Exploring the impact of experiential learning and cross-cultural management education as contributing factors to Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development

A comparative study of Austrian and Italian business students

Master Thesis
to obtain the academic degree of
Master of Science Global Business
in the Master's Program
Global Business Russland/Italien
Statutory Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted is my own unaided work, that I have not used other than the sources indicated, and that all direct and indirect sources are acknowledged as references.

This printed thesis is identical with the electronic version submitted.

Kirchberg-Thening, 17/12/2018

Jungreithmeier K.
Dedication

I dedicate this master thesis to my family and friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, Christine and Alfred whose words of encouragement help me to achieve my best. They enabled me to study, which I appreciate tremendously. My brother Stefan, who is very special to me and keeps me grounded. My loving partner Markus, without whom I would not have the perseverance to keep going. With his unconditional love, I felt continuously supported throughout my entire studies.

I also dedicate this thesis to many friends who have supported me throughout the process. I will always appreciate all they have done and the measures they took to keep me motivated. Even though I complained a lot through this entire journey, they still stood at my side.
Abstract

Permanently changing business environments and, as a result, an increased occurrence of cross-cultural encounters in accordance with a heightened workforce diversity, represent enormous challenges for today's labor pool. Following this, multicultural teams are no longer an option and thus, individuals are now required to deal with diverse work environments and cultures. This demands for the concept of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) to assist individuals in handling such unstable and potentially ambiguous conditions. However, a scarcity of research about CQ competencies development is prevalent. Consequently, due to the gap in research about CQ development, this master thesis deals with the role of training interventions regarding students’ self-perceived Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development. More precisely, it explores cross-cultural management education (CCM) and experiential learning as contributing factors to CQ amplification within a cross-cultural context. Hence the study aims at closing the identified research gap through collecting data from semi-structured interviews of Austrian and Italian business students. The statements about their feelings, attitudes, and perceptions related to CQ development are the object of the study. As the results show, intercultural training interventions are vital elements in preparing individuals for an international environment. In this regard, the interviewees express confidence and satisfaction in their cross-cultural abilities, which is primarily attributable to prior CQ interventions. What is more, the exerted CQ level affects aspirations for global success as well as the motivation to push across cross-cultural boundaries. Above all, for both Italian and Austrian students receiving theoretical input as well as gaining real-life experiences is the most feasible way to develop CQ, with a greater importance given to experiential learning. Apart from this, no clear culture-specific patterns can be identified. Above all, the collected findings demonstrate valuable information and insights regarding the conditions students need in order to develop their cross-cultural ability spectrum. Thus, the relevance of academic institutions concerning CQ development is highlighted.
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III. List of Abbreviations

CBS ........................................................................................................................................................ Cultural Boundary Spanning
CJDM ........................................................................................................................................................ Cultural Judgment and Decision Making
CQ ........................................................................................................................................................ Cultural Intelligence
CQS ........................................................................................................................................................ Cultural Intelligence Scale
CST ........................................................................................................................................................ Cultural Strategic Thinking
EQ ........................................................................................................................................................ Emotional Intelligence
ELT ........................................................................................................................................................ Experiential Learning Theory
IQ ........................................................................................................................................................ Intelligence Quotient
QCA ........................................................................................................................................................ Qualitative Content Analysis
Part 1: Literature review

1 Introduction

Throughout the past decades, the world has been permanently confronted with the implications of the globalization as barriers fall and cultures become more intertwined. Consequently, an increased occurrence of cross-cultural encounters in accordance with a heightened workforce diversity and heterogeneity represent enormous challenges for today's labor pool. However, the current status is that transnational companies increasingly structure their organizations by using teams composed of members originating from diverse cultural backgrounds. With regard to Triandis (2006, p. 20), these cultural differences may be due to language, ethnicity, religion, politics, social class, and other attributes. It is noteworthy to state that the existence of multicultural teams as an organizational element is no longer an option, but rather the status quo of modern corporate reality (Eisenberg & Williams, 2012) as the work environment continues to encompass an increased amount of diversity.

However, being confronted with different cultures does not only yield in benefits, yet significant obstacles for people striving within global spheres prevail. Hence globalization and its effects have an extensive impact on individuals across international realms and fields. Thus, how individuals can develop and exert cross-cultural capabilities is an essential question within academic literature. Before the concept of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) was introduced by Earley and Ang (2003), various intercultural theories were already established within the body of literature. In spite of this, the concept of CQ exhibited profound empirical validity and thus, scholars see it as a standard tool to evaluate and frame one’s skills set within a cross-cultural setting. Regarding the main essence of the concept of CQ, Earley and Ang (2003) pinpoint that it assists individuals in handling unstable conditions and increasing their CQ competencies.

In general, it has been widely assumed that an analysis of intercultural proficiency occurs based on the pillars of CQ. Even though an array of definitions on CQ exist, one of the most commonly known definitions has been made by Earley and Ang (2003), in which they refer to a “person’s capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts” (p. 59). In this regard, the elaboration on the multiple foci of intelligence by Stemberg and Detterman (1986) serves as a basis for CQ in terms of the creation of a multifactor model. Thus, the multiple foci of intelligence construct is comprised of metacognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral facets of intelligence, which is extended by various authors to create the concept of CQ (e.g. Earley & Ang, 2003; Earley, Ang &
Tan, 2006; Earley & Peterson, 2004; Thomas & Inkson, 2003). It is important to acknowledge the fact that the conceptualization of CQ does not provide one single framework as various researchers have created somewhat diverging, yet somehow similar models. Additionally, with regard to CQ research, an extensive amount has been conducted on the antecedents of CQ (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008; Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2012) as well as its links to other constructs of intelligence (Ang, Van Dyne, & Rockstuhl, 2015; Earley & Ang, 2003).

To date, the most significant attention within CQ research realms has been given to its outcomes, which can range from performance, psychological, behavioral to cognitive outcomes (Ang et al., 2007). Apart from this, the depiction of CQ development interventions within the academic literature has increased over the past decade, but it did not yet receive the required attention. In this context, a growing body of literature has studied the influence of both experiential learning (e.g. MacNab, 2012) and cross-cultural management education (CCM) (e.g. Eisenberg et al., 2013). Thus, the literature portrays that two research paradigms contribute to the development of CQ, which are firmly interconnected. Above all, as research has shown, there is a significant connection between a successful CQ development and intercultural training methods. Concerning this matter, it is noteworthy to state that cross-cultural interventions play a major role in dealing with today’s complex business dynamics and guaranteeing an individual’s success on a global scale.

1.1 Research gap and research questions

This thesis deals with the role of experiential learning and cross-cultural management education (CCM) as contributors to students’ CQ development. In general, the literature suggests that being knowledgeable about important cultural cues indicates an easier foray into unknown cohorts. Even though this is widely known in today’s business environment, managers still continually fail to be aware of important cultural nuances (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004a). Despite this, researchers such as Hofstede et al. (2010) depict that cultural diversity among and within countries will remain and there is strong evidence that cultural differences will face another significant increase in the future. Consequently, today’s labor pool has “no choice but to pursue the direction of expansion of the moral circle to all people in the world” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 477). In this regard, the concept of CQ implies how to exhibit an individual with a repertoire of skills to strive within an international setting. The body of literature on CQ has expanded extensively over the past decade with many scholars using it a basis within their studies (e.g. Ahn & Etther, 2013; Clifford & Montgomery, 2015; Engle & Crowne, 2014; Erez et al., 2013; Holbrügge & Engelhard, 2016; Kurpis & Hunter, 2017; Reichard et al., 2015; Rosenblatt, Worthley, & MacNab, 2013). However, research on CQ mainly emphasizes the antecedents and the immediate outcomes rather than examining the underlying factors or elements that lead to the development of CQ.
In spite of the abundance of research in some fields, there are still questions, which have not been clarified within the existing literature. In this regard, according to Ott and Michailova (2018), it is noteworthy to point out to the fact that questions remain about the development of CQ. More precisely, whether it can be acquired and in which way it can be obtained. Even though a significant number of studies have been conducted on the link between international experiences and CQ development, discrepancies prevail. Consequently, Ott and Michailova (2018) argue that there is an apparent lack of consistency regarding the stance on how CQ is developed through real-life experiences. The inconsistency is mostly due to the fact that there is no comprehensive conceptualization of the CQ construct as can be seen in the different approaches by Earley and Ang (2003) and Thomas and Inkson (2003). Therefore, it is assumed that discrepancies within CQ development exist as cohesiveness of the theoretical grounding is non-existent. What is more, Ott and Michailova (2018) suggest that a greater relevance within research should be given to the question of how CQ can be developed and in particular, determining a clear pattern regarding CQ development interventions.

In addition to this, there is an apparent gap within research as studies do not report a comprehensive approach regarding CQ development research. Thus, despite the fact that step-by-step guides relating to CQ and intercultural competencies development exist (e.g. Bennett, Aston, & Colquhoun, 2000; Earley & Mosakowski, 2004b; Brislin, Worthley, & MacNab, 2006), consensus about the CQ development methods is not available. In this context, the different CQ development research paradigms act somewhat separately, yet are connected to either experiential learning or cross-cultural management education. In spite of the categorization into two different development streams, synergies exist and when examining them in detail it can be identified that the two paradigms overlap in some aspects. What is more, due to the extensive amount of literature on expatriate CQ development, there is a lack of research on students' CQ development. However, rather recently, studies based on student samples within the realms of CQ development has gained momentum.

What is more, comparative empirical research, especially in a cross-cultural context is lacking regarding students’ CQ development. Above all, within the literature there has been little agreement on what truly constitutes the development of Cultural Intelligence and in particular, in a student context. Hence it can be stated that a research gap exists in this field. Thus, this thesis will start to close this research gap by exploring the explicit role of experiential learning and cross-cultural management education as contributing factors to students' CQ development. Thereby, the concept of CQ and its amplification will be better understood as well as insights can be gathered. Additionally, implications for practice and research can be identified. In line with the identified
research gap in this field, the main research question has been developed, which is further accompanied by one sub-question.

In general, the primary research question demonstrates and helps to understand to which extent the two identified influencing factors of cross-cultural management education (CCM) and experiential learning are related to students’ CQ development. Hence it is defined in this way:

“How do cross-cultural management education and experiential learning contribute to students’ self-perceived Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development?”

In addition to this, as a comparative study will be conducted, the following sub-question focuses on any significant distinctions, which may derive from the sampling of Austrian and Italian business students. Therefore, the sub-question is specified in the following manner:

In which ways do Austrian and Italian business students differ with regard to self-perceived CQ development?

1.2 Research methodology

In general, this thesis explores the role of experiential learning and cross-cultural management education concerning students’ CQ development and how it impacts them on a cross-cultural level. Thus, as to understand the complexity and dynamics of the topic, an extensive literature review is conducted to gather an in-depth understanding. By starting with the definition of both the concept of culture and intelligence, this thesis intends to provide the reader with knowledge about the underlying constructs of CQ and thus, depicts their main essences. Following this, the construct of Cultural Intelligence is elaborated and a comprehensive chronology of CQ conceptualization is provided to understand the broad nature of CQ. As a next step, the focus of CQ research will be addressed. In this regard, the antecedents of CQ, relation to other constructs of intelligence and immediate outcomes of CQ will be portrayed. What is more, criticism regarding CQ and its research focus will be illustrated. As the previous section lacks an emphasis on CQ development, the following chapter will be devoted to this issue. Thus, two important research paradigms – experiential learning and cross-cultural management education will be explored to demonstrate the relevance for CQ development. Lastly, convergences and divergences between the two research streams will be depicted to provide a complete picture of CQ development.
As a next step, the empirical research is conducted in which the research questions will be answered based on semi-structured interviews and thus, the thesis follows a qualitative approach. Prior to the interview, the participants complete the Cultural Intelligence Scale by Ang et al. (2007). However, it is noteworthy to state that this scale is only used as a trigger to get the interviewees acquainted with the topic and thus, it is empirically insignificant for this thesis. In general, the semi-structured interviews allow generating a profound understanding of the participant’s attitudes, perceptions and feelings. What is more, exploring the reasons for specific behaviors and decisions as well as drawing on experiences are at the core of the semi-structured interviews.

