also not have had negative experiences with new cultures yet, their attitudes may be more positive towards other cultures that could be translated into more Cultural empathy. In addition, given the fact non-international employees may be more emotionally stable according to Korzilius et al. (2011), potentially due to working in a more certain, safe environment, it could make them feel less threatened by a new culture, resulting in more cultural empathic feelings.

Besides that, as the non-international employee group was older than the international employee group, age could also be an explanation for the surprising differences on Cultural empathy. According to Richter and Kunzmann (2011), older adults are better capable of expressing empathy in general, compared to younger adults. In this sense, it could be assumed that older people may also be better able to have cultural empathic feelings, which could be an explanation for the non-international employees being more culturally empathic. However, it could also reflect peculiar characteristics of employees in this study.

With respect to foreign language proficiency, the high proficiency of international employees follows logically from previous literature suggesting that working in an international context may often entail using a foreign language on a regular basis (Henderson & Louhiala-Salminen, 2011; Janssens & Steyaert, 2014; Matsumoto, 2000). In this study, international employees also reported speaking foreign languages more often in more professional situations than non-international employees, which could explain their higher proficiency. It emphasizes the importance of foreign language mastery for employees working in an international setting and confirms the suggestions that language mastery is related to multicultural effectiveness, argued in previous literature (e.g. Dewaele & Van Oudenhoven, 2009; Matsumoto, 2000; Van Niejenhuis, Otten, & Flache, 2018).

Overall, the MPQ dimensions Cultural empathy and the foreign language mastery sub-variable foreign language proficiency are of importance for predicting employee group membership in a Dutch educational business context.

5.4. The relationship between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction (RQ4)

A positive relationship was found between the MPQ dimensions Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, and Social initiative. Only Flexibility did not show to be

related to job satisfaction. The higher the MPQ dimensions (Cultural empathy, Open-mindedness, Emotional stability, Social initiative), the higher the job satisfaction of employees. The latter findings concur with previous studies who found a positive relationship between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction of expatriates (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011; Leung, Ang & Tan, 2014; Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van der Zee, 2003; Peltokorpi, 2008; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2014), which may imply the MPQ could be seen as determinant for job satisfaction for native employees as well.

To conclude, in line with expectations, most MPQ dimensions are positively related to job satisfaction. As job satisfaction, in turn, is related to job performance, according to Anderson, Flynn and Spataro (2008) and Lin, Yu, and Yi (2014), HR managers should consider employee's multicultural personality competencies in the selection process. Within the Dutch educational sector, the MPQ could be used as a measurement tool.

5.5. Limitations and further research

Several aspects have limited or influenced the results of this current study. First of all, respondents in this current study were limited to the educational sector, as the majority of the employees worked at educational institutions, located in the Province of Gelderland, The Netherlands. Educational institutions in this area may not be representative of a multicultural working environment. Due to this homogeneous Dutch employee groups, the results of this study are restricted to the context of the educational sector in the Eastern Netherlands. In order to tackle these restrictions and be able to generalize results, it would be relevant to include a larger sample in which more business sectors are represented.

Secondly, the two employee groups were distinguished based on the frequency of their foreign language use in their job. Differences in interpretations and subjective views on the notion 'frequency of foreign language use' and 'foreign language use' in general, could have resulted in biased outcomes for job orientations. An employee group, of whom their job orientation is clear and objectively determined, could lead to less biased results.

Besides that, in the Netherlands, people may generally have good language competencies and often speak at least one foreign due to the fact that learning foreign languages is mandatory in high school. Especially because employees were all highly educated, which makes good language competence even more likely, results on employees' language mastery, may be biased. Future research should carefully consider other influential factors when measuring one's foreign language mastery in relation to the MPQ dimensions.

Thirdly, age was not distributed equally among the employee groups. The fact that international employees were younger than non-international employees might have led to different results. Differences in worldviews, attitudes, and competencies due to more or less life experience could have influenced outcomes on the variables measured in this study. As the organizations in this study were not distributed equally as well, different organizational norms, values and standards may have also had an impact on employees' attitudes and competencies, and therefore, the results. For better generalizability, it would be recommended to ensure equal age and organization distribution in future research.

