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Intercultural competence, foreign language
mastery, psychological adjustment, and job
orientation

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Jennifer Peters – S4623576

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Radboud University Nijmegen

Supervisor: Andreu van Hooft

Second reader: Brigitte Planken

Abstract

In today's global business environment, understanding each other's cultural background is important in order to be internationally successful. What plays an important role in individual success in international assignments is the extent to which a person fits the position of the job (i.e. nationally or internationally oriented). Intercultural competence can contribute to that fit and can be defined as "the ability to function effectively in another culture" (Gertsen, 1990, p.431) and with "people of different social identities" (Byram, 2000, p.5) which leads to "success in the fields of professional effectiveness, personal adjustment and intercultural interactions" (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p.293). People with a higher level of intercultural competence are expected to be more internationally successful than people with lower levels of intercultural competence. Additional to intercultural competence, measured with the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ), foreign language mastery should be taken into consideration when predicting international success (Korzilius, Van Hooft, Planken, Hendrix, 2011), which consists of the number of spoken foreign languages and the self-assessed proficiency in those foreign languages. The present study added psychological adjustment as a variable that is possibly related to the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery (Yukanina, Weigold, Weigold, Hercegovac & Elsayed, 2012; Basow & Gaugler, 2017). The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationship between the MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment, and to determine whether the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery can predict psychological adjustment and job orientation (i.e. whether an employee works nationally or internationally). Results showed that all MPQ dimensions correlated, except for cultural empathy and flexibility, cultural empathy and emotional stability, and open-mindedness and emotional stability. Furthermore, some correlations were found with regard to psychological adjustment and no correlations were found with regard to foreign language mastery. Unexpectedly, both the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery did not predict job orientation. With regard to psychological adjustment, emotional stability was shown to be a significant predictor. These findings suggest that for British companies it would be recommended to focus on personal characteristics (i.e. the MPQ dimensions) in order to enhance psychological adjustment abroad and therefore be internationally successful.

Literature review

In today's global business environment, companies increasingly establish contacts abroad and internationally-oriented organizations are becoming the standard. Communicating internationally within and between organizations is becoming increasingly important. Previous studies claim that in communication situations with people that come from different cultural backgrounds, and the variety of cultural values that comes with that, could possibly decrease effective communication (Gertsen, 1990; Griffith, 2002). Thus, in order to communicate effectively with international contacts, understanding each other's cultural differences is a key factor (Griffith, 2002). A consequence of globalization is the need for and the rise of more expatriate executive work. Previous research focused on the importance for companies of the success of expatriates' assignments abroad, as the failure of those assignments is highly costly (See e.g. Black & Gregersen, 1999; Mendendall & Oddou, 1985; Caligiuri & Tung, 1999; Ashamalla & Crocitto, 1997; Edmond, 2012).

What plays an important role in individual success in international assignments is the extent to which a person fits the position of the job (i.e. nationally or internationally oriented). Thus, the extent to which a person's characteristics match those of the organization enhance international success. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) posit that "the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched" (p.281). This can be described as the personality-organization fit (P-O fit).

Several attempts have been made to gain a better understanding of the P-O fit (see e.g. Anderson, Spataro & Flynn, 2008; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; O'Reilly, 1977). Anderson, Spataro and Flynn (2008) posit that job performance and organizational influence can be predicted by the P-O fit, as they concluded that "better work attitudes, commitment to the organization, and increased job performance" can be encouraged by the extent to which a person fits the organization (p.708). These researchers compared a team-oriented company with a more technical organization and found that extraverts, as expected, were a better fit in the team-oriented organization than in the more technical organization, where employees more commonly worked independently. Thus, a relation was found between personality traits, such as extraversion, and the extent to which a person fit to the organization (Anderson, Spataro & Flynn; 2008).

Moreover, the study by Anderson, Spataro and Flynn (2008), as well as other previous research (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; O'Reilly, 1977), showed that work attitudes and organizational commitment could be improved by the fit between a person's characteristic

and an organization's characteristics. These studies support the notion that effective job performance, such as the successful performance of expatriates' assignments, can be enhanced by a good P-O fit.

Researchers have shown an increased interest in the influence of personality traits on the extent to which an individual is successful in their job performance. The purpose of the present study is to further explore the relationship between personality traits and individual success in international assignments. In order to determine the predictive value of personality traits in international success, more insight is needed into the understanding of the role of intercultural competence as an antecedent of effective job performance.

The relation between multicultural personality traits and intercultural competence

Culture can be defined as “a pattern of behaviors which is acquired and transferred through symbols that are shared within a group and serve as a cognitive map or a blueprint for future behavior” (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p.293) People with other cultural backgrounds need to understand the cognitive map or blueprint of a certain culture in order to be multi-culturally effective in that culture. In the literature, this is referred to as intercultural competence (Gertsen, 1990; Herfst, Van Oudenhoven & Timmerman, 2008; Korzilius, Van Hooft, Planken & Hendrix, 2011). In the literature, other names have been proposed for intercultural competence, including multicultural effectiveness (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), cross-cultural competence (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013) and intercultural abilities (Grin & Faniko, 2012). The present study uses the term intercultural competence.

A variety of definitions of the term intercultural competence have been suggested. This paper uses a combination of definitions and defines intercultural competence as “the ability to function effectively in another culture” (Gertsen, 1990, p.431) and with “people of different social identities” (Byram, 2000, p.5) which leads to “success in the fields of professional effectiveness, personal adjustment and intercultural interactions” (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p.293). The common denominator in the abovementioned definitions seems to be that individuals with a high intercultural competence are better able to understand other people's (cultural) background and therefore communicate more effectively with others than people with a lower intercultural competence. It should be noted here that the term *intercultural* competence must be interpreted with caution, because the MPQ dimensions do not measure actual competence, instead, the MPQ dimensions measure an individual's

personality. An important question that arises here is what determines whether people are inter-culturally competent. And how can we measure someone's intercultural personality?

Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) developed the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ), an instrument which can be used for predicting multicultural effectiveness, and could therefore be useful in selecting expatriates who will, based on the MPQ dimensions, be successful internationally. For example, it may be suggested that people who are more cultural empathic will probably also be more understanding towards other cultures, and therefore, it is easier for these people to reach international success than people with lower levels of cultural empathy. The MPQ is designed to question "more specific, narrow traits" (p.292) than other tools, such as for example the Big Five (Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002, p. 680), a tool that measures personality traits that are more universal and on the basis of trait adjectives such as 'outgoing' or 'forgiving'. The MPQ involves situational contexts in its questions, such as 'Is able to voice other people's thoughts' and 'Wants to know exactly what will happen'. Previous research confirms the validity of the MPQ instrument as a tool for questioning personality traits in a more specific context (see e.g. Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013).