The subsequent analysis is done in line with the qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2014). Therefore, this method facilitated the analysis of the ten business students. As the empirical research is executed within a cross-cultural setting, five participants come from Austria, while the other five come from Italy. Furthermore, this should assure better comparability due to the equal number of participants from each country. Regarding the selection of the interviewees, it must be stated that it was based on convenience. However, the participants are within similar age cohorts (24-26) and completed the same Master’s program. Lastly, the analysis of the transcribed interviews was conducted with the software program MAXQDA.

1.3 Purpose and objective of this thesis

The purpose of this master thesis is to explore the specific CQ development methods aiming at students and to compare them with previous assumptions of the pervasiveness of experiential learning and CCM education as amplifiers of CQ. Additionally, a clear line between these two research paradigms should not only be drawn, but also still be able to determine a common ground on which both development streams focus. Above all, the relevance of the proposed thesis and the topic is given through the lack and scarceness of research in this field, especially regarding students’ CQ development. Consequently, the focus on students is helpful as they will make up the majority of the workforce sooner or later. Above all, the objective of this master thesis is to explore if cross-cultural management education (CCM) and experiential learning contribute to students’ self-perceived Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development. Additionally, it should be investigated if there are clear distinctions among the sample of Austrian and Italian interviewees. The collected findings should contribute to close the identified research gap.
2 Origins and evolution of Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

As to grasp the nature of the concept of Cultural Intelligence, a separate overview of the constructs of culture and intelligence is given to be prepared for the following chapters. Subsequent to this, the two terms mentioned above come together and form the construct of Cultural Intelligence (CQ), which is then depicted in greater detail. The fusion should demonstrate the interconnectedness of both culture and intelligence and their reciprocal impact.

2.1 The construct of culture

Nowadays, a wide array of definitions for the term culture exist. However, the contexts of these vary substantially and can potentially be contradictory or ambiguous. Back in the 70s, Hall (1976) argued that all cultures have “their own identity, language, systems of nonverbal communication, material culture, systems and ways of doing things” (p. 2). In general, culture describes the mental programming and should be regarded as a collective phenomenon as it is shared at least to a certain degree with people living in the same social circle. In addition to this, among the most prominent definitions is the one by Hofstede (1984), but caution should be exercised as it should not be seen as universally applicable as all definitions of the construct of culture can be rather subjective. In general, Hofstede (1984) states that culture can be defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another” (p. 21).

It is further implied that in today’s business environment managers face obstacles when managing not only across cultural boundaries, but also in the home country due to a steady increase of a diverse or multicultural workforce. In this context, dependence is created among individuals by creating a shared system of meaning, which can be described in other words as a “shared definition of a situation by a group” (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012, p. 27). It further can be stated that culture not only directs our actions but forms the roots of our actions. As can be derived from the previous statement, our actions are based on our culture. However, according to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012), verbalizing culture does not occur consciously as culture lies beneath awareness and thus, everyday actions mostly have a subconscious nature. In general, a culture is created by humans, which then gets confirmed by other human beings until it to becomes conventionalized. Younger generations further “learn” a culture through their surroundings through which it has been passed on for generations. In other words, the definition
by Geertz (1973) seems fitting to describe the concept of culture in a brief manner: “Becoming human is becoming individual, and we become individual under the guidance of cultural patterns, historically created systems of meaning in terms of which we give form, order, point, and direction to our lives” (p. 13).

2.2 The construct of intelligence

The concept of intelligence is rather hard to grasp and is among the most elusive constructs due to its non-verifiable physical nature. During the twentieth century, an emphasis was put on being able to define, assess and measure human intelligence, whereas the development of standardized intelligence tests stood at the forefront of this particular time (Earley & Ang, 2003). Following this, it can be derived from Earley and Ang (2003) that the human interest in the definition and assessment of human intelligence was coming to a peak in the last century. Nowadays regarding the definition of intelligence, Earley and Ang (2003) illustrate that it is seen as a person’s ability to learn from past experiences and to thrive within social as well as worldly settings. The current definition of intelligence mostly derived from two major symposia on the nature of intelligence in 1921 and 1986. However, during the 1921 Symposium, a wide array of definitions was presented, and a lack of convergence could be identified. Some experts defined rather broadly that intelligence can be seen as a mental ability such as being able to adapt or to learn. Contrary to that, other experts argued that intelligence is defined as a sensory capacity (e.g. alertness, flexibility) (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Following this, the 1986 Symposium was by Sternberg and Detterman and used to create a coherence based on the diverse and distinct views of the various experts. Sternberg (1985) himself argued that the research on intelligence could further be separated into implicit and explicit theories. On the one hand, implicit theories describe people’s views of what intelligence actually is and thus, need to be discovered rather than invented. It is further implied that implicit theories already exist in people’s minds to a certain extent. Additionally, Sternberg (2000) further points out to the fact that the knowledge about implicit methods is substantially used by people to make judgments in their everyday life. On the other hand, explicit theories can tell us what intelligence indeed is. In detail, those theories give a more detailed specification of mental structures and processes. However, in practice most explicit concepts do not seem to do justice to the full scope of intelligence. In line with Sternberg (2000), it can be stated that intelligence refers to the ability to adapt and to learn within an environment. Additionally, other attributes related to intelligence might be demonstrated by basic mental processes and higher order thinking such as problem-solving or decision-making.
However, Sternberg (1997) further points out to the fact that intelligence enables us to select and shape the environmental context in which we are acting. Thus, it is a system of abilities, which continuously interact. It is important to highlight that theories on intelligence describe it as a multifaceted construct (e.g. Sternberg et al., 2003). Going beyond the just mentioned definitions by Sternberg (2003), the 1986 Symposium concluded that there was a consensus among the experts that the concept of human intelligence should not be seen as a single construct and thus, is not easily definable. Apart from this, the experts agreed on some aspects of intelligence, which are believed as the most frequent ones such as the biological or physiological level, the level of mental functioning, the motivational level and the behavioral level (Sternberg & Berg, 1986).

### 2.3 Synergy between culture and intelligence

Within this sub-chapter, the synergies between the constructs of culture and intelligence are elaborated to identify potential linkages. In this context, it will be observed if the concepts have a reciprocal relation or if one serves as the basis for the other. Regarding the following definition by Earley and Ang (2003), it can be assumed that the extent of intelligence depends on the culture of the surrounding environment as they state that “the content of intelligence is culturally bound, that is, intelligence is an attribute of an individual operating within the culture of an environment that defines what intelligent behavior is” (p. 29). In Chapter 2.2 above, biological, cognitive, motivational and behavioral levels have been defined as the commonly agreed upon aspects of intelligence. Notwithstanding, these perspectives assume that the locus of intelligence resides within an individual and thereby, ignores environmental and contextual variables that influence intelligence (Sternberg, 1990). A close relation between culture and intelligence can be identified as proponents of context theories actively support the perspective that the culture defines intelligence.

Following this, Earley and Ang (2003) argue that what is seen as intelligent behavior in one culture is not applicable to every other culture and thus, is not universal. Based on this argument, proponents of the contextual theory of intelligence believe that the research on intelligence should evaluate the cultural environment in which an individual resides to determine the characteristic values of a society (Berry & Irvine, 1986). Following this, Sternberg and Kaufman (1998) conducted research on cross-cultural views of intelligence and it can be stated that universal views on intelligence exist, yet some tend to be culturally specific. To show the practical relevance of this matter, Yang and Sternberg (1997) compared Western and Eastern cultures and a clear distinction can be drawn between those two geographic regions. In the West, an intelligent person is defined through devotion and significant perseverance to lifelong learning. Whereas in the East
being benevolent and humble, while having full knowledge of oneself and one's surroundings are the main attributes connected to an intelligent human being.

What is more, Ng and Earley (2006) point out to the fact that the research on the concept of culture and intelligence had a somewhat independent development. Due to this fact, Ng and Earley (2006) tried to determine the intersection of the two constructs to better understand the relation between them. The impetus for their research was the fact that this particular domain was neglected or overlooked by scholars from both sides. By integrating culture and intelligence, Ng and Earley (2006) demonstrate that the so-called cultural variation of intelligence can be used. Proponents of this approach include Ferguson (1956), Berry (1974) and, Yang and Sternberg (1997). In spite of this, the core focus of this approach has already been explained in the previous paragraph and in brief, it describes that culture and its context influence the construct of intelligence.

In contrast to this approach of connecting culture and intelligence, Ng and Earley (2006) highlight the fact that the concept of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) plays a role among researchers. According to Earley and Ang (2003), Cultural Intelligence can be depicted as a “person’s capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts” (p. 59). Additionally, the term CQ originates from and relates to the concept of the Intelligence Quotient (IQ). However, researchers like Earley and Ang (2003) point out to the fact that the level of CQ is not expressed through a mathematical relationship. Despite this, due to CQ being a facet of intelligence, the abbreviation CQ is used instead of CI.

What is more, research on the general concept of intercultural competence and effectiveness has existed already within several academic disciplines, whereby various predictors of efficacy have been examined (Dinges & Baldwin, 1996). Thus, Ng and Earley (2006) classify the competencies into individual difference factors (e.g. personality traits, cross-cultural attitudes) and situational factors (e.g. cultural distance). Regarding the concept of CQ, it would reflect the first category and thus, it should be seen as an individual difference variable. Additionally, CQ is not innate and therefore, can be learned and enhanced through various intervention alternatives, which will be depicted later in the thesis.

To provide an integrative approach, Ng and Earley (2006) proposed a framework, which connects culture and intelligence. To distinguish between the cultural variation versus the cultural intelligence stream, Ng and Earley (2006) use the emic and etic distinction. The etic perspective has an outside view meaning that behavior is studied from an outside perspective. Conversely, an emic perspective studies behavior within a system and thus, has an inside approach (Pike, 1967). The framework of Ng and Earley (2006) is displayed by Figure 1, in which cultural variation of intelligence represents the emic approach, whereas the construct of cultural intelligence reflects the etic perspective. Within the framework, the emic perspective of intelligence should
demonstrate what is seen as intelligence in a particular culture and its links to other concepts within the culture. The model by Ng and Earley (2006) includes three cultures (A, B, C) and their notion of intelligence may not overlap. In this context, the correlates and outcomes of intelligence in Culture A may include significant differences from those of Culture B. In general, the focal point of the emic perspective is examining intelligence from an insider perspective to investigate the meaning and impact of intelligence within a culture and how it relates to it.

Conversely, the etic perspective takes a more general approach regarding the notion of intelligence and thus, it is implied that intelligence can be interpreted as a capability that can be transferred across various cultures. Within Figure 1, having the skills to be effective across multiple cultures is represented by the dotted lines. In accordance with the emic perspective, it can be stated that individuals, who can be proficient in each of the three cultures would embody a high level of CQ and can act effectively in each cultural environment. In other words, the level of CQ depends more on the capability to be effective across a greater range of cultures and not just being effective within one culture. Generally, having a high CQ means finding out what effectiveness means in different cultural environments and acting upon that by using a set of behavior to achieve a compelling outcome in these cultures. Based on the framework it can be stated that by definition CQ consists of emic perspectives of intelligence, yet this cannot be implied vice versa meaning. Thus, it is further assumed that "while a culturally intelligent individual has the capability to be effective across cultures, an intelligent individual in a particular culture (emic) may not be effective when placed in a different cultural setting" (Ng & Earley, 2006, p. 12).