Furthermore, for all variables used in this study self-assessment scales were used. Results are, therefore, based on employees' own perceptions and judgements of their abilities. This could differ from reality, in that less competent people tend to assess their abilities overly favourable, due to their lack of knowledge (Kruger & Dunning, 1999), for example. Also, people may tend to give desirable answers. On top of that, as self-assessment scales may only reflect subjective views of abilities, no actual multicultural competent behaviour was measured in this study. Further research should use objective measures for the same variables to gain insight into actual behaviour to obtain more realistic results.

In addition, for this study, based on extensive literature it was assumed that the MPQ dimensions could predict multicultural competence (e.g. Halim, Bakar & Mohamad, 2018; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013; Herfst, Van Oudenhoven & Timmerman, 2008). However, this relation was not measured in this current study. Follow-up research could address this in order to validate the MPQ as predictor of multicultural competence in a Dutch business context involving native employees working either internationally or non-internationally.

Lastly, for job satisfaction, only the relationship between the MPQ dimensions and job satisfaction was addressed. As these two variables appeared to be positively related, further research could address whether MPQ dimensions could also predict job satisfaction. By doing so, more insight could be gained into a multicultural personality profile as a function of job satisfaction.

5.6. General conclusion and implications

In the business context of Dutch organizations, including Dutch native employees, this current study was an extension of the study by Korzilius et al. (2011) and had the purpose to contribute to the knowledge of distinguishing an ideal multicultural personality profile. More specifically, a personality profile likely to easily adjust to the intercultural working environment. Adjustment

professionally, reflected in job satisfaction, and based on the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery, was addressed in this current study.

This study implies employees working in a non-internationally oriented job to be more cultural empathic than employees working in an internationally oriented job, in which Cultural empathy showed to be of predictive value. However, in turn, international employees are more proficient in foreign languages than non-international employees, in which foreign language proficiency showed to be of predictive value. Whether having international, and therefore, presumably, intercultural working experience does not seem to discriminate between being multiculturally effective or not. Based on this study, no particular multiculturally effective employee profile can be differentiated.

Regardless of the distinguished groups in this study, MPQ dimensions were positively related to job satisfaction. As job satisfaction may reflect professional adjustment and may be translated in positive job performance outcomes, it underscores the importance of selecting employees having a multicultural personality profile. As no straightforward, ideal employee profile can be distinguished, it would be wise for HR managers to look at candidates individually. They should carefully consider one's multicultural competence, in which foreign language proficiency and MPQ dimensions may be interesting criteria.

According to the current study, a specific, carved out multicultural personality profile could not be identified. However, more research needs to be done to gain insight into multicultural effectiveness, foreign language mastery, and job satisfaction and the potential to shape a multicultural personality profile which an HR manager can build upon when selecting organizations' most valuable capital, humans.

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Appendix A. English questionnaire

Dear participant,

My name is Juul Hartman, a Master's student International Business Communication at the Radboud University Nijmegen. You are invited to participate in my research study into intercultural competence, foreign language mastery, and job satisfaction in a business context. You will need about 10 minutes to answer all the questions in this questionnaire.

Confidentiality

The information in the study records will be completely anonymous. Data will be solely used for this study and will not be shared with third parties. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study. Your participation in this study is voluntary, you may decline to participate without penalty.

Procedure

The questionnaire consists of four parts. I ask you to fill out the questionnaire with as much as accuracy possible. Please note that there are no false answers. By continuing you agree with the above.

Thank you for participating!

Kind regards,

Juul Hartman
Dr. Andreu van Hooft
Dr. Brigitte Planken

If you would like to know more at any stage, have questions or remarks, please feel free to contact either Juul Hartman, MA Candidate, on j.hartman@student.ru.nl, or Dr. Andreu van Hooft, Chief investigator/supervisor, on a.v.hooft@let.ru.nl.

Part 1: The following statements are related to the views you have about yourself; to what extent do these statements apply to you? Please take your time to answer the statements openly and truthfully. (1 = 'totally not applicable', 5 = 'completely applicable')

Cultural empathy

Understands other people's feelings

Tries to understand other people's behavior

Takes other people's habits into consideration

Finds it hard to empathize with others (-)

Sympathizes with others

Has problems assessing relationships (-)

Is attentive to facial statements

Asks personal questions

Enjoys other people's stories

Remembers what other people have told

Is able to voice other people's thoughts

Is a good listener

Notices when someone is in trouble

Has an insight into human nature

Open-mindedness

Is interested in other cultures

Is fascinated by other people's opinions

Is looking for new ways to attain his/her goal

Is curious

Finds other religions interesting

Tries out various approaches

Is intrigued by differences

Starts a new life easily

Gets involved in other cultures

Has a feeling for what is appropriate in a specific culture

Seeks contact with people from a different background

Has a broad range of interests

Puts his or her own culture in a perspective

Is open to new ideas

Emotional stability

Is nervous (-)