Previous research supported the notion that narrower traits, such as those measured by the MPQ, are better in predicting international success than more universal personality traits (see e.g. Hough, 1992; Paunonen, 1998). Moreover, the MPQ could possibly predict multicultural success, which is composed of the three aspects "Success in the field of professional effectiveness, personal adjustment and intercultural interactions (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p.293; Van Oudenhoven & Van Der Zee, 2002), According to Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000), the MPQ could possibly be used as an instrument to establish which professionals have the 'ideal' multicultural personality, and therefore could communicate effectively internationally. Previous research prove that some of the MPQ dimensions have predictive value for whether someone works nationally or internationally (Korzilius et al., 2011), however, no study so far has proven that all MPQ dimensions predict someone's job orientation.

The MPQ consists of five dimensions which together predict multicultural success. The first dimension is Cultural Empathy, which is referred to as "the ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of members from different cultural groups" (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p.294). The second dimension is Open-mindedness, which refers to "an open and prejudices attitude towards outgroup members and towards different cultural norms and values" (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p.294). The third dimension is

Emotional Stability, which is “the extent to which they either stay calm and relaxed or, in contrast, panic, become irritated, or even start shouting or crying (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p.294). The fourth dimension is Social Initiative, which is defined as “a tendency to approach social situations in an active way and to take initiatives (Van Oudenhoven & Van Der Zee, 2002, p.681). The fifth dimension is Flexibility, which refers to the ability to effortlessly and quickly adapt when placed in another cultural situation (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). An aspect of flexibility is that an individual has “the ability to learn from new experiences” (Van Oudenhoven & Van Der Zee, 2002, p.681), which would lead to behavior that is easily adjusted.

In addition to measuring intercultural effectiveness and predicting international success, the abovementioned five dimensions might be useful in predicting various stakeholder groups’ personality traits, which could also help in successfully selecting expatriates for their assignments abroad. For example, Korzilius et al. (2011) compared international internal stakeholders (i.e. internationally working employees), non-international internal stakeholders, and external stakeholders (i.e. business contacts). Findings showed that the international internal stakeholders scored higher on the dimensions open-mindedness and flexibility than the non-international stakeholders. Thus, according to the study by Korzilius et al. (2011), with regard to the internal stakeholders (i.e. working employees), only the dimensions open-mindedness and flexibility discriminated between the two groups (i.e. internationally vs. non-internationally working employees) and could therefore predict international success. Further results from this study showed that external stakeholders scored higher on the dimension open-mindedness than non-international working employees. Surprisingly, the two international stakeholder groups (i.e. internationally working employees and the external business contacts) scored different on all MPQ dimension, except for open-mindedness.

The results obtained by Korzilius et al. (2011) are mixed; therefore, more research is needed to gain insights into the predictive value of the MPQ. The present study builds on previous research concerning the predictive value of the MPQ by investigating the predictive value of the MPQ personality dimension concerning job orientation (i.e. employees working nationally vs. employees working internationally).

The relation between intercultural competence and foreign language mastery

Another dimension that is related to intercultural competence is foreign language mastery, Foreign language mastery can be defined as the number of foreign languages that an individual speaks, or the extent to which an individual is proficient in foreign languages

(Korzilius et al. 2011)., Korzilius et al. (2011) examined if various stakeholder groups (i.e. internationally working employees, nationally working employees, and external business contacts) displayed differences concerning the number of spoken foreign languages and the proficiency of spoken foreign languages. They found that only the number of spoken languages could somewhat predict the differences between different stakeholder groups. Results obtained by Korzilius et al. (2011) showed that one foreign language more was spoken by internationally working employees compared to the other two stakeholder groups (i.e. nationally working employees and external business contacts).

Previous research that focused on other groups of participants found (partial) evidence for the relation between foreign language mastery and the MPQ personality dimensions. For example, Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven (2009) investigated the relationship between foreign language mastery and the MPQ personality dimensions among expatriate teenagers. Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven (2009) found that foreign language mastery correlated with the MPQ dimensions open-mindedness and cultural empathy, which means that expatriate teenagers who spoke one or two more languages besides their mother tongue scored higher on these dimensions than monolingual teenagers.

Korzilius et al. (2011) built upon the research of Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven (2009) and also investigated the relationship between foreign language mastery and the MPQ personality dimensions. In contrast to the study by Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven (2009), where teenagers were examined, Korzilius et al. (2011) investigated business professionals. They found a relationship between the number of spoken foreign languages and the MPQ dimension open-mindedness and emotional stability. Moreover, findings showed a relationship between the proficiency of spoken foreign languages and cultural empathy.

The study by Dewaele and Stavans (2014) investigated to what extent immigration, foreign language mastery and personality traits were related among Israeli participants. These researchers found that a higher proficiency in a foreign language leads to higher score on the MPQ dimensions social initiative, open-mindedness, and cultural empathy.

Herfst, Van Oudenhoven and Timmerman (2008) examined the relationship between the number of spoken languages and the MPQ personality dimensions, and found no relation between these two elements. Furthermore, in their study into Israeli multilinguals, Dewaele and Stavans (2014) also found no relation between the number of spoken languages and the MPQ personality dimensions.

From the studies outlined above, it can be concluded that results obtained from professionals (Korzilius et al., 2011; Dewaele & Stavans, 2014) differ from results obtained

from students (Dewaele & Van Oudenhoven, 2009) as participants. Interestingly, the literature does not provide an explanation for this difference in finding. As indicated in the definition of intercultural competence, Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) included “professional effectiveness” (p.293) in their definition, which means that the MPQ, developed by Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000), was developed with the purpose of predicting personality traits in a professional context, i.e. business context. Thus, a tentative reason for the difference in findings with professionals and students as participants could be that the context in which the participants function could possibly influence the predictive value of the MPQ.

The studies outlined above have shown that foreign language mastery could discriminate between various stakeholder groups and that foreign language mastery (partially) correlates with certain MPQ personality dimensions, but findings are mixed. Therefore, there is a need for research into the relationship between intercultural competence and foreign language mastery, and to test their ability to predict nationally or internationally oriented job functions.

The relation between intercultural competence and psychological adjustment

Besides investigating the relation between intercultural competence and multilingualism, and their predictive value of job orientation, several attempts have been made to gain insight into the relation between intercultural competence and psychological adjustment (Basow & Gaugler, 2017; Yukanina et al. 2012). Psychological adjustment refers to “feelings of well-being” (p.40) and “is generally assessed in terms of life satisfaction, positive and negative mood states, depression and/or anxiety” (Basow & Gaugler, 2017, p.40). In a cross-sectional study, Yukanina et al. (2012) investigated the relationship of the MPQ personality dimensions with regard to students’ cross-cultural adjustment. These researchers found a direct relationship between the MPQ dimensions social initiative and emotional stability, and psychological adjustment. The MPQ dimension cultural empathy correlated both directly and indirectly with psychological adjustment. Moreover, the MPQ dimensions open-mindedness and flexibility were related to psychological adjustment, albeit in a mediated relationship through the dimension ‘openness to diversity’ (Yukanina et al., 2012). Thus, all five MPQ dimensions were to a certain extent positively correlated to psychological adjustment.

