

**The role of intercultural competence in European international management**

**Theory, measurement, antecedents and outcomes**

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**The Role of Intercultural Competence in European International Management:  
Theory, Measurement, Antecedents, and Outcomes**

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In light of the current developments – not only in the European context – the relevance of understanding the effects of intercultural competencies on international management outcomes has never been greater (e.g. Thomas, et al., 2015). Researchers agree that to be successful in international and intercultural contexts, European managers and especially global leaders need intercultural competencies to be able to deal with the increasingly complex and globalized world (e.g. Bücker & Poutsma, 2010; Johnson, Lenartowicz, & Apud, 2006; Bird, Mendenhall, Stevens, & Oddou, 2010). The research on cross-cultural aspects of management has long relied on and discussed concepts of cultural values (e.g. the concepts of Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, of project GLOBE, see House & Javidan, 2004, or of Schwartz, 1992, 1994), and value differences between nations (e.g. Shenkar, 2001; Kraus, Meier, Eggers, Bouncken, & Schuessler, 2016; Jiménez, Jiménez, Ordeñana, & Puche-Regalíaza, 2017) to understand various international management related outcomes (e.g. Garbe & Richter, 2009; Hoffmann, 2014; Hauff, Richter, & Tressin, 2015; Gunkel, Schlaegel, Rossteutscher, & Wolff, 2015, see also the overview in Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006).

Albeit the progress made, researchers claim that it is time to move forward and discover new theoretical streams and methodological practices which might be useful for explaining management behaviors and the mechanisms to improve international managerial outcomes (e.g. Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2017; Devinney & Hohberger, 2017). One of these newer concepts and streams is the one looking more directly at intercultural competencies, such as a global mindset (e.g. Lovvorn & Chen, 2011; Maznevski & Lane, 2003) or cultural intelligence (e.g. Earley & Ang, 2003; Ang, et al., 2007). These concepts have emerged from different research streams, yet seem to significantly overlap and are useful to further study successful intercultural interaction within different management settings (e.g. Andresen & Bergdolt, 2017). Prior

research looks at these phenomena from basically four different perspectives (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014; Ott & Michailova, 2016): a) a conceptual perspective which focuses on conceptualizing competencies and developing constructs (e.g. Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2012, Thomas, et al., 2008), b) the investigation into antecedent factors of intercultural competencies which can be used for developing such competencies (e.g. cross-cultural training or contact with a local host, see Reichard, et al., 2015; Van Bakel, Gerritsen, & Van Oudenhoven, 2014), c) the understanding of moderating or mediating effects of these phenomena on management outcomes (e.g. see Wu & Ang, 2011; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012), and finally d) the direct associations of intercultural competencies with management related performance outcomes (e.g. Remhof, Gunkel, & Schlägel, 2013; Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, Van Dyne, & Annen, 2011).

Building on the above, the objective of this special issue is twofold: First, the special issue aims to address and promote research associated with theory, conceptualization, and measurement of intercultural competence to contribute to the recent developments in this area (e.g. Schlägel & Sarstedt, 2016). Second, the special issue aims at fostering research into intercultural competencies from a management perspective: In this context, the objective is to increase our understanding of the specific processes or mechanisms through which antecedents influence intercultural competencies (that are of value for different management fields). Moreover, the objective is to uncover the processes or mechanisms through which intercultural competencies manifest as determinants of management related outcomes.

These research objectives are not only of theoretical value, but also have valuable management implications: A better understanding of the determinants and outcomes of intercultural competencies could guide the development of effective intervention programs, and should improve the international management in European firms (e.g. Engle & Crowne, 2014; Alon & Higgins, 2005).

### **Subject Coverage**

The following suggestions include (but are not limited to) possible areas of research that will be suitable for this special issue:

#### **Theory and Measurement**

- Conceptual papers discussing concepts and frameworks of intercultural competence, their differences and similarities, and appropriateness for various research purposes in an European international management context
- Conceptual papers and/or empirical research that aim(s) to improve existing measures of intercultural competence through novel methodological approaches (e.g., cultural neuroscience)
- Empirical research on the nature and dimensionality of intercultural competence
- Empirical research that compares the similarities and differences as well as the effectiveness of different intercultural competence conceptualizations and measures
- Empirical research that assess the measurement of intercultural competence at the team level and the organizational level
- Empirical research that addresses the measurement of intercultural competence across different countries, regions, and social groups

#### **Antecedents**

- Empirical research into the processes or mechanisms through which different antecedents (that are of relevance to European international management) influence the development of intercultural competencies
- Empirical multi-level research that examines the determinants and development of intercultural competence across different levels of analysis (e.g. supervisor's intercultural competence and supervisee's intercultural competence)
- Empirical research that compares different trainings and interventions to foster the development of intercultural competence
- Empirical evidence that combines qualitative and quantitative procedures to assess the role of negative and positive international experience as well as depth and breadth of international experience in the development of intercultural competence
- Empirical evidence that investigates the interaction effects of cultural distance and international experience in the development of cultural competence
- And we also encourage: Empirical research that goes beyond the "usual suspects" and explores the influence of antecedents, such as prenatal testosterone, body mass-index, and ADHD, on intercultural competence

#### **Outcomes**

- Empirical research into the processes and mechanisms through which intercultural competencies influence international management related outcomes (e.g. HR, marketing, purchasing, operations)
- Empirical multi-level research that examines the influence of intercultural competencies across different levels of analysis (e.g., team-level, organizational level)
- Empirical research that tests the unique and shared effects of different facets of intercultural competence on management-related outcomes

#### **Notes for Prospective Authors**

Submitted papers should not have been previously published nor be currently under consideration for publication elsewhere. (N.B. Conference papers may only be submitted if the paper has been completely re-written and if appropriate written permissions have been obtained from any copyright holders of the original paper).

All papers are refereed through a peer review process.

All papers must be submitted online. To submit a paper, please read our Submitting articles page.

If you have any queries concerning this special issue, please email the Guest Editors.

#### **Important Dates**

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