![Figure 1: A framework for integrating emic and etic perspectives of intelligence (adapted from Ng & Earley, 2006, p. 9)](image)
As can be derived from the previous arguments, having Cultural Intelligence is an essential factor to deal with or overcome intercultural dilemmas in a multicultural or potential ambiguous environment. Following this, companies, whether domestic or international, increasingly structure their organization by using teams composed of members originating from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, apart from that, in today’s business environment managers continually fail to be aware of critical cultural nuances (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004b). Regarding this matter, the impetus was given to Earley and Ang (2003) and they developed the concept of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) to understand why some people, work more effectively in intercultural contexts than others. Within the research on Cultural Intelligence, Earley, Ang and Tan (2006) try to gather an understanding about the question: "Why is it that some people adjust to new cultures, understand local practices, and can behave appropriately and effectively, while others flounder?" (p. 40). Important to note is the fact that CQ is not specific to any culture. Hence CQ can be seen as a culture free construct that transcends any cultural boundaries (Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2012).

2.4 Definitions of CQ

In general, as stated by Thomas et al. (2008), CQ can be defined as a type of intelligence unlike similar terms including intercultural competency or global mindset. With regard to Thomas et al. (2008), CQ can be defined as a “system of interacting knowledge and skills, linked by cultural metacognition, that allows people to adapt to, select and shape the cultural aspects of their environment” (p. 127). In the following table, various definitions and applications of CQ will be stated, which is adapted from Thomas et al. (2008), to provide a clearer understanding and general overview of the concept.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Definition of Cultural Intelligence</th>
<th>Constituent elements</th>
<th>Outcomes/applications</th>
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<tr>
<td>Earley, 2002; Earley &amp; Ang, 2003</td>
<td>“... a person’ capability to adapt effectively to new cultural context”</td>
<td>Cognitive, Motivational, Behavioral</td>
<td>Global assignment success, Diversity assignments, Training methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas &amp; Inkson, 2003</td>
<td>“...involves understanding the fundamentals of intercultural interactions, developing a mindful approach to intercultural interactions, and finally building adaptive skills and a repertoire of behavior so that one is effective in different intercultural situation.”</td>
<td>Knowledge, Mindfulness, Behavioral Skills</td>
<td>Cross-cultural decision making, Cross-cultural communication, Cross-cultural leadership, Multicultural teams, International careers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Earley & Mosakowski, 2004a/b
“…a seemingly natural ability to interpret someone’s unfamiliar and ambiguous gestures in just the way that person’s compatriots and colleague would, even to mirror them”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Emotional/ Motivational</th>
<th>Appropriate behavior in new cultures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Earley & Peterson, 2004
“…reflects a person’s capability to gather, interpret, and act upon these radically different cues to function effectively across cultural settings or in a multicultural situation”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metacognitive/ Cognitive</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Intercultural training</th>
<th>Multinational teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Earley, Ang & Tan, 2006
“…a person’s capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is for unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>strategic</th>
<th>thinking</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Diversity assignments</th>
<th>Global work assignments</th>
<th>Global teams</th>
<th>Global leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Thomas, 2006
“…the ability to interact effectively with people who are culturally different”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Mindfulness</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Ang et al., 2007
“…an individual’s capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse setting”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognition</th>
<th>Metacognition</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Cultural judgment and decision making</th>
<th>Cultural adaptation and performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Thomas et al., 2008
“…a system of interacting knowledge and skills, linked by cultural metacognition, that allows people to adapt to, select, and shape the cultural aspects of their environment.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Cross-cultural skills</th>
<th>Cultural metacognition</th>
<th>Effective intercultural interactions (personal adjustments, interpersonal relationship development, task performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 1: Definitions and application of Cultural Intelligence (adapted from Thomas et al., 2008, p. 126)

Following this illustration of the various definitions, it is important to note that this list is not exhaustive. Thus, several other definitions exist, yet are not integrated within Table 1. However, the various concepts and their constituent elements will be explained in greater detail in the following section. Thus, already mentioned concepts will be addressed in greater detail, yet also further definitions and applications of cultural intelligence will be included to elaborate a chronology of how the construct has developed over time.
2.5 Chronology of CQ conceptualization and its constituent elements

The available literature focuses to an extensive part on the origins and evolution of the concept of CQ and its different variations (Earley & Ang, 2003; Earley & Peterson, 2004; Thomas, 2006; Ang et al., 2007; Thomas et al., 2008; Livermore, 2011). However, it must be noted that the origins of Cultural Intelligence lie within the research of human intelligence and therefore, CQ emphasizes a fundamental aspect of human cognition (Sternberg, 1985). Consequently, within the literature, several terms can be found, which are somehow related to the concept of CQ or conversely, serve as a basis for its conceptualization. Thus, prior to the conceptualization of Cultural Intelligence, Sternberg and Detterman (1986) created the foundation on which the concept of CQ as a multifactor construct within broader intelligence research was built, namely the framework of the multiple foci of intelligence. As an array of views on the term intelligence exist, Sternberg and Detterman (1986) tried to determine four ways how to conceptualize the individual-level intelligence, namely through metacognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral facets. So firstly, metacognitive intelligence is the way in which individuals acquire and process knowledge, whereas the cognitive level refers to an individual’s knowledge structures. In addition to this, motivational intelligence pinpoints that an individual directs the energy as a locus of intelligence, while the behavioral level focuses on the actions taken by an individual based on the capabilities. Within their research, Sternberg and Detterman (1986) further differentiate between mental abilities (metacognitive, cognitive & motivational intelligence) and behavioral skills (behavioral intelligence). Thereby, the former capabilities reside within the “head” of an individual, while the latter capacity is related to concrete actions. Furthermore, it should be clearly stated that Cultural Intelligence deviates from the constructs of social intelligence and emotional intelligence. However, Earley and Ang (2003) argue that some elements of CQ were derived from these constructs of intelligence, which will be explained in greater detail in the following chapters. Apart from that, the adjustment to various cultural settings is the predominant element in the research of Cultural Intelligence.

In general, despite the inconsistencies in the CQ research field due to different conceptualizations of Cultural Intelligence by a wide range of authors, it can be stated that the current concepts still mostly originate from the core thinking of multiple foci of intelligence by Sternberg and Detterman (1986). In this context, Cultural Intelligence was built as a multidimensional construct. It was further noted by Ang and Van Dyne (2008) that the factors of CQ “mirror contemporary views of intelligence as a complex, multifactor, individual attribute that is composed of metacognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral factors” (p. 5). In general, the term CQ itself was introduced by Earley and Ang (2003). The underlying reason for their research was to create a definition for
CQ and additionally, determine a conceptual framework to be able to assess and apply it to intercultural interactions. In their initial research, Earley and Ang (2003) defined CQ as a concept consisting of three elements, namely cognitive, motivational and behavioral. In Figure 2 as adapted from Earley and Ang (2003, p. 67), the facets of Cultural Intelligence are depicted, which show the process and content features of Cultural Intelligence.

Based on Figure 2, it must be pointed to the fact that cognitive CQ is mostly in line with the traditional view of intelligence. In general, cognitive CQ refers to the cognitive processes of an individual. In this regard, not only flexibility is of great significance, but also the ability to adapt and reorganize one’s self-concept based on the circumstances lead to a high cognitive CQ level. Apart from that, inductive reasoning is of utmost importance as one might be exposed to many new cultural contexts and within these ones, a confrontation with potentially ambiguous or misleading cues might occur. In general, individuals exhibiting a higher level of cognitive CQ can understand similarities and differences across cultures better than individuals with a lower CQ level (Brislin, Worthley, & MacNab, 2006). In addition to this, Earley and Mosakowski (2004b) include the cognitive facet in their research, yet regarding the terminology they use the term “head” for addressing the cognitive CQ. Following this, they propose that individuals execute learning strategies that enable them to “notice clues to a culture’s shared understandings” (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004b, p. 141), which somehow includes elements of metacognition, which will be depicted in the next paragraph. Conversely, Earley, Ang and Tan (2006) take a different approach regarding cognitive capability as they refer to it as cultural knowledge and strategic thinking. While the former refers to the practices, beliefs, and value of a given culture, the latter should be seen as the development of ways to gain new cultural knowledge. These two different aspects of building cultural knowledge are often expressed through the term cultural strategic thinking (CST).

Conversely, the element metacognition represents an essential factor of cognitive functioning and is thus, seen as a sub-category of cognitive CQ by Earley and Ang (2003). Regarding
**metacognitive CQ**, it can be identified that this capability emphasizes higher-order cognitive processes, which individuals use to systematize and understand cultural knowledge (Eisenberg & Williams, 2012). In other words, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) state that important capabilities of metacognition include the processes of planning, monitoring and revising of mental models, especially with regards to diverging cultural norms. Additionally, with time metacognition itself has been incorporated as a FOURTH separate component of CQ for example by Ang et al. (2007), Van Dyne, Ang, and Livermore (2009) or Eisenberg and Williams (2012) – to only name a few. Even though Earley and Mosakowski (2004b) do not address it as a separate element, Earley and Peterson (2004) draw a line between the cognitive and metacognitive facet. They regard it as a strategic variable needed to achieve the desired goal. According to Earley and Peterson (2004), the metacognitive facet can be separated into metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive experience, whereas the former refers to the fact how individuals deal with knowledge gained under various circumstances. The latter depicts how to use relevant experiences as a framework or guide for future encounters. Metacognition has a great significance due to the fact that “much of what is required in a new culture is putting together patterns into a coherent picture, even if one does not know what this coherent picture might look like” (Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 107). Moreover, Ang et al. (2007) define the metacognitive CQ as a higher-order mental capability. This implies that metacognition is firmly in line with thought processes and the anticipation of other individuals’ cultural preferences.

With regard to the **motivational CQ**, it can be described as an individual’s willingness and motivation to engage with new cultures. However, Earley and Ang (2003) point out to the fact that an individual’s motivation regarding an intercultural encounter is often underestimated. Within their research, they further state that an individual needs to perceive himself or herself as capable in engaging in a successful manner when being exposed to a different environment and thus, needs self-efficacy to succeed. “Without a strong sense of self-efficacy, a person will avoid challenges and give up easily when confronted with failure feedback” (Earley & Ang, 2003, p. 138). It further can be derived from this that a higher level of self-efficacy assists an individual in finding new and potentially better ways of acting in a particular setting. In line with Bandura (1977b), it can be pointed out to the fact that self-efficacy is a key facet of the self. Regarding early failures when interacting with a new culture, Earley (2002) states that individuals, who do not believe in their capabilities, are more likely to disengage after experiencing such a scenario. In addition to this, Earley and Mosakowski (2004b) express the motivational CQ facet through the term “heart”. Furthermore, they address that adaptation to a new culture does not always go smoothly. In other words, overcoming obstacles and setbacks are focal points when interacting or entering a new culture. Concerning an individual’s motivation, Earley, Ang and Tan (2006) point out that it is influenced by the cultural values, self-confidence, personal goals and which roles individuals take on for themselves.
Lastly, behavioral CQ generally emphasizes the behavioral adaptation to different cultural settings, such as gestures. Regarding this, Earley and Ang (2003) point out to the fact that the focus should be put on overt or external behavior and thus, not on covert or internal behavior. In this context, overt behavior deals with what people say and do and thus, are visible to the world. Conversely, covert behaviors include feelings, dreams and fantasies and are invisible to everyone except the actor. For Earley (2002), behavioral CQ means having a behavioral repertoire consisting of all the responses needed for various scenarios. Furthermore, he believes that an individual exhibiting a high behavioral CQ level thrives more in any given intercultural sphere and can adapt the behavior accordingly. With regard to Earley and Mosakowski (2004b), they use the term “body” when referring to the behavioral CQ facet. They state that through the adaptation to people’s habits, gestures and mannerism, an individual discovers what is like to be one of the other cultures. In turn, other cultural cohorts become more trusting and open up more easily. Regarding mimicry, Earley and Peterson (2004) argue that an individual exerting a high CQ is savvy in using moderate doses of imitation to become a talented mimic. Apart from this, mimicking others to a great extent might not lead to positive results as it could be perceived as mockery. Out of all the different CQ competences, Earley, Ang and Tan (2006) note that behavioral CQ is the most difficult to acquire. This is mainly due to the fact that we grow up being used to a particular set of behaviors and thus, most of our responses are habitual. Therefore, culture-specific behavior will be hard to acquire due to its intimate nature. All in all, according to Eisenberg and Williams (2012), it can be stated that the behavioral capability focuses on the action domain, whereas the three other competencies (metacognition, cognition, motivation) are mental capabilities. Concerning the similarities and differences of the CQ capabilities, Van Dyne, Ang and Livermore (2009) stress in their research that these four facets are qualitatively different, yet somehow interconnected. To support this, to achieve full effectiveness leaders are in need of all four CQ capabilities as emphasizing only one factor might even result in increased cultural ignorance rather than in enhanced Cultural Intelligence (Van Dyne, Ang, & Livermore, 2009).