Furthermore, Basow and Gaugler (2017) built upon the study by Yukanina et al. (2012) by examining the relationship between intercultural competence and psychological adjustment in a longitudinal study. Basow and Gaugler (2017) concluded that the four MPQ dimensions emotional stability, social initiative, cultural empathy, and open-mindedness were directly

related to psychological adjustment. Thus, according to Basow and Gaugler (2017), and in contrast with Yukanina et al. (2012), only the MPQ dimension flexibility was not related to psychological adjustment.

The studies by Basow and Gaugler (2017) and Yukanina et al. (2012) provide evidence for the relationship between intercultural competence and psychological adjustment. According to Basow and Gaugler (2017) the relevant MPQ personality dimensions for international students' adjustment are emotional stability, social initiative, cultural empathy, and open-mindedness, whereas Yukanina et al. (2012) include flexibility as an additional relevant MPQ dimension.

However, as the studies outlined above only investigated students, the question remains whether the same results would be obtained among working professionals. Previous research found evidence that there is a relation between the MPQ dimensions and adjustment of business professionals. Van Oudenhoven, Mol and Van Der Zee (2003) investigated the validity of the MPQ amongst expatriates in Taiwan, by examining three levels of adjustment: personal adjustment (i.e. "psychological outcomes such as mental health and personal satisfaction"), professional adjustment (i.e. "the amount of satisfaction with the new work environment in the host country") and social adjustment (i.e. "satisfying social relationships in the host country") (p.160), together defined as expatriate adjustment. Results showed that personal adjustment could be predicted by the MPQ dimensions emotional stability, cultural empathy and social initiative, professional adjustment was predicted by the MPQ dimension flexibility, and social adjustment was predicted by the MPQ dimensions emotional stability, flexibility, and cultural empathy. Thus, overall, expatriate adjustment was predicted by four of the MPQ dimensions: emotional stability, cultural empathy, social initiative, and flexibility.

The studies by Basow and Gaugler (2017) and Yukanina et al. (2012) show mixed results and only one study to date has investigated adjustment amongst professionals (Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van Der Zee; 2003). Therefore, the present study examined business professionals as participants, in order to investigate to what extent the same conclusions can be drawn as the studies investigating students.

The studies by Basow and Gaugler (2017) and Yukanina et al. (2012) remain narrow in focus dealing only with the relation between intercultural competence and psychological adjustment. Therefore, the present study did not only focus on investigating the relationship between intercultural competence (i.e. the MPQ personality dimensions) and foreign language mastery, but did also focus on the correlation of the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery with psychological adjustment.

Research aim and RQ's

Korzilius et al. (2012) posit that cultural difference may be the underlying reason for differences in findings and highlight the need to do more research into intercultural competence in different cultural make-ups. To test whether the findings by Korzilius et al. (2012) in the Netherlands can be generalized to other countries, and to investigate their cross-national validity, the present study was conducted in Great Britain. Moreover, to increase generalizability of findings from the study by Korzilius et al. (2012), who investigated one large company in one sector (the agricultural sector), the present study was conducted among various companies and sectors.

Furthermore, most studies in the field of intercultural competence, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment have only focused on students as respondents (Basow & Gaugler, 2017; Yukanina et al., 2012), and little research has been done using professionals (Korzilius et al., 2011; Van Oudenhoven, Mol & Van Der Zee; 2003). Therefore, the present study uses professionals as respondents. This study aims to investigate the relationship between intercultural competence, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment. Moreover, the present study aims to examine the extent to which intercultural competence and foreign language mastery predict psychological adjustment and job orientation (i.e. working nationally or internationally).

The studies outlined above have shown that intercultural competence and foreign language mastery could discriminate to some extent between various stakeholder groups, but only one study to date has investigated the combination of both intercultural competence and foreign language mastery as predictors for characteristics of various stakeholder groups (Korzilius et al., 2011) and no study to date has investigated the combination of intercultural competence, foreign language mastery and psychological adjustment. Furthermore, the study by Korzilius et al. (2011) showed mixed results. Therefore, there is a need for research into the relationship between intercultural competence, foreign language mastery and psychological adjustment, and the ability of intercultural competence and foreign language mastery to predict job orientation and psychological adjustment.

The first focus of the current study is the extent to which the five MPQ dimensions correlate amongst each other, and to what extent the MPQ dimensions correlate with foreign language mastery and psychological adjustment, regardless of respondents' job orientation. Second, this study tested whether the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery can predict job orientation and psychological adjustment. For these investigations, respondents

were split into a nationally-working group and an internationally-working group, as it may be assumed, on the basis of the literature, that internationally-working employees would be more likely to hold personal characteristics (i.e. intercultural abilities) connected with being internationally successful, and hold a higher degree of foreign language mastery, which might possibly predict their job orientation and lead to a higher level of psychological adjustment.

The present study addresses the following research questions:

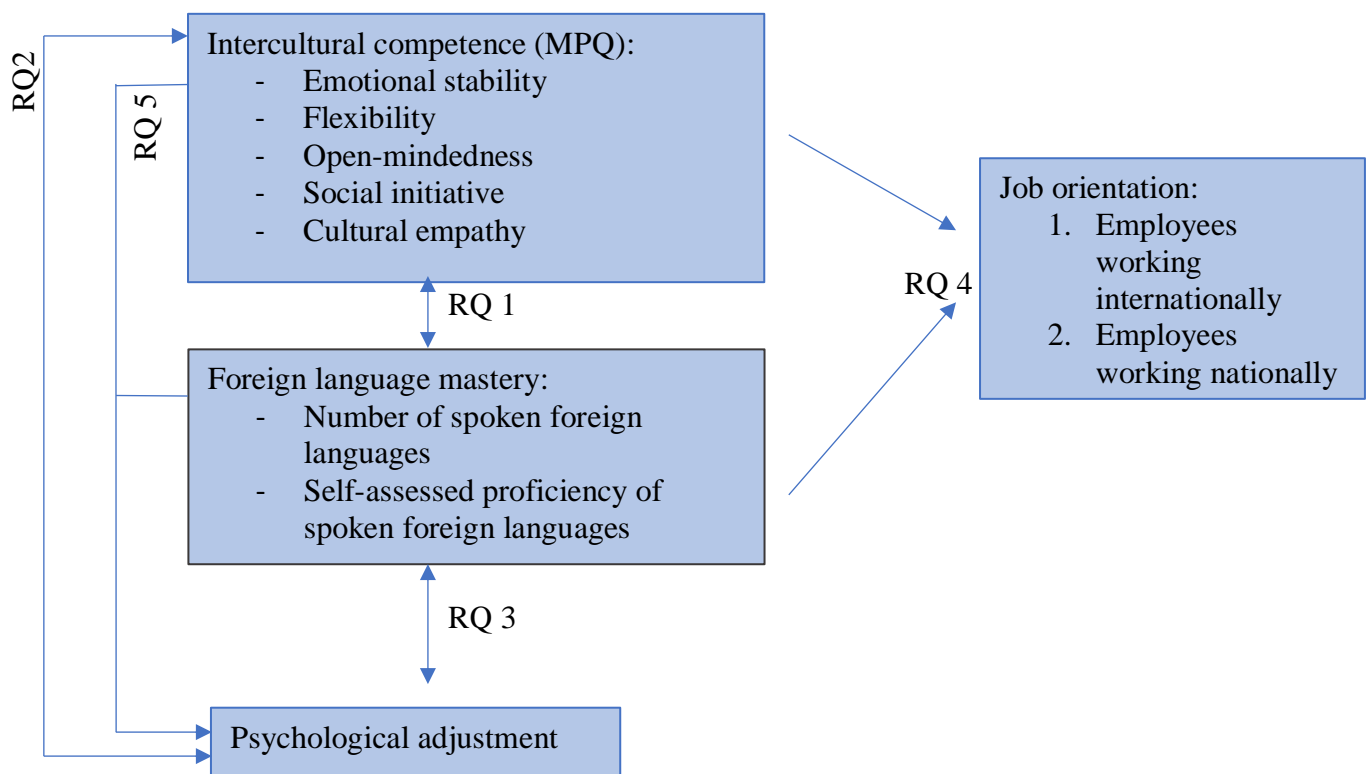
RQ1: To what extent is there a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery?

RQ2: To what extent is there a relationship between the MPQ dimensions and psychological adjustment?

RQ3: To what extent is there a relationship between foreign language mastery and psychological adjustment?

RQ4: To what extent do the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery predict job orientation?

RQ5: To what extent do the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery predict psychological adjustment for the nationally-working employees and the internationally-working employees?



Method

Instruments

The present study tested the relationship between the MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment, and to what extent the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery predict job orientation and psychological adjustment. The five MPQ dimensions cultural empathy (14 items), flexibility (13 items), emotional stability (20 items), open-mindedness (14 items), social initiative (17 items) by Van Oudenhoven and Van Der Zee (2000) were used to test subjects' intercultural competence, consisting of a total of 78 items, anchored by the question "To what extent do the following statements apply to you?" and measured by a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "totally not applicable" to 5 "totally applicable". The reliability for open-mindedness ($\alpha = .88$), social initiative ($\alpha = .91$), emotional stability ($\alpha = .80$), cultural empathy ($\alpha = .83$), and flexibility ($\alpha = .78$) was good.

Foreign language mastery was measured based on the study by Korzilius et al. (2011), consisting of the two questions "Please indicate which foreign languages you speak", and "How would you rate your proficiency level in the foreign language(s) you speak?" (1 "poor" to 5 "native-like"). Consequently, the number of foreign languages respondents spoke was calculated for each participant, and an average proficiency level was calculated for each participant.

Psychological adjustment was measured using the 10-item Schwartz Outcome Scale, based on Blais et al. (1999), using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "never" to 5 "all of the time". The reliability for psychological adjustment was good ($\alpha = .87$).

Moreover, the extent to which respondents' job is national or international was examined with the question "To what extent do you come into contact with the following aspects in your business activities?" followed by the items "Communication to another country", "Business trip abroad", and "Contact within an international network", using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "never" to 5 "very often". The reliability of the scale was good ($\alpha = .89$).

Finally, demographical questions were asked, which included respondents' gender, age, nationality, and educational level. The full questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

Procedure and respondents

The questionnaire used for this study was developed in Qualtrics. The present study was conducted among employees in the Great Britain in different sectors. The survey was distributed in English in the period from the first of May until the 29th of May 2017. Respondents were contacted via e-mail which contained the anonymous link to the online

questionnaire. Respondents were informed about the survey and that their responses would be anonymous.

A total of 116 respondents participated with a drop-out rate of 39.65%, which means that 70 respondents completed the survey, of which 28 male (40%) and 42 female (60%). The average age was 40 ($SD = 1.66$) with a range of 57, from 17 to 74 years. The most frequent level of completed education was high school (25.7%), followed by a bachelor degree (24.3%). Other educational levels were master (21.4%), PhD (7.1%), and other (18.6%).

A Chi-square test showed no significant relation between job orientation and educational level ($\chi^2 (4) = 8.376, p = .079$), or between job orientation and nationality ($\chi^2 (22) = 28.037, p = .174$). However, a Chi-square test showed a significant relation between gender and job orientation ($\chi^2 (1) = 6.193, p = .017$). Among the national employees 73.3% were female, whereas only 26.7% was male. The distribution was more equal among the international employees, as 59.3% was male and 40.7% was female. In the discussion, the potential influence of the unequal distribution of gender is discussed.

With regard to job orientation, the procedure to establish whether a respondent belonged to the national or international group was as follows. The question “To what extent do you come into contact with the following aspects in your business activities: communication to another country, business trip abroad, and contact within an international network?” was used to determine respondents’ job orientation. Respondents who stated to never go abroad for a business trip were counted as nationally working employees ($n=30$). Respondents who stated to go abroad for a business trip sometimes, often, and very often were counted as internationally working employees ($n=27$). The group of respondents who stated to rarely go abroad for a business was eliminated. An independent samples t-test showed a significant difference between nationally working employees and internationally working employees with regard to business trips abroad ($t (26) = 16.17, p < .001$), contact within an international network ($t (55) = 5.67, p < .001$), and communication to another country ($t (55) = 7.03, p < .001$). International employees ($M = 3.70, SD = .87$) were shown to go more often on a business trip abroad than national employees ($M = 1.00, SD = .00$). International employees ($M = 3.63, SD = 1.33$) were shown to have a higher level of contact within an international network than national employees ($M = 1.70, SD = 1.24$). International employees ($M = 3.89, SD = 1.05$) were shown to have a higher level of communication to another country than national employees ($M = 1.83, SD = 1.15$).

Statistical treatment

In order to statistically analyze the data, the software package SPSS version 21 was used. To give an answer to research question one, two, and three, correlations within and between the constructs were calculated to test the relationships between the MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment. To interpret the statistical analysis, the measurement of Cohen (1988, p.79-81) was used to indicate a small, medium or large correlation.

For research question four, a binomial logistic regression analysis was run in order to measure the predictive strength of the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery with regard to job orientation.