Is not easily hurt

Suffers from conflicts with others (-)

Is afraid to fail (-)

Keeps calm at ill-luck

Takes it for granted that things will turn out right

Radiates calm

Considers problems solvable

Is timid (-)

Is under pressure (-)

Can put setbacks in a perspective

Is sensitive to criticism (-)

Has ups-and-downs (-)

Forgets setbacks easily

Is self-confident

Gets upset easily (-)

Worries (-)

Is apt to feel lonely (-)

Is insecure (-)

Has a solution for every problem

Flexibility

Likes low-comfort holidays

Avoids from adventure (-)

Changes easily from one activity to another

Avoids surprises (-)

Likes to work on his/her own (-)

Dislikes travelling (-)

Wants to know exactly what will happen (-)

Functions best in a familiar setting (-)

Works mostly according to a strict scheme (-)

Feels uncomfortable in a different culture (-)

Works according to plan (-)

Likes routine (-)

Has fixed habits (-)

Social Initiative

Takes initiatives

Makes contacts easily

Finds it difficult to make contacts (-)

Keeps to the background (-)

Is inclined to speak out

Leaves the initiative to others to make contacts (-)

Takes the lead

Is a slow starter (-)

Is always busy

Is easy-going among groups

Easily approaches other people

Knows how to act in social settings

Likes to speak in public

Tends to wait and see (-)

Likes action

Is often the driving force behind things

Leaves things as they are (-)

Part 2: Now some questions will follow with respect to your foreign language competence.

Are you bilingual?

- Yes
- No

What is your (first) mother tongue?

- Arabic
- German
- English

- French
- Dutch
- Spanish
- Other, namely

How would you rate your proficiency level in your (first) mother tongue? (1 = 'poor', 5 = 'native-like')

What is your second mother tongue? (please ignore this question if it does not apply to you)
- Arabic
- German
- English
- French
- Dutch
- Spanish
- Other, namely

How would you rate your proficiency level in your second mother tongue? (1 = 'poor', 5 = 'native-like')

Do you use one or more foreign language(s)?
- Yes
- No

Which foreign language(s) do you use? (multiple answers are possible)
- Arabic
- German
- English
- French
- Dutch
- Spanish
- Other, namely

How would you rate your proficiency level in the foreign language(s) you use? (1 = 'poor', 5 = 'native-like')

Please indicate which language you speak in the following situations (multiple answers are possible).
- With colleagues at work
- With external business partners
- With your manager
- In email (work-related)
- In conference calls

How often do you use a foreign language in business context?
- Daily
- 4-6 times per week
- 1-3 times per week
- Once per week
- Never

Are you interested in working with people from other cultures? (1 = 'not at all', 5 = 'very much')

How many weeks….
- did you spent abroad for holidays in the course of your life?
- did you spent studying abroad in the course of your life?
- did you spent abroad for work in the course of your life?
- have you been abroad, other than for holidays, study, and work?

Part 3: The following statements are related to the views you have about your job; to what extent do these statements apply to your job? Please take your time to answer the statements openly and truthfully. (1 = 'disagree very much', 5 = 'agree very much')

Coworkers

I like the people I work with

I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with (-)

I enjoy my coworkers

There is too much bickering and fighting at work (-)

Nature of Work

I sometimes feel my job is meaningless (-)

I like doing the things I do at work

I feel a sense of pride in doing my job

My job is enjoyable

Communications

Communications seem good within the organization

The goals of this organization are not clear to me (-)

I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization (-)

Work assignments are not fully explained (-)

Part 4: Personal background

What is your gender?

- Female

- Male

- Other

What is your age?

What is your nationality?

- Dutch

- Other, namely

What organization do you work for? And how long have you been working there? Please tick the right box and fill in below.

- Radboud University. I have been working here for: _____

- HAN University of Applied Sciences. I have been working here for: _____

- Other. Where and how long have you been working here? _____

Which department do you work for at your organization?

What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- MBO
- HBO
- WO
- Master
- PhD

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for participating!