When analyzing the literature about the conceptualization of Cultural Intelligence, it can be noticed that Thomas and Inkson (2003) take a different approach. Their research involves building a fundamental understanding of intercultural interaction. As a consequence of this, preparing a mindful approach to intercultural encounters is of utmost importance. Following this, behavioral adaption to be versatile in different cross-cultural situations becomes a valuable asset. As to expand the research by Thomas and Inkson (2003), Thomas (2006) suggests that CQ is comprised of three interrelated elements, namely knowledge, mindfulness and behavioral ability. The first element implies the fact of what is understood under the term culture, how it varies across different environments and accordingly, how it affects the behavior. In turn, mindfulness is seen as the “key linking process between knowledge and action” (Thomas, 2006, p. 84). In other words,
mindfulness assists the individual in applying cultural knowledge and also, how culture affects the behavior within an intercultural encounter. Lastly, the behavioral ability refers to an individual's ability to be competent in various intercultural and potentially ambiguous contexts. Additionally, Thomas (2006) strongly believes that the development of CQ is not envisioned as a linear process, but rather as a form of experiential learning including the three previously mentioned elements to reach a higher CQ state. Regarding the overlap between the concepts by Thomas (2006) and Earley and Ang (2003), knowledge is somehow related to cognitive CQ. Additionally, the behavioral ability by Thomas (2006) shows similarities to the behavioral CQ competence as described by Earley and Ang (2003).

In comparison to this, Thomas et al. (2011) include cultural knowledge, cross-cultural skills and cultural metacognition in their construct. Through the composition of these three elements, Thomas et al. (2011) want to create a system of interactive dimensions leading to an intensification of Cultural Intelligence. They suggest that their conceptualization deviates from others due to the different manner in which the three facets interact. Moreover, Thomas et al. (2011) strongly believe that “the complete development of a measure of cultural intelligence remains a work in progress” (p. 136). Despite this, Thomas et al. (2008) criticized some aspects of the construct by Earley and Ang (2003), mainly due to its aggregate nature. Additionally, Thomas et al. (2008) pinpoint that CQ being a multidimensional construct necessitates a precise specification of the relationship between the separate dimensions and the overall concept of CQ. Consequently, they stress the fact that this is lacking within the conceptualization by Earley and Ang (2003) and has not been emphasized in later developments by Ang et al. (2007) or Ang and Van Dyne (2008).

Conversely, Livermore (2011) emphasizes a consultancy-based approach, which includes the competences of CQ Drive, CQ Knowledge, CQ Strategy and CQ Action. In detail, CQ Drive refers to the ability to be persistent and motivated in a cross-cultural context. When creating synergies, this competence can be related to the motivational CQ element developed by Earley and Ang (2003). Following this, CQ Knowledge entails the “extent to which you understand the role of culture in how people think and behave and your level of familiarity with how cultures are similar and different” (Livermore, 2011, p. 69). This competence is in line with the cognitive CQ level by Earley and Ang (2003) and the knowledge competence by Thomas and Inkson (2003). Additionally, CQ Strategy implies the fact that individuals are aware during an intercultural encounter and due to this awareness can manage it effectively. Consequently, a close connection can be made to the metacognition ability by Ang et al. (2007) and the competence of mindfulness developed by Thomas and Inkson (2003). Lastly, CQ Action is in accordance with the statements about Earley and Ang’s (2003) behavioral CQ level and Thomas Inkson’s (2003) behavioral ability. Thus, it refers to the degree that an individual can act appropriately in situations deviating from the own cultural norm.
3 Focus of CQ research

It is hard to grasp the core of the concept of CQ due to its elusive nature. Consequently, this chapter is devoted to determining the factors leading up to CQ as well as its outcomes. As to understand the full scope of CQ research and its influencing factors, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) provide a comprehensive review of CQ based on studies by Ang, Van Dyne and Tan (2011). The nomological network of Cultural Intelligence by Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) includes the following elements namely the antecedents of CQ, the distinction of CQ to other types of intelligence, and the outcomes of CQ. Thus, Figure 3 depicts this framework, which facilitates the understanding about the general meaning of CQ and its relation to other aspects. Subsequently, within Chapter 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, the three sections of this framework will be described in greater detail. Firstly, regarding the antecedents of CQ, the elements will be portrayed, which serve as a basis for the development of CQ. Secondly, the distinctiveness to other intelligence types is of significance, yet also potential synergies will be examined. Lastly, the outcomes of CQ will be investigated according to the categorization described in Figure 3. This should mainly demonstrate that CQ can have a wide array of results.

![Figure 3: Summary of Cultural Intelligence research findings (adapted from Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2012, p. 36)](image)

Regarding the general direction of CQ research, as one can see in the work by Ang, Van Dyne and Rockstuhl (2015), the first stream of Cultural Intelligence research aims to achieve linkages between CQ with the outcomes of cross-cultural encounters. Additionally, Ang, Van Dyne and Rockstuhl (2015) want to demonstrate that Cultural Intelligence can predict these outcomes,
whereas other established predictors continuously fail to do so. The second stream of research puts the predictive validity of CQ in intercultural settings in comparison to general contexts. Adding to this, the third stream of research depicts CQ as a so-called mediator and moderator. Lastly, the development of CQ as a fourth stream is increasingly taken into consideration by researchers over the past years. In general, different studies highlight the diverse angles of the concept of Cultural Intelligence, yet the most prominent themes include cultural adaptation (Hansen et al., 2011; Huff, Song, & Gresch, 2014) in accordance with expatriate and global manager’s leadership and performance success (Alon & Higgins, 2005; Rockstuhl et al., 2011; Wu & Ang, 2011). As one can see from the literature, research on teams composed of members originating from diverse cultural cohorts attracts empirical attention (Chen, Lin, & Sawangpattanakul, 2011; Crotty & Brett, 2012; Eisenberg & Williams, 2012). In addition to this, Cultural Intelligence training and development interventions gain particular significance and thus, are often tested in a global leader or student context (Earley & Peterson, 2004; Li, Mobley, & Kelly, 2013; Ng et al., 2009a). Nevertheless, the specific contributing factors leading to the development of students’ CQ are hardly recognized in the literature. However, the practical relevance of the use of Cultural Intelligence as a variable, which can heighten both individual and group success in multicultural teams, is covered to a large extent in the literature.

### 3.1 Antecedents of Cultural Intelligence

When considering the antecedents, researchers mostly agree on their trait-like nature as an individual difference (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008; Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2012). Following this, the personality traits are pivotal differences, yet also influencing variables regarding the shaping of an individual’s CQ. This implies that these traits influence the choice of behavioral patterns or also experiences that inevitably affect Cultural Intelligence. Among the first researchers, who conducted a study based on the effects of personality on the four-factor model of Cultural Intelligence were Ang, Van Dyne and Koh (2006). In this context, they wanted to examine the relationship between Big Five personality and the CQ construct. Even though the authors generally label the Big Five personality differently, there is a consensus regarding its underlying meaning. According to Ang, Van Dyne, and Koh (2006), it can be referred to the five factors of extraversion (e.g. sociable), agreeableness (e.g. cooperative), conscientiousness (e.g. responsible), emotional stability (e.g. emotional control), and openness to experience (e.g. intellectual). The sample of their study included business undergraduates based in Singapore. The results of the study demonstrated strong empirical evidence and a high level of validity by using a concept such as the Big Five for linking personality with the construct of Cultural Intelligence. In brief, it was shown that personality is related to CQ and the various CQ competences were each related to the aspects of the Big Five framework. Furthermore, MacNab,
Brislin and Worthley (2012) identified that general self-efficacy and the personality trait of openness are valuable factors, which are influential in line with CQ and CQ development.

Under the nomological framework by Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012), international experience should be seen as an antecedent of CQ. In this context, the research by Lave and Wenger (1991) on the situated learning theory is of great significance. Within their research, they refer to the fact that international experiences enable individuals to be exposed to authentic social contexts, which should assist them to manage cross-cultural encounters more effectively. It can be derived from this argument that individuals with a higher level of international experiences have a greater chance to heighten their CQ status. In addition to this, Earley and Peterson (2004) argue that intercultural experiences enable individuals to differentiate them from ordinary experiences and thus, challenge a person’s thinking. Following this, Crowne (2008) investigated the exposures that impact CQ. It can be derived from her study that “those who had been abroad for employment and education demonstrated more CQ than those who had been abroad just for vacation or other reasons” (Crowne, 2008, p. 396). With regard to the length of international work experience, Li, Mobley and Kelly (2013) concluded from their research that it is positively related to the level of Cultural Intelligence. More significantly, they have identified that different learning styles affect the relationship between international experience and CQ. In other words, a stronger relationship can be made based on divergent learning style, while the link remained weaker with convergent learning styles.

Apart from that, Lee and Sukoco (2010) have identified that expatriates having an extensive amount of international experience could lead them in having a lower CQ level, because they view themselves as advanced and knowledgeable in dealing with intercultural matters. Conversely, Reichard et al. (2015) found out that openness to international experience has a strong link to Cultural Intelligence. Moreover, results of the study by Sahin, Gurbuz and Köksal (2014) have shown that individuals, who have a high level of openness to new experience significantly improved their motivational CQ when contrasting them with individuals, who are somewhat closed off to new experiences. Due to the study by Sahin, Gurbuz and Köksal (2014), it was proven that after a timeframe of six months all four CQ competences of the participants have improved. Concerning international non-work experience, differentiation into the number of countries visited and the length of stay should be done. Based on that, Tarique and Takeuchi (2008) have demonstrated that the number of countries has effects on all four CQ elements, yet the length of a stay abroad only predicts cognitive and metacognitive CQ. In comparison to that regarding the number of countries, Crowne (2008) has identified that when visiting for either employment or education purposes, a significant impact on the CQ level can be seen. Apart from this, when solely visiting for vacation or other reasons, no impact on the total CQ can be predicted. In addition to this, Sahin, Gurbuz and Köksal (2014) have shown that an individual’s four-factor CQ level was
tremendously higher after an international assignment in comparison to the beginning. Regarding the country choice for an international non-work experience, Engle and Nash (2015) point out to the fact that when individuals want to develop cross-cultural competencies, the choice of country matters. In this context, it is noteworthy to state that the best choice regarding country selection is to be outside of the home country’s regional cluster. In contrast to this, Choi, Moon and Jung (2010) that expatriates non-work experiences heightened their CQ level more significantly than their work experience.