Research question five was analyzed by running a multiple regression analysis to test to what extent the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery predict psychological adjustment.

Results

The relationship between MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment

The results of the correlations between the variables MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery and psychological adjustment can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations between foreign language mastery (i.e. number of spoken foreign languages and proficiency of spoken foreign languages), intercultural competence (i.e. the five MPQ dimensions), and psychological adjustment.

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Number of spoken foreign languages	Proficiency of spoken foreign languages	Flexibility	Social Initiative	Emotional Stability	Open-mindedness	Cultural empathy	Psychological adjustment
Number of spoken foreign languages	57	.96	1.15		.32	.12	-.11	-.17	.20	.06	-.05

Proficiency of spoken foreign languages	31	2.73	1.23	.32		.10	.02	.22	.27	.01	.13
Flexibility	57	3.18	.47	.12	.10		.37**	.47**	.56**	.22	.17
Social Initiative	57	3.52	.59	-.11	.02	.37**		.50**	.34**	.47**	.32*
Emotional Stability	57	3.18	.43	-.17	.22	.47**	.50**		.21	.21	.61**
Open-mindedness	57	3.72	.43	.20	.27	.56**	.34**	.21		.50**	.23
Cultural empathy	57	3.69	.54	.06	.01	.22	.47**	.21	.50**		.20
Psychological adjustment	57	3.70	.60	-.05	.13	.17	.32*	.60**	.17	.19	

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

With regard to the MPQ dimensions it was shown that all MPQ dimensions correlated significantly, except for cultural empathy and flexibility, cultural empathy and emotional stability, and open-mindedness and emotional stability. A significant medium positive correlation was found between flexibility and social initiative ($r(57) = .37, p = .004$). It was shown that flexibility was related to social initiative. A significant medium positive correlation was found between flexibility and emotional stability ($r(57) = .47, p < .001$). It was shown that flexibility was related to emotional stability. A significant large positive correlation was found between flexibility and open-mindedness ($r(57) = .56, p < .001$). It was shown that flexibility was related to open-mindedness. A significant large positive correlation was found between social initiative and emotional stability ($r(57) = .50, p < .001$). It was shown that social initiative was related to emotional stability. A significant medium positive correlation was found between social initiative and open-mindedness ($r(57) = .34, p = .010$).

It was shown that social initiative was related to open-mindedness. A significant medium positive correlation was found between social initiative and cultural empathy ($r(57) = .47, p < .001$). It was shown that social initiative was related to cultural empathy. A significant large positive correlation was found between open-mindedness and cultural empathy ($r(57) = .50, p < .001$). It was shown that open-mindedness was related to cultural empathy.

With regard to psychological adjustment, several significant correlations were found. A significant medium positive correlation was found between psychological adjustment and social initiative ($r(57) = .32, p = .014$). It was shown that psychological adjustment was related to social initiative. A significant large positive correlation was found between psychological adjustment and emotional stability ($r(57) = .61, p < .001$). It was shown that psychological adjustment was related to emotional stability.

As can be seen in Table 1 no significant correlations were found with regard to foreign language mastery (all $p > .082$).

The prediction of Job orientation on the basis of the MPQ dimensions and Foreign language mastery

A logistic regression was performed to ascertain the effects of the MPQ dimension, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment on the likelihood that employees work nationally or internationally. The logistic regression model was not statistically significant ($\chi^2(8) = 6.627, p = .577$). No variable has been shown to be a significant predictor of job orientation (all $p > .156$).

Table 2. Results logistic regression predicting job orientation (i.e. national or international).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	Odds ratio
Number of spoken foreign languages	.18	.56	1.20
Proficiency of spoken foreign languages	.46	.39	1.59
Flexibility	.47	1.49	1.59

Social Initiative	-.40	.96	.67
Emotional Stability	1.75	1.63	5.74
Cultural Empathy	-2.13	1.50	.12
Open-mindedness	.91	1.10	2.49
Psychological Adjustment	-.61	.97	.54

Model

Likelihood ratio test $\chi^2 (8) = 6.627, p = .577$

R² Cox and Snell .25

R² Nagelkerke .34

Correct-classifications: *n*

group, *n* correct, % correct

National employees 30,18,60

International employees 27,22,81.3

The prediction of Psychological adjustment on the basis of the MPQ dimensions and Foreign language mastery

Separate multiple regression analyses were performed in order to detect differences regarding psychological adjustment between the nationally and internationally working employees.

Concerning the nationally-working employees, a multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered, the MPQ dimensions emotional stability, flexibility, cultural empathy, open-mindedness, and social initiative, explained 35% of the variance in psychological adjustment ($F(5, 24) = 4.18, p = .007$). The variable emotional stability was shown to be a significant predictor of psychological adjustment ($\beta = .63, p = .004$). No other variable was

shown to be a significant predictor of psychological adjustment (all $p > .130$). The results can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Regression analysis for the MPQ dimensions as predictors of psychological adjustment with regard to nationally-working employees ($N = 30$)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Intercept	.32	.81	
Flexibility	-.22	.20	-.23
Social initiative	-.02	.16	-.02
Emotional stability	.74	.23	.63**
Cultural empathy	.35	.22	.30
Open-mindedness	.14	.16	.17
R^2	.35		
F	4.18**		

* $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$, *** $p < .001$

Another multiple regression analysis for the nationally-working employees showed that the variables entered, number of spoken foreign languages and proficiency of spoken foreign languages, were not significant predictors ($F(2, 12) = 0.29, p = .752$). Both number of spoken foreign languages ($\beta = .21, p = .501$) and proficiency of spoken foreign languages ($\beta = .02, p = .945$) were not significant predictors of psychological adjustment. The results can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression analysis for foreign language mastery as predictor of psychological adjustment with regard to nationally-working employees ($N = 15$)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Intercept	3.32	.35	
Number of spoken foreign languages	.10	.14	.21
Proficiency of spoken foreign languages	.01	.14	.02
R^2	-.11		
F	.29		

* $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$, *** $p < .001$

Concerning the internationally-working employees, a multiple regression analysis showed that the variables entered, the MPQ dimensions emotional stability, flexibility, cultural empathy, open-mindedness, and social initiative, explained 34% of the variance in psychological adjustment ($F(5, 21) = 3.66, p = .015$). The variable emotional stability was shown to be a significant predictor of psychological adjustment ($\beta = .78, p = .001$). No other variable was shown to be a significant predictor of psychological adjustment (all $p > .225$). The results can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Regression analysis for the MPQ dimensions as predictors of psychological adjustment with regard to internationally-working employees ($N = 27$)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Intercept	.89	1.30	
Flexibility	-.44	.37	-.27
Social initiative	.02	.24	.02
Emotional stability	1.32	.33	.78**
Cultural empathy	-.44	.35	-.28
Open-mindedness	.39	.39	.26
R^2	.34		
F	3.66*		