Appendix B. Dutch questionnaire

Beste deelnemer,

Mijn naam is Juul Hartman, masterstudent International Business Communication aan de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. U bent uitgenodigd om deel te nemen aan mijn afstudeeronderzoek naar interculturele competentie, vreemde taalcompetentie en baantevredenheid in een organisatie. Het invullen van de vragenlijst zal ongeveer 10 minuten duren.

Confidentiality

Deelname aan dit onderzoek is volledig anoniem. Uw gegevens zullen uitsluitend worden gebruikt voor dit onderzoek en zullen niet worden gedeeld met derden. In mondelinge of schriftelijke rapporten zal geen enkele persoonlijke verwijzing worden gemaakt. Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig; u kunt weigeren om deel te nemen zonder enige consequenties.

Procedure

De vragenlijst bestaat uit vier onderdelen en ik vraag u de vragenlijst met zo veel mogelijk precisie in te vullen. Er zijn geen foute antwoorden. Door op doorgaan te klikken gaat u akkoord met al het bovenstaande.

Hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!

Met vriendelijke groet,

Juul Hartman
Dr. Andreu van Hooft
Dr. Brigitte Planken

Als u meer wilt weten met betrekking tot dit onderzoek, vragen en/of opmerkingen hebt, neem dan contact op met Juul Hartman, MA kandidaat, via j.hartman@student.ru.nl, of met Dr. Andreu van Hooft, hoofdonderzoeker/ begeleider, via a.vanhooft@let.ru.nl.

Deel 1: De volgende stellingen hebben betrekking op uw opvatting over uzelf; in welke mate zijn de stellingen op u van toepassing? Neem uw tijd om de antwoorden openlijk en naar waarheid in te vullen. (1 = 'helemaal niet van toepassing', 5 = 'helemaal van toepassing')

Cultural empathy

Begrijpt de gevoelens van anderen

Probeert het gedrag van anderen te begrijpen

Houdt rekening met de gewoontes van anderen

Kan zich moeilijk inleven in anderen (-)

Leeft mee met anderen

Heeft moeite sociale situaties in te schatten (-)

Let op gelaatsuitdrukkingen

Stelt persoonlijke vragen

Beleeft plezier aan de verhalen van andere mensen

Onthoudt wat anderen vertellen

Kan andermans gedachten goed verwoorden

Kan goed luisteren

Ziet wanneer iemand het moeilijk heeft

Heeft mensenkennis

Open-mindedness

Is geïnteresseerd in andere culturen

Is geboeid door andere opvattingen

Zoekt naar nieuwe methoden om iets te bereiken

Is nieuwsgierig

Vindt andere godsdiensten interessant

Probeert verschillende benaderingen uit

Vindt verschillen interessant

Kan gemakkelijk een nieuw leven beginnen

Verdiept zich in andere culturen

Voelt aan wat hoort in een andere cultuur

Zoekt contact met mensen met een verschillende achtergrond

Heeft een brede interesse

Relativeert de eigen cultuur

Staat open voor nieuwe ideeën Heeft vaste gewoontes

Emotional stability

Is nerveus (-)

Kan tegen een stootje

Lijdt onder conflicten met anderen (-)

Is bang om te falen (-)

Blijft kalm bij tegenspoed

Gaat er vanuit dat dingen weer op hun pootjes terechtkomen

Straalt rust uit

Ervaart problemen als oplosbaar

Is bangig (-)

Is gespannen (-)

Kan tegenslagen relativeren

Is gevoelig voor kritiek (-)

Wisselt vaak van stemming (-)

Vergeet tegenslagen snel

Heeft zelfvertrouwen

Is snel uit het veld geslagen (-)

Piekert (-)

Voelt zich snel eenzaam (-)

Is onzeker (-)

Heeft voor elk probleem wel een oplossing

Flexibility

Houdt van primitieve vakanties

Schuwt het avontuur (-)

Schakelt gemakkelijk over van de ene op de andere activiteit

Gaat verrassingen uit de weg (-)

Houdt ervan alleen te werken (-)

Heeft een hekel aan reizen (-)

Wil precies weten wat er gaat gebeuren (-)

Functioneert het beste in een vertrouwde omgeving (-)

Werkt meestal volgens een vast stramien (-)

Voelt zich gemakkelijk in een andere cultuur (-)

Werkt planmatig (-)

Houdt van Routine (-)

Heeft vaste gewoontes (-)