Furthermore, within the literature some authors depict the influence of specific program contributing to the development of CQ such as virtual team experiences. In this context, Shokef and Erez (2008) have gathered results that demonstrate that members of virtual multicultural teams have a visible increase in their metacognitive, motivational and behavioral CQ throughout a timeframe of four weeks. To put the development of Cultural Intelligence in relation to virtual multicultural teams, Erez et al. (2013) created an online four-week virtual team project with a total sample of 1221 graduate management students. The objective was to identify whether team members enhance their global characteristics through being in a virtual multicultural team. Additionally, the role of team trust was explored and the question of whether it contributes to the development of global characteristics. It can be derived from Erez et al. (2013) that team level trust did indeed enhance global characteristics. Additionally, it was shown that the virtual multicultural team project on a short-term basis is of great significance for the development of an individuals' global identity and competences. To expand the research on virtual multicultural teams with a more leadership orientated focus, Lisak and Erez (2014) conducted a study on a sample of 317 MBA students. Within this study, the context was to work on a joint project for four weeks, yet in a virtual multicultural team. The main aim was to determine the “global characteristics of emergent leaders on multicultural teams” (Lisak & Erez, 2014, p. 12). According to Lisak and Erez (2014) these global characteristics include Cultural Intelligence, global identity and being open to diversity. Thus, individuals having these global characteristics have a higher likelihood of becoming a leader in a multicultural team.

When examining the literature, it can be seen that many researchers emphasize cross-cultural programs such as studying abroad or service learning. In this context, Sharma and Mulka (1993) identified that U.S. students, who have studied abroad developed a more international mindset and accordingly, could imagine working in a more intercultural setting. Study abroad programs or international internships could pave the way towards a more globally-minded workforce. Additionally, in with Reichard et al. (2015), it can be stated that a so-called classroom training significantly increases the level of Cultural Intelligence, especially metacognitive and behavioral CQ. In turn, ethnocentrism is visibly decreased. Generally, Reichard et al (2015) determine if such type of training could be used as a cross-cultural trigger event and thus, could be seen as a
substitute for costly international experiences. With regard to structured short-term programs, Engel and Crowne (2014) explored whether such programs have an impact on the four-factor CQ model. Their research indicates that a so-called “structured service-oriented short-term assignment” (Engle & Crowne, 2014, p. 40) has an impact on CQ development. Within this study, participants received a pre-trip preparation and even though participants were only abroad for two weeks, the CQ level has increased.

In order to provide more research on short-term cross-cultural study tours, Wood and Peters (2014) collected data from individuals within an MBA program. In this context, results were gathered before and after being on an experientially orientated short-term study tour (11- or 12-days). Based on their findings, it can be stated that short-term cross-cultural study tours contribute to an increase in metacognitive, cognitive and motivational CQ. However, no impact can be identified on behavioral CQ. In addition to this, research by Holtbrügge and Engelhard (2016) has drawn attention to the role of cultural boundary spanning (CBS) abroad as a mediator between personal motives and Cultural Intelligence. In this context, according to Holtbrügge and Engelhard (2016, as cited in Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Williams, 2002), boundary spanners are highly motivated individuals, who want to be knowledgeable about people and organizations outside their usual surroundings. Within their study, 901 university students from 46 countries were included and the effect of CBS on CQ was tested. It can be derived from the results of the study by Holtbrügge and Engelhard (2016) that students with “intrinsic and highly self-determined extrinsic motivations engage in CBS during study abroad programs, whereas those with extrinsic motivations and low self-determination do not” (p. 448). Moreover, CBS has a direct effect on Cultural Intelligence and thus, through CBS actions all four CQ competences can be heightened. Apart from this Stewart, Wilson and Miles (2013) emphasize international service experiences in order to develop ethically and culturally intelligent leaders. In general, service projects are essential tools in creating a personal view on issues, mainly related to economic poverty or social injustice. Based on the findings by Stewart, Wilson and Miles (2013), it can be pointed out to the fact that there is still potential for adults to increase their moral reasoning and Cultural Intelligence. Additionally, changes in Cultural Intelligence are highly visible with individuals participating in their first service experience.

Above all, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) draw attention to the fact that research on antecedents primarily focuses on personality traits and international experiences, whereas research on situational and environmental factors is hardly existing. Despite this, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) stress the fact that the link between international experience and Cultural Intelligence is not highly transparent and straightforward. In other words, the accumulation of international experiences and thus, the quantity of it is often highlighted. However, the quality of international experiences has received little research.
3.2 CQ and its relation to other constructs of intelligence

In order to grasp the core nature of the construct of CQ, differences and similarities to other concepts will be depicted. These concepts might look similar on paper, yet clear distinctions can be drawn. Thus, within this sub-chapter, the concept of CQ is contrasted with three intelligence concepts, namely cognitive ability, social intelligence and emotional intelligence. Therefore, when creating the concept of Cultural Intelligence, Earley and Ang (2003) did not have in mind that it is just a minor adaptation to already existing intelligence constructs. However, it should be seen as a “component of intelligence that is key for adjusting to, and interacting with, cultures other than one’s own” (Earley & Ang, 2003, p. 7). In general, CQ is similar, but distinct to emotional, social intelligence and cognitive ability, as it emphasizes an individual’s abilities, rather than focusing on preferred behaviors. Same as the other interpersonal variants of intelligence, CQ should facilitate interpersonal interactions. Apart from this, in comparison to the other two intelligence constructs, it focuses entirely on cross-cultural interactions and encounters.

3.2.1 Cognitive ability

According to Ang and Van Dyne (2008), the term cognitive ability mostly implies the ability to learn. When contrasting Cultural Intelligence with the cognitive ability, it should be said that those two constructs are similar yet exhibit some distinctions. “Whereas general cognitive ability focuses on the cognitive loci of intellectual abilities, CQ encompasses biological, motivational, cognitive, and behavioral loci of intercultural capabilities” (Ang, Van Dyne, & Rockstuhl, 2015, p. 281). In addition to this, both concepts can be seen as predictors of performance, whereas cognitive ability focuses on job-related performance matters, CQ emphasizes only the performance in intercultural contexts. This is further supported by Ang and Van Dyne (2008) as they point out to the fact that that general cognitive ability is a crucial element to differentiate oneself from others and is closely related to performance in many jobs and settings.

3.2.2 Social intelligence

In general, Ang, Van Dyne and Rockstuhl (2015, as cited in Thorndike & Stein, 1937) define social intelligence as an individual’s ability to understand others as well as one’s adaption to social settings. Furthermore, with regard to Vernon (1933), he defined it as an individual ability to thrive in a social setting especially with regards to being knowledgeable about social matters and getting along with people. However, it is presumed that social intelligence is often seen without an emphasis on the cultural context and therefore, the content and processes are seen as universal. Therefore, Earley and Ang (2003) argue that the assumptions of a universal stance when it comes
to social intelligence is unwarranted. This is mainly due to the fact that research has shown that social forces influence “thought processes, experience of emotion, and behavior responses” (Earley & Ang, 2003, p. 9) to a great extent. In this context, CQ is seen as a separate construct, which is distinct, but not in a superordinate relationship to social intelligence. In line with Kihlstrom and Cantor (2011), it should be argued that social intelligence might outlive its purpose or usefulness and thus, might therefore be replaced by the construct of emotional intelligence, which is described in the following sub-section.

3.2.3 Emotional intelligence

The interpersonal level of emotional intelligence, as elaborated by Mayer and Salovey (1993), is determined as the ability to deal effectively with one’s own emotions and with the emotional states of the surroundings. The close relation of emotional intelligence (EQ) to social intelligence is demonstrated by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as it should be seen as a subset of it. According to Ang and Van Dyne (2008), same as CQ, emotional intelligence goes beyond the general understanding of academic and mental intelligence, as its explicit focus is on personal emotions. In contrast to CQ, emotional intelligence refers to the perception and management of emotions without considering the cultural context. Therefore, in line with Ang and Van Dyne (2008), it can be noted that EQ is culture-bound and CQ is culture free. In other words, having a high EQ in one culture does not necessarily mean being emotionally intelligent in another one. However, when being culturally intelligent, one can efficiently manage culturally diverse surroundings as the emphasis is not entirely put on one particular culture. Despite this, Earley and Ang (2003) point out to the fact that research in the field of emotional intelligence does not explicitly limit the model to be culture-bound. However, within the existing literature or research contexts, the extent to which intercultural aspects might be incorporated into the model of emotional intelligence is hardly discussed.

3.3 Outcomes of CQ research

Within this section, the outcomes of CQ research are explored following the nomological framework provided by Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012). The main aim is to demonstrate that the concept of CQ has rather different outcomes and is categorized into cognitive, psychological, behavioral and performance outcomes. In this context, the elements depicted within Figure 3 will be explored, yet also additional aspects will be included. In general, the main driving factor behind research on CQ was to determine why some individuals are more effective in intercultural environments than others. Thus, the importance of the contextual and situational variables should be highlighted, which further affect the relationship between CQ and its outcomes. Due to this,
Ang and Van Dyne (2008) stress the fact that situational strength should be seen as a moderator or mediator between the relation of CQ and its outcomes. “In strong situations, where the task environment is well structured and there are clear cues for task performance, we expect CQ to play a more reduced role, since difficulties resulting from intercultural situations are attenuated as compared to weak situations. Weak situations are vague, generating mixed expectations of the desired behavior” (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008, p. 12). Within such a context, according to Earley and Ang (2003), CQ should then be used as a guide for action.

When exploring the literature about the intermediate outcomes of CQ, it can be identified that several studies show the effects of CQ on **cognitive outcomes**. Based on the framework by Shaffer et al. (2006), Ang et al. (2007) tried to examine the relationship between CQ and various outcomes, namely cultural judgment and decision-making as well as cultural adjustment and task performance. In this context, cultural judgment and decision making (CJDM) is an important variable as it describes the quality of decisions based on human information processes. Within their study, Ang et al. (2007) predict that CJDM would positively relate to cognitive and metacognitive CQ, yet they do not predict a link to motivational or behavioral CQ. This implies that CDJM does not focus on channeling energy (motivational CQ) or displaying appropriate behaviors (behavioral outcomes). Based on the cross-cultural decision-making scenarios by Cushner and Brislin (1996), Ang et al. (2007) assessed CDJM by using settings having a distinct emphasis on cultural values and thus, participants should select the best response to each of the scenarios, which reflected their perspective. In line with the hypothesis, Ang et al (2007) demonstrated that motivational and behavioral CQ do not predict CJDM effectiveness. In addition to this, it should be highlighted that cognitive abilities (e.g. adjusting mental models) are integral factors in making accurate cultural judgment and decision making. To support this result, Rockstuhl and Van Dyne (2018) have shown that mental capabilities such as metacognitive and cognitive CQ have an impact on cultural judgment and decision making. Conversely, consistent with the predictions, there is no positive association between motivational and behavioral CQ and CDJM effectiveness.

When considering the **psychological outcomes**, it must be noted that they could range from intercultural and psychological adjustments (Ang et al., 2007) to culture shock (Chen, Lin, & Sawangpattanakul, 2011), whereas different psychological realms will be emphasized within this thesis. Regarding this, Leung, Ang and Tan (2014) examined the most recent theoretical developments within the cross-cultural competencies’ realms. What is more, the research by Abdul Malek and Budhwar (2013) addresses the intercultural, psychological and work adjustment of individuals. Thereby, they have drawn attention to expatriate adjustment to the host country’s surroundings and the study is based on 132 expatriates working in Malaysian multinational corporations. The results of this study show that exerting a high level of CQ correlates to a decreased anxiety, which allows being in better control of the immediate surroundings. This
argument is further supported by Ang et al. (2007) as they argue that being culturally intelligent has a positive association with two forms of cultural adaptation, namely cultural adjustment and psychological well-being. Similar to the research by Abdul Malek and Budhwar (2013), Sri Ramalu et al. (2012) investigate the relationship between Cultural Intelligence and expatriate performance, while considering the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment. The findings prove that Cultural Intelligence (independent variable) predicts the mediator variable of cross-cultural adjustment, whereas cross-cultural adjustment predicts expatriate performance (dependent variable). Thus, the interrelationship between those three variables is proven. It can be illustrated, due to the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment on the relation between CQ and performance, that organization need to emphasize adjustment in order to achieve higher performance.