* $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$, *** $p < .001$

Another multiple regression analysis for the internationally-working employees showed that the variables entered, number of spoken foreign languages and proficiency of spoken foreign languages, explained -.01% of the variance in psychological adjustment ($F(2, 13) = .90, p = .430$). Both number of spoken foreign languages ($\beta = .34, p = .236$) and proficiency of spoken foreign languages ($\beta = .04, p = .883$) were shown to be no significant predictors of psychological adjustment. The results can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Regression analysis for foreign language mastery as predictor of psychological adjustment with regard to internationally-working employees ($N = 16$)

Variable	B	$SE B$	β
Intercept	2.94	.66	
Number of spoken foreign languages	.31	.24	.34
Proficiency of spoken foreign languages	.03	.18	.04
R^2	-.01		
F	.90		

* $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$, *** $p < .001$

Conclusions and discussion

The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationship between the MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment, and to determine whether the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery can predict psychological adjustment and job orientation (i.e. whether an employee works nationally or internationally). In order to generalize results of previous research, and to add to the cross-national validity of previous research (see Korzilius et al., 2011), the present study was conducted in Great Britain and among various sectors. By adding psychological adjustment, the present study aimed to contribute to an under examined aspect in the field of the relationship between personal characteristics and job orientation. First, each research question is answered based on the results and compared to previous research. Moreover, possible explanations are presented. Finally, limitations and suggestions for future research are discussed.

The relationship between MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment

Research questions one to three were concerned with the relationship between the MPQ dimensions, foreign language mastery, and psychological adjustment, regardless of whether someone worked nationally or internationally. The findings revealed the following. With regard to the MPQ dimensions, it was found that flexibility was positively correlated with social initiative, emotional stability, and open-mindedness. The found positive correlations suggest that the more flexible a person is, the more emotional stable, open-minded and willing to take social initiative a person is. Since flexibility refers to the ability to effortlessly and quickly adapt when placed in another cultural situation (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven,

2000), it seems reasonable that people who score higher on this dimension, also score higher on the dimensions emotional stability (i.e. the ability to stay calm and relaxed), open-mindedness (i.e. having an open attitude), and social initiative (i.e. to take initiative in social situations), as all these dimensions contribute to the ability to deeper understand other cultures. Additionally, social initiative was positively correlated with emotional stability, open-mindedness, and cultural empathy. This means that the more one takes initiative in social situations, the more emotional stable, open-minded, and cultural empathic one is. Finally, with regard to the MPQ dimensions, a positive correlation was found between cultural empathy and open-mindedness.

The found positive correlations support the idea that all MPQ dimensions (i.e. flexibility, emotional stability, open-mindedness, social initiative, and cultural empathy) are personal characteristics that to some extent contribute to understanding other cultural rules. These findings are partly in line with Korzilius et al. (2011), who also found significant positive correlations between abovementioned MPQ dimensions. However, Korzilius et al. (2011) found more significant correlations that were not found in the present study. Findings of the study by Korzilius et al. (2011) showed that, contrary to the present study, all MPQ dimensions were significantly correlated, except for cultural empathy and flexibility. A possible explanation for the differences in findings may lie in the different sample characteristics. Firstly, the current study contained a smaller sample size. Therefore, it could be possible that the present study did not detect significant correlations that were found in the study by Korzilius et al. (2011). Secondly, the current study investigated various sectors, whereas Korzilius et al. (2011) only studied one large company in one sector.

Unexpectedly, no significant correlations were found with regard to foreign language mastery. Both number of spoken foreign languages and self-assessed proficiency of spoken foreign languages were not correlated to the MPQ dimensions or to psychological adjustment. This would mean that speaking a foreign language or being proficient in a foreign language is independent from adjusting psychologically to intercultural situations, as well as independent from having intercultural competence. This finding is in contrast to the findings by Korzilius et al. (2011), who found that the number of spoken foreign languages was positively correlated with the MPQ dimensions open-mindedness and emotional stability, and that the self-assessed proficiency of spoken foreign languages was positively correlated with cultural empathy. This rather contradictory result may be due to, again, the difference in sample characteristics. As the current study was conducted in Great Britain, whereas the study by Korzilius et al. (2011) was conducted in the Netherlands, respondents of the current study

spoke English as their first language. Results of the current study show that, on average, respondents spoke not even one foreign language ($M = .96$), whereas results of the study by Korzilius et al. (2011) showed that, on average, respondents spoke almost two foreign languages ($M = 1.81$). As previous research posits that English is often used as lingua franca in business contacts (see e.g. Dewey, 2007), English native speakers tend to speak in their native language, regardless of communication with other English native speakers or with non-English speakers in international contacts. Consequently, it might be possible that English native speakers, such as respondents of the current study, speak fewer foreign languages than non-English native speakers, such as the respondents of the study by Korzilius et al. (2011).

Findings of the present study with regard to the correlations with foreign language mastery are partly in line with Dewaele and Stavans (2014) and Herfst, Van Oudenhoven and Timmerman (2008), who also found no correlation between the number of spoken languages and the MPQ dimensions. However, in contrast with the present study, Dewaele and Stavans (2014) found that a higher proficiency in a foreign language leads to a higher score on the MPQ dimensions social initiative, open-mindedness, and cultural empathy.

Psychological adjustment was positively correlated with emotional stability and social initiative, but not correlated with the other MPQ dimensions or foreign language mastery. A rational assumption would be that people who are emotionally stable also show a higher level of psychological adjustment. Moreover, since social initiative is defined as “a tendency to approach social situations in an active way” (Van Oudenhoven & Van Der Zee, 2002, p.681) it is reasonable that people who are able to psychologically adjust in intercultural and new situations, are also more willing to take social initiative. These findings are partly in line with Yukanina et al. (2012), who also found a direct relationship between emotional stability and social initiative, and psychological adjustment. However, these researchers additionally found a direct relationship between the MPQ dimension cultural empathy and psychological adjustment. Moreover, Yukanina et al. (2012) found an indirect relationship between open-mindedness and flexibility, and psychological adjustment. Findings of the present study are also partly in line with Basow and Gaugler (2017), who found that the MPQ dimensions emotional stability, social initiative, cultural empathy, and open-mindedness were related to psychological adjustment. These differences in findings can be explained by the fact the both Yukanina et al. (2012) and Basow and Gaugler (2017) used students as respondents in their research, while the current study used professionals as respondents. It is possible that results are different for professionals compared to students due to the different environments in which professionals and students are. It might be assumed that students are more flexible in

general as they are usually younger than employees, which makes it easier for students to adapt to new situations, plus the fact that students are together in classes, which makes making new contacts rather easy. Moreover, employees are more involved with obligations and responsibilities such as moving the family, costs such as rent and a car, and the pressure of being a successful expat. This could possibly influence professionals' psychological adjustment abroad, compared to students' psychological adjustment.