Social initiative

Neemt initiatieven

Legt gemakkelijk contact

Vindt het lastig contacten te leggen (-)

Houdt zich op de achtergrond (-)

Is geneigd het woord te nemen

Laat in contacten het initiatief van de ander komen (-)

Neemt de leiding

Komt moeilijk op gang (-)

Is altijd bezig

Beweegt zich gemakkelijk in groepen

Stapt gemakkelijk op mensen af

Weet zich te redden in sociale situaties

Spreekt graag in het openbaar

Wacht af (-)

Houdt van actie

Is meestal de motor achter dingen

Laat de dingen op zijn beloop (-)

Deel 2: Er volgen nu enkele vragen over uw beheersing van vreemde talen.

Bent u tweetalig?
- Ja
- Nee

Wat is uw (eerste) moedertaal?
- Arabisch
- Duits
- Engels
- Frans
- Nederlands
- Spaans
- Anders, namelijk

Maak een inschatting van uw kennis van uw (eerste) moedertaal. (1 = 'slecht', 5 = 'uitstekend')

Wat is uw tweede moedertaal? (vraag overslaan indien niet van toepassing)
- Arabisch
- Duits
- Engels
- Frans
- Nederlands
- Spaans
- Anders, namelijk

Maak een inschatting van uw kennis van uw tweede moedertaal. (1 = 'slecht', 5 = 'uitstekend')

Spreekt u één of meerdere vreemde talen?
- Ja

- Nee

Welke vreemde talen spreek u? (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- Arabisch
- Duits
- Engels
- Frans
- Nederlands
- Spaans
- Anders, namelijk

Maak een inschatting van uw kennis van de vreemde taal/talen die u spreekt (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk). (1 = 'slecht', 5 = 'uitstekend')

Geef aan welke taal u gebruikt in de volgende situaties (meerdere antwoorden zijn mogelijk).
- Met collega's op het werk
- Met externe zakenpartners
- Met uw manager
- In email (werk)
- In conference calls

Hoe vaak gebruikt u een vreemde taal in uw professionele omgeving?
- Dagelijks
- 4-6 keer per week
- 1-3 keer per week
- Eens per week
- Nooit

Bet u erin geïnteresseerd om met mensen van andere culturen samen te werken? (1 = 'helemaal niet', 5 = 'zeer zeker')

Hoeveel weken heeft u in de loop van uw leven…
- Doorgebracht in het buitenland voor vakanties?
- Doorgebracht in het buitenland voor studie?

- Doorgebracht in het buitenland voor werk?
- Doorgebracht in het buitenland anders dan voor vakantie, studie en werk?

Deel 3: De volgende stellingen hebben betrekking op uw opvatting over uw baan; in welke mate zijn de stellingen voor u van toepassing? Neem uw tijd om de antwoorden openlijk en naar waarheid in te vullen. (1 = 'helemaal mee oneens', 5 = 'helemaal mee eens')

Coworkers

Ik vind de mensen met wie ik werk aardig

Ik heb het idee dat ik harder moet werken omdat mijn collega's incompetent zijn (-)

Ik heb plezier met mijn collega's

Er is te veel gekibbel en geruzie op mijn werk (-)

Nature of Work

Ik heb soms het gevoel dat mijn baan betekenisloos is (-)

Ik vind de dingen die ik voor mijn werk doe leuk

Ik haal een gevoel van trots uit mijn baan

Mijn baan is plezierig

Communications

Er lijkt goed gecommuniceerd te worden

Het is me niet duidelijk wat de doelen zijn van het bedrijf waarvoor ik werk (-)

Ik heb vaak het gevoel dat ik niet weet wat er gaande is in mijn organisatie (-)

Werktaken worden niet volledig toegelicht (-)

Deel 4: Demografische gegevens

Wat is uw geslacht?
- Vouw
- Man
- Anders

Wat is uw leeftijd?

Wat is uw nationaliteit?

- Nederlands
- Anders, namelijk

Bij welke organisatie bent u werkzaam? Hoelang al? Graag het juiste antwoord selecteren en invullen.

- Radboud Universiteit, voor een periode van: _____
- Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen, voor een periode van: _____
- Anders. Waar en hoelang? _____

Binnen welke afdeling bent u werkzaam?

Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

- MBO
- HBO
- WO
- Doctoraal/Master
- PhD/Doctoraat

Dit is het einde van de vragenlijst. Bedankt voor uw deelname!