Moreover, Gong and Fan (2006) introduced the so-called goal orientation theory, which is combined with cross-cultural adjustment. The results are based on international undergraduate students and indicate that a sound motivational basis or high level of self-efficacy is inevitable for successful cross-cultural adjustment. To support this perspective, Templer, Tay, Chandrasekar (2006) examined the motivational facet of CQ and how it relates to cross-cultural adjustment in the fields of work, general and interaction adjustment of so-called global professionals. Their research suggests that motivational CQ is a critical competence that has a strong link to cross-cultural adjustment. Similar to Templer Tay and Chandrasekar (2006), Huff (2013) illustrated within his research that expatriates gather significant benefits when having higher motivational CQ competences. In other words, being able to channel attention, energy and efforts towards cultural differences is an integral asset and assists expatriates to not only adjust more successfully to a foreign environment, but also be more satisfied with life and work itself. However, Huff (2013) tried to investigate the relationship between CQ and language proficiency. Subsequently, he further determines how the relation further affects cross-cultural adjustment and expatriate satisfaction. On the contrary, Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar (2006) solely focus on motivational CQ and do not include the other free facets of Cultural Intelligence. In addition to this, Huff (2013) considered the language proficiency as a variable within his research and thus, goes beyond the results by Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar (2006). The relationship between CQ and expatriate adjustment has received attention within the research by Huff, Song and Gresch (2014) and the results support the previous research. Thus, particularly noteworthy is the fact that “the greater a person’s motivational CQ, the greater the effort and energy that person will exert to adjust” (Huff, Song, & Gresch, 2014, p. 155). As a result of this, the assignment success rate of expatriates can be increased.

When considering expatriates previous experiences and its relation to CQ, research by Lee and Sukoco (2010) suggests that the interrelation to other variables such as cultural adjustment, cultural effectiveness and expatriates’ performance should not be ignored. It is of great
significance to demonstrate that prior international working experience or travel experience serve as moderators regarding the effects that Cultural Intelligence has on cultural adjustment or cultural effectiveness. The findings, in line with the expectations by Lee and Sukoco (2010), demonstrate that expatriates with a wide range of experiences and higher CQ are among those individuals, who reach the highest level of cultural adjustments. Whereas, as expected, expatriates with higher CQ, yet relatively low work experience abroad have a lower cultural adjustment. However, it is important to stress the fact that expatriates with a wider range of previous experiences, yet lower CQ will arguably have the lowest cultural adjustment. In comparison to this, Lin, Chen, and Song (2012) do not only include the effect of Cultural Intelligence on cross-cultural adjustment, but also emotional intelligence. Thus, the main aim is to examine the effects of both intelligence factors on an individual’s adjustment to a foreign environment. The results of this study are consistent with past studies such as Ang et al. (2007), Lee and Sukoco (2010) or Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar (2006). The findings by Lin, Chen and Song (2012) have supported the view that individuals exerting a high cognitive CQ competence tend to better understand similarities, yet also differences of people originating from different cultural cohorts. This is mainly due to the fact that those individuals have a repertoire of knowledge about the different norms, traditions and habits across culture from which they can choose. Concerning the motivational facet, it is proven that it is an integral ability of individuals, who are keen to learn about new cultures. This argument further relates to the behavioral CQ facet as highly motivated individuals are more apt and willing to exercise verbal and nonverbal communication of other cultural groups. Following this, greater acceptance can be gathered, and better interpersonal relationship can be created in an intercultural context (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012).

As research by Chen, Lin and Sawangpattanakul (2011) suggests, culture shock can be seen as a mediating variable on the relationship between Cultural Intelligence and performance. This phenomenon was further tested to explore the role of the mediating variable on Philippine laborers working in Taiwan. It can be derived from the study that CQ has a positive association with the performance of the laborers, yet a negative relation to culture shock. Concerning the former, this implies that Philippine laborers with a higher CQ have more success and better performance in Taiwan. With regard to the latter, Chen, Lin and Sawangpattanakul (2011) confirm that “Philippine laborers with a higher CQ suffered less culture shock in a culturally different workplace” (p. 256). In other words, the degree of a culture shock is highly dependent on the experience of the workers. This indicates that if they are willing to adapt to a new foreign environment, culture shock will occur to a lesser degree. Furthermore, as today’s business environment puts much pressure on the workforce, it is of great significance to highlight psychological outcomes of CQ (e.g. emotional exhaustion). In this context, Tay, Westman and Chia (2008), but also Tay, Rossi and Westman (2010) emphasize international business travelers. Their studies prove that there is a negative association between CQ and emotional exhaustion. The findings indicate that individuals exerting
a higher CQ level can better deal with the effect of family demands on emotional exhaustion and thus, feel it to a lesser extent.

When considering affect-based trust as an intermediate outcome of CQ, Rockstuhl and Ng (2008) examined this factor at the interpersonal (dyadic) level. Additionally, within their research, they have shown the unique relevance of the concept of Cultural Intelligence to intercultural contexts. The way in which they designed the study was to have some dyads sharing the same cultural background, while others come from a different cultural cohort. This enabled Rockstuhl and Ng (2008) to contrast ethnically diverse dyads with culturally homogenous dyads. It can be derived from the findings that participant’s metacognitive and cognitive CQ are positively associated with their trust in diverse teams. In addition to this, a high behavioral CQ predicts trust from members originating from diverse cultures. Based on the research by Rockstuhl and Ng (2008), a follow-up study was conducted, which focused on the development of trust with time between culturally diverse team members. Similarities between the findings can be drawn and it can be concluded that affect-based trust in culturally diverse teams was lower at the beginning, while in the culturally homogenous team the reverse condition was prevalent. However, at the end of the project, CQ is positively related to affect-based trust spanning across cross-cultural barriers. Regarding affect-based trust, Chua, Morris and Mor (2012) conducted a new study, which replicates recent findings, yet also extend the research. Consequently, the results demonstrated that, same as Rockstuhl and Ng (2008), metacognitive CQ has a definite relation to affect-based trust within a cross-cultural surrounding, whereas metacognitive CQ is not associated to trust within a homogeneous context.

In addition to this, Chua, Morris and Mor (2012) extend previous research on trust and furthermore, contribute to the research about behavioral outcomes of CQ. Thus, they have proven that metacognitive CQ assists individuals in the search for new ideas in order to overcome knowledge gaps. However, this phenomenon does not occur within a culturally homogeneous environment. In other words, Cultural Intelligence, especially the metacognitive facet, engages individuals in a more frequent process of idea sharing with culturally different ones. Moreover, the behavior individuals demonstrate during intercultural interactions is a focal point within the research by Beyene (2007; as cited in Ang, Van Dyne, & Rockstuhl, 2015; Ng, Van Dyne, Ang, 2012). More precisely, Beyene (2007) tried to emphasize and examine the interactions between native-English-speaking and non-native-English-speaking employees in a French multinational company. The findings demonstrate that the level of CQ from non-native-English speaking employees predicted the frequency of interactions with native ones. This occurred even after controlling for the ability to speak a wide array of languages.

Concerning the creativity within a multicultural team, Crotty and Brett (2012) examined this phenomenon and state that across teams with members exerting a high metacognitive CQ, the
likelihood of fusion teamwork and creativity was exponentially higher. In this context, with the term fusion teamwork Crotty and Brett (2012) elaborate that “it would enhance creativity because it consists of two interrelated processes, co-existence and meaningful participation, which respect cultural diversity, encourage divergent thinking, and promote team members’ participation” (p. 212). Furthermore, the results show the significance of fusion teamwork as a variable to heighten creativity within a multicultural team. Additionally, the crucial role of cultural metacognition is highlighted within the work by Mor, Morris and Joh (2013). It can be derived from their research that metacognitive CQ has a positive association with expectations of cooperative and relationship-oriented goals when preparing for cross-cultural encounters. In addition to this, they found out that executives exhibiting a higher metacognitive CQ level are more prone to succeed in creating more creative collaborations regarding their intercultural relations. Similar to this, Imai and Gelfand (2010) demonstrated that dyads consisting of members with higher CQ can maintain a higher degree of integrative negotiation outcomes. This ultimately implies a more optimal overall outcome in comparison to dyads with lower CQ. Thus, it can be concluded from the research by Imai and Gelfand (2010) that Cultural Intelligence is a “key predictor of intercultural negotiation effectiveness” (p. 95). Based on their studies, synergies can be made to the research by Mor, Morris and Joh (2013) as metacognitive and motivational CQ lead to cooperative negotiation patterns.

When examining the literature about CQ and its intermediate outcomes, a trend among researchers can be observed, which is the focus on performance outcomes. Research to date has immensely focused on this individual-level outcome and its relation to Cultural Intelligence. Within this context, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) have classified performance into general job performance and performance in specific fields. Whereas the former refers to tasks, yet also adaptive performance, the latter focuses on specific areas such as negotiation and leadership. Concerning task performance, Ang et al. (2007) conducted a study in which they argued that a priori all four facets of Cultural Intelligence predict task performance. As the results reveal, only metacognitive and behavioral CQ predict it and thus, are more relevant to task performance than the other dimensions. However, this finding is consistent with the literature as it has been demonstrated that individuals having a high metacognitive CQ (e.g. monitoring the situation) and behavioral CQ (e.g. behavioral adjustment) are more successful in a global sphere.

Subsequent to the results by Ang et al. (2007), Chen et al. (2010) have investigated motivational and cognitive CQ to be predictors of intercultural performance. Within the study, two contextual variables were observed in order to see the impact on expatriate effectiveness, namely subsidiary support and cultural distance. It can be concluded from the research by Chen et al. (2010) that “expatriate cross-cultural motivation related to job performance through work adjustment, but that work adjustment is more likely to mediate the positive relationship between expatriate cross-
cultural motivation and job performance in less supportive and culturally distant foreign subsidiaries” (p. 1125). The positive association of motivational CQ to performance is further elaborated by Chen, Liu and Portnoy (2011). The emphasis of their study is on cultural sales, defined as the number of sales to a client originating from a different cultural cohort. Following this, a high motivational CQ predicts cultural sales, which is further boosted by a higher firm-level motivational CQ.

What is more, Eisenberg and Williams (2012) found out that multicultural teams benefit from the motivational CQ competency. Meaning that team members are keen on getting to new other cultures and can deal with successfully with obstacles in a multicultural team setting. Similar to this, Moon (2013) investigated which effects Cultural Intelligence has on the performance of multicultural teams. The indication is given that Cultural Intelligence serves as a moderator between the relation of cultural diversity and team performance. The study suggests that CQ attenuates the adverse effects diversity has on a multicultural team’s performance. Additionally, at the beginning it can be observed that teams comprised of members from different cultures perform worse in comparison to rather homogenous teams. However, over time multicultural teams tend to outperform the other. Thus, the results of the study by Moon (2013) demonstrate that the higher the cultural diversity within a team, a greater significance should be given to the members’ CQ in relation to performance.