However, even though the kind of respondents may explain results from the current study, no conclusions can be drawn on the differences between professionals and students with regard to the MPQ dimensions and psychological adjustment, as this study did not compare these two groups, nor was causality measured in the current study. To develop a full picture of possible differences between professionals and students with regard to personal characteristics such as the MPQ dimensions and psychological adjustment, additional studies will be needed that investigate both students' and professionals' personal characteristics.

The prediction of Job orientation on the basis of the MPQ dimensions and Foreign language mastery

Research question four dealt with the predictive strength of the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery for job orientation. Contrary to expectations, the results of the present study indicate that the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery do not predict job orientation. This means that the MPQ dimensions are independent from whether an employee works nationally or internationally, and that it is whether an employee speaks more foreign languages or whether one is more proficient in a foreign language. This finding is in contrast with Korzilius et al. (2011), who found that the MPQ dimensions emotional stability and open-mindedness could possibly predict whether an employee's job is nationally or internationally oriented.

Again, this difference in findings could be explained by the different sample characteristics of the current study compared to the study by Korzilius et al. (2011). First, the smaller sample size of the current study could have led to failing to detect significant results and therefore, caution must be applied. Second, and as abovementioned, the fact that respondents of the present study are English native speakers could be an explanation for why the present study failed to indicate the predictive value of foreign language mastery for job orientation.

The prediction of Psychological adjustment on the basis of the MPQ dimensions and Foreign language mastery

Research question five dealt with the predictive strength of the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery for psychological adjustment. The current study found that only the MPQ dimension emotional stability predicts psychological adjustment. Surprisingly, findings of the current study showed that the other four MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery were not predictive for psychological adjustment. As was made clear in the results with regard to the relationship between the MPQ dimensions and psychological adjustment, emotional stability was positively correlated with psychological adjustment, meaning that people who are emotionally more stable also show a higher level of psychological adjustment. As psychological adjustment refers to “feelings of well-being” (Basow & Gaugler, 2017, p.40), it is reasonable that people who have a higher level of psychological adjustment, also are emotionally stable, which means that they have the ability to stay calm and relaxed, which in turn could again lead to higher levels of feelings of well-being.

These findings are in contrast with studies by Yukanina et al. (2012) and Basow and Gaugler (2017), who found that all MPQ dimensions contributed directly or indirectly to psychological adjustment. Again, differences in results may be explained by the different kind of respondents (students vs. professionals) used in the studies by Yukanina et al. (2012) and Basow and Gaugler (2017), and the present study.

Practical implications

Findings of the present study have important implications for the professional context. Previous research (Anderson, Spataro & Flynn, 2008; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; O’Reilly, 1977) posits that a greater personality-organization fit (P-O fit) contributes to the successful performance of expatriates’ assignments, which can be enhanced by the extent to which a person’s characteristics match those of the organization. Therefore, the present study aimed to gain more insight into the understanding of the role of intercultural competence as a possible influence of international success. More insight into the P-O fit makes it possible for managers to select expats based on certain personality traits. Findings of the present study showed that emotional stability could possibly predict psychological adjustment. Additionally, emotional stability was positively correlated with the MPQ dimensions social initiative and flexibility, which in turn were positively correlated with open-mindedness and cultural empathy. Thus, strong correlations among the MPQ dimensions were found. These findings suggest that for British companies it

would be recommended to focus on all the MPQ dimensions in order to enhance psychological adjustment abroad and therefore be internationally successful.

On the contrary, findings of the present study showed that foreign language mastery does not contribute to intercultural competence. Therefore, language skills or the number of spoken foreign languages should not be the main focus for British companies to select or train British employees in order to be internationally successful. It appears that speaking more languages and being more proficient in foreign languages does not relate to intercultural abilities in this sample and should therefore, based on the current study, not be the main emphasis of British managers with regard to effective intercultural communication in the professional context.

General conclusion

As not all MPQ dimensions are correlated, one conclusion that can be drawn from part of the findings of the present study is that for example a higher level of flexibility in the population of the present study is associated with higher levels of social initiative, emotional stability and open-mindedness, but not necessarily with higher levels of cultural empathy. Additionally, higher levels of psychological adjustment are associated with higher levels of social initiative and emotional stability, but not necessarily with higher levels of cultural empathy, flexibility, and open-mindedness. Moreover, when findings of the present study are compared to previous research (Korzilius et al., 2011; Yukanina et al., 2012; Basow & Gaugler, 2017), findings are mixed. This might not only suggest that understanding intercultural competence is more complex than expected, but also its relationship with foreign language mastery and psychological adjustment, and that there might be other factors that could influence these relationships. Further investigation and examination into the relationship between personal characteristics and job orientation are strongly recommended.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

The current study was limited in several ways. First, the small sample size, due to a dropout rate of 39.65%, was relatively small, which might have led to difficulties in detecting correlations or predictive value of the variables. It is recommended for further research to make use of large-scale samples in order to enhance the possibility to generalize the results.

It is important to bear in mind the possible bias in the responses, since the current research was based on self-assessment. Self-assessment of language skills might lead to answers that are deviating from language skills. This might have resulted in language skill levels and personality outcomes that differed from actual language skill levels and respondents' actual

personality. It would be interesting for further research to use a method of measuring skills more objectively.

Another limitation that goes in line with the limitation of self-assessment, is the way in which job orientation was defined and determined. First of all, respondents had to self-assess their job orientation, which could be seen as a limitation, as respondents might hold different views of what an “international job” is. Second, the literature does not provide a clear definition of what distinguishes a nationally-oriented job from an internationally-oriented job. This makes it more difficult to define job orientation, and more difficult to generalize the results and compare results to other studies.

This study has been unable to demonstrate that foreign language mastery was related to the MPQ dimensions, whereas Korzilius et al. (2011) found a significant relationship between foreign language mastery and the MPQ dimensions, possibly since respondents of the current study were English native speakers, whereas respondents of the study by Korzilius et al. (2011) were non-English native speakers. A future study investigating the possible influence of respondents’ native language, for example by asking what language is used for international contacts, would be interesting. Future research should focus on both English native speakers and non-English native speakers to further indicate the relevance of foreign language mastery in the relationship with intercultural competence.

An issue that was not addressed in this study was whether psychological adjustment could possibly predict job orientation. The literature on psychological adjustment (Yukanina et al. 2012; Basow & Gaugler, 2017) does not provide insights into the relationship of psychological adjustment and job orientation, as previous research focused on students and did not examine professionals. Consequently, no expectations were expressed in this study with regard to the predictive value of psychological adjustment on job orientation, and, therefore, this issue was not investigated. It would be interesting for future research to examine a possible relationship between psychological adjustment and job orientation.

The possible influence of culture on results of the present study cannot be ruled out. The present study was conducted in the Great Britain, which, according to Hofstede, has a high score on the individualism dimension (score by Hofstede, 89, <https://geert-hofstede.com/united-kingdom.html>). A higher level of individualism within a culture might lead to an ego-defensive strategy of giving answers (MacDonald, Sulsky, Spence & Brown, 2013), resulting in desirable answers with regard to the self among people in the Great Britain, in order to keep up a positive image. Therefore, culture is a factor that could be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. However, culture was not measured as a

separate variable in this study and therefore, further work is required to be able to draw accurate conclusions on the effect of culture.

Another factor that could have affected the results is the high average age (40) among the respondents, which is a generation that grew up in a less international context than the current younger generation. Personal characteristics of the younger generation nowadays are more affected by the international context in which we live than among the respondents used for this research. Further work needs to be done to establish whether the same results would be obtained among younger respondents.

Another limitation lies in the fact that gender was unequally distributed in the current study, which might have led to different results compared to an equal distribution of gender, might have influenced the results. In order to be better able to generalize the results, it is recommended for future research to ascertain an equal distribution of gender.

In general, based on the present study and compared to the study by Korzilius et al. (2011), it appears that there is a difference in findings in Great Britain and the Netherlands with regard to the MPQ dimensions and foreign language mastery, and their predictive value. Large-scale and cross-national or cross-cultural investigations are recommended to establish a greater understanding into the relationship between personal characteristics, language skills, and job orientation.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Dear participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study into intercultural competence in global business context, being conducted by the department of Communication and Information Sciences at the Radboud University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. You will need about 10-15 minutes to answer all the questions in this questionnaire.

Confidentiality

The information in the study records will be kept confidential. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless you specifically give permission in writing to do otherwise. 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 three parts: first you assess a number of statements that relate to your views of yourself, subsequently we will ask you some questions about your language competence and lastly we ask some demographic questions. The bar at the bottom of the screen displays your progress. The survey is saved automatically and you can stop and continue the survey at any time or another day. Please do not forget to complete the survey.

We ask you to fill out the questionnaire with as much accuracy as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,

Dr. Andreu van Hooft (Radboud University Nijmegen)

Jennifer Peters (MA student International Business Communication)

If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Dr. Andreu van Hooft, Chief Investigator, on a.v.hooft@let.ru.nl.

The following statements are related to the views you have about yourself; to what extent do they apply to you? Please take your time to answer the statements openly and truthfully. (1- “totally not applicable”; 2- “not applicable”; 3- “neutral”; 4- “applicable”; 5- “totally applicable”)

Likes low-comfort holidays
Takes initiative
Is nervous
Makes contacts easily
Is not easily hurt
Is troubled by conflicts with others; suffers from conflicts with others
Finds it difficult to make contacts
Understands other people's feelings
Keeps to the background
Is interested in other cultures
Avoids from adventure
Changes easily from one activity to another
Is fascinated by other people's opinions
Tries to understand other people's behavior
Is afraid to fail
Avoids surprises
Takes other people's habits into consideration
Is inclined to speak out
Likes to work on his/her own
Looking for new ways to attain his/her goal
Dislikes traveling
Wants to know exactly what will happen
Remains calm in misfortune; keeps calm at ill-luck
Waits for others to initiate contacts; leaves the initiative to others to make contacts
Takes the lead
Is a slow starter
Is curious
Takes it for granted that things will turn out right
Is always busy
Is easy-going in/among groups
Finds it hard to empathize with others
Functions best in a familiar setting
Radiates calm

Easily approaches other people
Finds other religions interesting
Considers problems solvable
Works mostly according to a strict scheme
Is timid
Knows how to act in social settings
Likes to speak in public
Tends to wait and see
Feels uncomfortable in a different culture
Works according to plan
Is under pressure
Sympathizes with others
Has problems assessing relationships
Likes action
Is often the driving force behind things
Leaves things as they are
Likes routine
Is attentive to facial expressions/statements
Can put setbacks in perspective
Is sensitive to criticism
Tries out various approaches
Has ups and downs
Has fixed habits
Forgets setbacks easily
Is intrigued by differences
Starts a new life easily
Asks personal questions
Enjoys other people's stories
Gets involved in other cultures
Remembers what other people have told
Is able to voice other people's thoughts
Is self-confident
Has a feeling for what is appropriate in another / a specific culture

Gets upset easily
Is a good listener
Worries
Notices when someone is in trouble
Has good insight into human nature
Is apt to feel lonely
Seeks contact with people from different backgrounds
Has a broad range of interests
Is insecure
Has a solution for every problem
Puts his or her own culture in perspective
Is open to new ideas

Now some questions will follow in relation to your language competence.

Are you bilingual? (two or more mother tongues)

Yes

No

What is your mother tongue?

Arabic

Danish

German

English

French

Greek

Indonesian

Italian

Japanese

Cantonese

Malay

Mandarin

Dutch

Polish

Portuguese
Russian
Spanish
Thai
Turkish
Vietnamese
Swedish,
Other, namely:

Please indicate your mother tongues.

Arabic
Danish
German
English
French
Greek
Indonesian
Italian
Japanese
Cantonese
Malay
Mandarin
Dutch
Polish
Portuguese
Russian
Spanish
Thai
Turkish
Vietnamese
Swedish,
Other, namely:

Do you speak any foreign language(s)?

Yes

No

Please list the languages you speak (max. 10).

How would you rate your proficiency level in the foreign language(s) you speak? (1- “poor”; 2- “fair”; 3- “functional”; 4- “good”; 5- “native-like”)

Below are 10 statements about you and your life that help us see how you feel you are doing. Please indicate what best fits your feelings (1- “never”; 2- “sometimes”; 3- “about half of the time”; 4- “most of the time”; 5- “all of the time”)

Given my current physical condition, I am satisfied with what I can do

I have confidence in my ability to sustain important relations

I feel hopeful about my future

I am often interested and excited about things in my life

I am able to have fun

I am generally satisfied with my psychological health

I am able to forgive myself for my failures

My life is progressing according to my expectations

I am able to handle conflicts with others

I have peace of mind

To what extent do you come into contact with the following aspects in your business activities? (1- “never”; 2- “rarely”; 3- “sometimes”; 4- “often”; 5- “very often”)

Communication to another country

Business trip abroad

Contact within an international network

Do your business activities mainly have a national or international focus? Divide your business activities in national/international by shifting the beams so that they add up to 100%.

These final questions are about your personal background. Please describe or mark your answer.

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your age?

What is your nationality?

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

High school

Bachelor

Master

Phd

Other, namely:

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your participation.