Within the literature, an abundance of research is conducted based on expatriates and their performance. Concerning this, Wu and Ang (2011) aimed to the test the relationship between expatriate supporting practices, adjustment to the host culture and performance. It can be derived from the results that metacognitive and cognitive CQ negatively moderate the link between expatriate supporting practices and cross-cultural adjustment. This implies that individuals having a lower cognitive CQ need the assurance in the form of expatriate supporting practices. This further enables them to enhance their cultural knowledge. However, expatriates with a higher cognitive CQ tend to need fewer supporting practices due to already established cross-cultural knowledge. In accordance with the results, it can be stated that motivational CQ has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between supporting practices and adjustment. This means supporting practices (e.g. feedback) motivate expatriates to perform or adjust better. Similar to this, Wang (2016) conducted a study on the phenomenon of expatriates’ Cultural Intelligence and how it affects adjustment and performance. The findings have shown that higher CQ leads to better overseas adjustments, which then promotes job performance. Overall, the pervasiveness of expatriate orientated research on CQ can be identified within the literature. In this context, the focal point is how to turn expatriates CQ into strategic advantages and thus, into benefits for companies. Regarding this matter, O’Byrne (2018) collected data from 12 experienced expatriates. It can be derived from his research that CQ is a crucial competency, yet organizations...
fail to nurture it. In other words, beginning with the recruiting process up to the employee
development, human resource management should emphasize CQ. This should assist
organizations in providing “expatriates with valuable insights about the host country and its culture”
(O’Byrne, 2018, p. 135).

As the concept of Cultural Intelligence is quite elusive, there is an abundance of literature about
it. Thus, within this thesis, the description of the antecedents, related concepts of CQ and
intermediate outcomes is not comprehensive. In the following section, criticism on the concept of
CQ and its research will be elaborated. In addition to this, controversies or inconsistencies will be
depicted. Subsequently, potential gaps within the research will be highlighted in order to narrow
down fields of research, which have not received enough attention.

3.4 Criticism on CQ and its research

When highlighting a concept from various angles, criticism and controversies have to be
considered. Thus, within this section, the criticism about CQ and its research will be shown to
demonstrate all aspects related to this construct. According to Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012), one
of the biggest challenges to date refers to the term intelligence, as there is continuous debate and
controversy what intelligence is. In this context, similar to the term emotional intelligence, CQ is
consistent with the definition of intelligence by Sternberg and Detterman (1986) as it is an ability
to adapt to an environment. In addition to this, researchers tried to demonstrate that the concept
somehow correlates to IQ, EQ or social intelligence, yet it is still distinct from it (e.g. Ang et al.,
2007).

Another primary challenge within CQ research is that participants need to have been involved with
or have been exposed to diversity-related incidents in the past. When considering the study design
this factor has to be taken into consideration. Otherwise, it could be argued that the results of the
study do not show the empirical relevance needed for research on the construct of CQ. However,
it has been noted by Ang, Van Dyne and Tan (2011) and Eisenberg et al. (2013) that not only
exposure but rather interaction with the foreign environment is among the main principles for CQ
to be developed as well as knowledge about foreign cultures. Furthermore, Blasco, Feldt and
Jakobsen (2012) argue that research has only hardly tested what constitutes Cultural
Unintelligence. They further state that current research has constructed an ideal culturally
intelligent individual based on the needs of the international business environment. In general,
Blasso, Feldt and Jakobsen (2012) strongly feel that the underlying assumptions of the construct
of CQ are somewhat problematic and thus, it should instead be seen and treated as a hypothesis
than a well-proven construct.
Additionally, regarding the four-factor model of CQ, a clear pattern is not shown how "to theorize a priori how the four CQ dimension will exert different effects" (Ng, Van, Dyne, & Ang, 2012, p. 46). Even though empirical data supports the four CQ competencies through confirmatory factor analyses, challenges do arise. Concerning intermediate outcomes of CQ, Ang et al. (2007) state that there is a precise relation between cultural judgment/decision making and cognitive and metacognitive CQ. However, when considering rather broad outcomes, such as adjustment or performance, researchers are faced with difficulties since it is hard to define a priori which of the four CQ dimensions precisely exert a particular effect. In addition to this, there is often no consensus among studies whether to use an aggregated representation of CQ or the four separate dimensions as a predictor of specific outcomes. As to advance the research about why some particular CQ competencies or overall CQ influences intermediate results, researchers need to develop an agreement on the nature of the variables. Thus, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) suggest that the overall construct of CQ may predict broad outcomes such as adjustment and performance. This enables to make variations based on the context regarding the performance requirements, as in some situations metacognitive CQ has greater relevance than motivational CQ in increasing performance. Opposed to this, specific outcomes such as cultural judgment and decision making are predicted by specific CQ competencies, as already stated above.

Regarding the theoretical understanding of CQ, Ott and Michailova (2018) suggest that there is an apparent need for more detailed and in-depth knowledge. Thus, they state that within the literature contradictory findings concerning the relationship between the four competencies and its intermediate outcomes, yet also regarding the development, are prevalent. Consequently, inconsistencies exist as CQ could be seen as an aggregate construct (Earley & Ang, 2003) or an integrated concept (Thomas et al., 2008). According to Ott and Michailova (2018), several aspects and research questions related to the concept of CQ have yet remained unanswered. This might refer to the question of how the separate CQ competencies are related to each other, but also which CQ facet or combination of them is the most significant one for generating a specific intercultural outcome. Regarding this, there is no research in the field of interrelations between the facets, implying that no evidence exists on the questions whether a particular level of a specific aspect of CQ is needed for another CQ competency to be developed.

As the sample selection is of great relevance, Ott and Michailova (2018) argue that research on CQ, especially regarding antecedents to and outcomes of CQ heavily depends on students as the selected sample. Regarding the student sample, some authors describe it as a limitation (e.g. Engle & Crowne, 2014; Wood & St. Peters, 2014). Additionally, it is argued that the measurement of CQ is mostly done via self-reported methods. Thus, Ott and Michailova (2018) advise scholars to both use self and peer-reported ways to generate data on CQ. This might relate to an argument by Blasco, Feldt and Jakobsen (2012) as they question whether individuals can accurately execute
a self-assessment based on their cognitive processes. Regarding this, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) state that the current empirical research heavily depends on self-reporting tools such as the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) by Van Dyne, Ang and Koh (2008). Even though the CQS has proven to be reliable due to its predictive validity, the development of complementary measures of CQ should still be at the forefront of current research. These measures should be based on different methodologies, which then could strengthen the studies on CQ and as well, offer other assessment alternatives for researchers.

With regard to the development of CQ skills, Blasco, Feld and Jakobsen (2012) fear that even though some abilities might be vital for business success, there is a broader issue regarding current research on “professional and vocational skills” (p. 242). Within this context, they recommend scholars to remain cautious and humble about making assumptions that individuals can use training to acquire CQ competences. Additionally, Ott and Michailova (2018) point out to the fact that due to the inconsistent and contradictory results, questions remain about the development of CQ, mainly whether and how it can be acquired. Thus, consensus should be generated about the research question of how CQ is developed. In addition to this, Ott and Michailova (2018) suggest that there is a need for greater research on the relationship between international experience and CQ. Regarding this, within the literature, there is an apparent lack of consistency about how international experience can be used to develop CQ competencies. Ott and Michailova (2018) suppose that this is mainly due to a “missing cohesive theoretical grounding within respective studies” (p. 112). Thus, they propose that following aspects should be emphasized within future CQ research: how CQ is developed, CQ interventions, the relationship between CQ and international experience. Regarding the CQ interventions, it should be examined if CQ development requires a combination of interventions and in general which ones.

As Ott and Michailova (2018) argue, research on the development of CQ and intervention techniques is still lacking. Even though step-by-step guides to develop CQ and intercultural competencies exist (e.g. Bennett, Aston, & Colquhoun, 2000; Earley & Mosakowski, 2004b; Brislin, Worthley, & MacNab, 2006), consensus about the CQ development methods is not available. Consequently, two streams of research are suggested by various authors on which a wide array of studies are based on when it comes to CQ development, namely experiential learning (e.g. Kolb, 1984; MacNab, 2012) and cross-cultural management education (CCM) (e.g. Eisenberg et al., 2013). In general, studies on CQ emphasize the antecedents and the intermediate outcomes of Cultural Intelligence rather than focusing on the underlying factors or methods, which lead to the development of CQ. Apart from this, during the last decade, expatriates are commonly known as the relevant sample for CQ research. However, studies based on student samples gained momentum quite recently. Consequently, research has been done on students as a sample mostly with an emphasis on international experience and experiential learning.
including study abroad programs (e.g. Engle & Crowne, 2014; Holtbrügge & Engelhard, 2016; Kurpis & Hunter, 2017; Erez et al., 2013; Reichard et al., 2015), university curriculum (e.g. Ahn & Ettner, 2013; Clifford & Montgomery, 2015; Kolb & Kolb, 2005), cross-cultural simulations (e.g. Bücker & Korzilius, 2015) and intercultural management education (e.g. Eisenberg, Härtel, & Stahl, 2013; Eisenberg et al., 2013; Ramsey & Lorenz, 2016). Despite this, experiential learning is often intertwined with the university curriculum or cross-cultural management education as can be seen within the research by MacNab (2012). What is more experimental cultural intelligence education is even investigated as a separate research field by Rosenblatt, Worthley and MacNab (2013).

Above all, a significant and growing body of literature has investigated different CQ development interventions separately, yet previous studies do not report a more comprehensive approach. Due to the current global business circumstances and to respond to the needs of the market, business schools are required to equip their students with enhanced cross-cultural competencies (Eisenberg et al., 2013). However, in this case, only a limited number of studies focuses on testing the effect of experiential learning and cross-cultural management (CCM) education on students’ CQ increase. Above all, scholars have not considered a more comprehensive approach when it comes to CQ interventions that help students develop it. To date, there has been little agreement on what constitutes the development of Cultural Intelligence, especially in a student context and thus, it can be stated that there exists a research gap in this field. Due to this fact, the purpose of this master thesis is to explore the specific CQ development methods and to compare them with previous assumptions of the pervasiveness of experiential learning and CCM education as amplifiers of CQ. Despite this, I will not only draw a clear line between the two research paradigms of experiential learning and CCM, but also still be able to determine a common ground on which both development streams focus. Consequently, within the next chapters, the emphasis will be on CQ development and its general implications, yet also its influence on students.
4 CQ development

4.1 Forethoughts

“Cultural literacy is not simply desirable – it is a global business prerequisite.”
- Mary O’Hara-Devereaux and Robert Johansen (1994)

The term Cultural Intelligence was first coined in the 21st century by Earley and Ang (2003), yet even before that measures on how to develop intercultural competence have received a considerable amount of attention. Therefore, within the literature on CQ, the benefits of Cultural Intelligence in comparison to intercultural effectiveness are well-documented. Thus, it is a natural extension of the CQ research program to highlight how CQ capabilities can be developed.

However, concerning CQ development and training, it has become commonplace to link the increased awareness, understanding and sensitivity acquired through intercultural training to a behavioral change. Earley et al. (2010) argue that the key problem with this assumption is that the relationship between cultural knowledge and behavior is culturally adaptive and flexible and thus, it does not illustrate a simple, linear, cause-and-effect chain. Therefore, as already pointed out before, it has become inevitable that business schools equip their students with enhanced cross-cultural competencies to compete within a global work environment (Eisenberg et al., 2013).

Despite this, the main weakness within this field is quite apparent as only a limited number of studies focuses on testing the effect of experiential learning and cross-cultural management (CCM) education on students’ CQ increase. Due to this fact, the gap within the literature will be highlighted from various angles to receive a comprehensive perspective on CQ development and training.

4.2 Framework for CQ intervention selection

When examining the literature about the intervention types, the needs of individuals and the desired outcomes are the focal points. In general, according to Tan and Chua (2003), cross-cultural training programs to develop intercultural competencies can be divided into intercultural management training and consulting, and international assignment training services. While the former aims at the delivery of skills to make individuals effective on an assignment abroad (e.g. global management training, virtual team facilitation, executive coaching), the latter focuses on the delivery of support services to the expatriates and their immediate family members (e.g. relocation assistance, visa preparation, language training, etc.). Thus, cross-cultural training and consulting programs have different objectives depending on the training type.
In addition to this, Tan and Chua (2003) depict that the different training methods address three kinds of knowledge, namely cognitive, behavioral and affective. In this regard, the training methods could then be used to have a direct impact on one or more particular CQ facets. Following this, in line with Earley and Peterson (2004), it can be stated that even though the four CQ competencies have discriminant validity, relations can be still drawn. This further implies that “an intervention targeting one of the facets may have minimal spillover effects onto other facets” (Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 109). Despite this, Tan and Chua (2003) stress the fact that training targeting the cognitive realm triggers changes to the thinking process. In other words, cognitive training involves instilling individuals with knowledge about cultures and cultural differences to which they could be exposed to when entering a different cultural setting. After successful execution of this type of training, people can heighten the complexity regarding their thinking process and can consider issues from various viewpoints. In addition to this, Black and Mendenhall (1990) point out that cognitive training mainly emphasizes transferring cultural knowledge through short lectures, videos, case studies. However, this method is, even though it is the cheapest, often criticized as studies have proven that there is no effect on interpersonal and professional effectiveness of individuals abroad (Tung, 1981). Conversely, Tan and Chua (2003) state that training aimed at increasing affective knowledge leads to changes in affective reactions. In this case, the objective is to assist individuals in overcoming negative or unpleasant experiences concerning other cultures (e.g. personal prejudices). An integral part of this type of training is addressing the phenomenon of “culture shock”. Lastly, transferring behavioral knowledge should trigger changes in their outward behavior. This mostly constitutes what is appropriate behavior in a particular culture and enable individuals to “skillfully enact certain behaviors” (Tan & Chua, 2003, p. 266).

As to design intercultural training, Tan and Chua (2003) draw from the research by Black and Mendenhall (1990). The main impetus to create a new structure was given since Black and Mendenhall (1990) do not differentiate between the different CQ facets. However, according to Tan and Chua (2003), it is of utmost significance to organize training methods around cognitive, motivational and behavioral elements. In addition to this, Tan and Chua (2003) as well as Earley and Peterson (2004), argue that the previous frame does not take into consideration the training needs of an individual and instead take a universal stance regarding cross-cultural training. Consequently, as a first layer, cognition, motivational and behavior stand at the forefront of the framework by Tan and Chua (2003). The second layer relates to the training needs and thus, they delineate the training prerequisites into three levels namely intensity, duration, and nature of the interaction. In this regard, Figure 4 illustrates the design of an intercultural training by Earley and Peterson (2004). Subsequently, the explanation of the various elements will follow.
Firstly, regarding the intercultural setting demands, Earley and Peterson (2004) reveal that intensity relates to the frequency of contact with foreigners, which is classified as high (e.g. education abroad) or low (e.g. subsidiary visits). Secondly, duration refers to the length of time one is exposed to or in contact with someone from a different cultural cohort, whereby a term over six months is considered as long. Lastly, nature is regarded as the type of interaction with one or more members from a different culture, which is divided into formal (e.g. business negotiation) or casual (e.g. overseas holiday). In addition to this, Tan and Chua (2003) demonstrated a more detailed overview of the different levels of CQ training, which can be seen in Table 2\(^1\). Their research further assists training practitioners in the formulation of appropriate CQ training methods for the trainees.

\(^1\) For further discussion see Tan & Chua, 2003, p. 273 ff.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CQ Training Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Training Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Generally involves low intensity and low duration of interaction with members of other culture.</td>
<td>Training should involve building simple cognitive content, some simple behavior techniques and an adequate level of emotional preparation and self-awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Generally, involves low intensity interaction but the duration is usually long. Interaction could also be formal.</td>
<td>Training should involve building substantial cognitive and metacognitive skills, a significant set of behavioral repertoires, and a high level of self-awareness with a moderate level of self-confidence. Some goal setting skills may be helpful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Tends to involve formal interaction of long duration and high intensity.</td>
<td>Training should involve building a high level of cognitive and metacognitive skills, a comprehensive set of behavioral repertoire or self-presentation ability, a high level of self-confidence and awareness. Significant goal setting may be required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Different Levels of CQ Training (adapted from Tan & Chua, 2003, p. 272)

Within the literature, particular training methods aiming at the four-facet CQ model are given (e.g. Tan & Chua, 2003; Earley & Peterson, 2004) and are demonstrated in this section. Consequently, regarding metacognitive CQ, Tan and Chua (2003) stress that three regulatory skills are essential in this field, namely planning, monitoring and evaluation. In addition to this, they turn to clinical and experimental psychology when considering metacognitive training methods. One crucial training method targeting both cognitive and metacognitive CQ is the so-called Cognitive Structure Analysis, which systematically examines different sets of knowledge representation to classify it into knowledge structures. In addition to this, Earley and Peterson (2004) argue that cognitive structures are tacit assumptions and beliefs an individual has. Subsequently, an individual’s personal goals and schemes influence the way information is processed and accordingly, how the behavior is organized. Conversely, methods aiming at enhancing the motivational facet are often heavily value-orientated. As result of the focus on values, individuals should exert empathy, but this does not necessarily imply self-efficacy and perseverance in a host culture.

Following this, self-efficacy is a vital element to effective intercultural training, which necessitates confidence building through the creation of simple, but salient rituals in the host country (e.g. finding out where to buy the newspaper). In comparison to this, when considering the behavioral facet of CQ, Tan and Chua (2003) draw upon the theory of self-presentation by Goffman (1967). Within this theory, the main focus is on a dramaturgical approach toward cross-cultural training in
the form of role-plays, performances as well as visual arts (e.g. narrative plays and theater training). Overall, to guide behavioral change, simulations and role-plays are the best tools to break out of old habits and to acquire a new repertoire of behaviors, which are seen as appropriate in the host culture. Above all, it must be stated that instead of focusing only on one facet of CQ, trainers and practitioners should take an integrative stance. Despite this, in line with Tan and Chua (2003) it must be noted that training for CQ is most likely bound to a particular culture. Put differently, a technique that works in one culture might lead to no results in another one. Consequently, one has to consider that the training methods might be culturally bound and thus, adjustments to a specific cultural environment may be needed. In addition to this, even though CQ is not innate and can be learned, Tan and Chua (2003) argue that intrinsic factors like personality play a vital role. It can be derived from this argument that training alone might not be the only solution for a positive international encounter.

Taken together, these frameworks should only be viewed as a starting point and provide a general understanding of the development. Following this, the subsequent chapters will go beyond this introduction to the development and an in-depth focus will be generated. As to provide a comprehensive overview of CQ development, two different research paradigms will be highlighted within Chapter 4.3 and 4.4 in order to demonstrate how various scholars depict the amplification of CQ competencies. However, within this thesis, not only the differences, but similarities and synergies will be highlighted as well.

4.3 Streams of CQ development

Regarding CQ development and training, Earley and Ang (2003) hold the stance that is a continuous interaction between environmental and genetic factors. Furthermore, according to Ang, Van Dyne and Rockstuhl (2015), learning through experience stands at the forefront of CQ development. However, when analyzing the available literature closer, it can be seen that an additional stream of CQ development has appeared. This research paradigm highlights cross-cultural management (CCM) education (e.g. Eisenberg et al., 2013) as a contributing factor to CQ amplification. Consequently, the two research approaches and its underlying elements will be analyzed in-depth within this section to grasp the nature of CQ development.

4.3.1 Learning through experience

It can be derived from Thomas and Inkson (2004) that experiential contact-based training of CQ development is seen among scholars as the most rigorous, yet also most effective in enhancing all four-facets of CQ. Concerning experiential learning theories, Ang, Van Dyne and Rockstuhl
(2015) draw attention to the fact that the literature about Cultural Intelligence development conveys three different research paradigms following learning through experience:

- experiential learning theory by Kolb (1984)
- leader and executive development such as research by DeRue and Wellman (2009)
- theories of situated learning as can be seen in studies by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Anderson, Reder and Simon (1996)

Consequently, these three streams highlight the importance of actual experiences to be able to develop Cultural Intelligence. However, Earley and Ang (2003) elaborate that the Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977a) can be used as an additional framework for understanding cross-cultural competence development and training.

4.3.1.1 Underlying theories of experiential learning

In general, the different research paradigms have led to the design of a wide range of CQ development interventions. Thus, when considering learning through experience in terms of CQ development, one theory is among the most prominent ones, namely the experiential learning theory (ELT) by Kolb (1984), who draws upon the work of well-known educational and organizational scholars like John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget. First of all, according to Kolb (1984), ELT indicates that learning is a process, unlike traditional learning theories emphasizing education as a behavioral or cognitive outcome. Secondly, based on Kolb and Kolb (2005), it is noteworthy to state that "all learning is relearning" (p. 194). Thirdly, conflicts as well as disagreements drive the learning process and thus, should not be avoided. As a fourth argument, Kolb (1984) emphasizes that learning is a holistic adaptation process to the world, which necessitates an integrated functioning of the person. With the fifth proposition, Kolb (1984) stresses the fact that ELT is a continuous process, meaning that generating new knowledge and integrating old aspects are significant elements of learning. Lastly, learning thrives from the synergetic transaction between an individual and its environment. Within his model, it is prescribed that a learner should undergo a four-stage learning cycle namely, experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting, which then enable to effectively transform experience into learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2005)².

Conversely, about leader and executive development, DeRue and Wellman (2009) depict the various forms of personal growth through direct on-the-job experience, whereas formal training and mentoring play a supporting role. Thus, their research aims to link leadership skills to elements of the experience (e.g. developmental challenge), the person (learning orientation), and the

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² For further discussion see Kolb, 1984, p. 179 ff.
context (feedback availability). Within their research, DeRue and Wellman (2009) strongly highlight the developmental value of experience. Following this, they further describe what constitutes a developmental challenge, namely unfamiliar responsibilities, working across boundaries and managing diversity. Due to the nonlinear effects of the developmental obstacles, their results advance research towards a better prediction and explanation of experiential learning and leadership development processes. Above all, they stress the fact that all the variables of experience, person and context must be in line to develop leaders through experience.

In comparison to this, the situated learning theory as demonstrated by Lave and Wenger (1991) implies that realistic and authentic tasks facilitate the learning process. Additionally, Lave and Wenger (1991) point out to the fact that “knowing” cannot be divided from “doing”. Overall, situated learning has a positive impact due to its collaborative nature. Furthermore, Anderson, Reder and Simon (1991) (as cited in Lave & Wenger, 1991) state that situated learning deals with the fact that what an individual learns is peculiar and characteristic to the situation in which it was learned. Lastly, Black and Mendenhall (1990) argued that the so-called Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977a) could be used as a framework in order to generate a greater understanding what encompasses cross-cultural learning and training. To point out to the benefit of this theory, Black and Mendenhall (1990) argue that it not only integrates cognitive and behavioral aspects, yet it also addresses the motivational aspect in relation to the concept of self-efficacy. Additionally, the Social Learning Theory emphasizes how individuals learn and utilize what they have learned within a training scenario.

4.3.1.2 Context and process of experiential learning

Concerning experiential learning, researchers contend and reinforce the significance of direct international exposures for developing Cultural Intelligence competencies. In this regard, the length of intervention and the training approaches play a role as pointed out by Fang, Schei and Selart (2018). As previously indicated, international experience is generally of great importance when developing CQ, yet studies or concepts elaborating how to train individuals to develop CQ have gained momentum within this decade. When considering the context in which CQ or in general intercultural competence is obtained, it can be identified that there is a classification of program types, especially in terms of study abroad stays (Engle & Engle, 2003). Within this context, Engel and Engle (2003) depict the different levels of study abroad programs and their classifications are proposed as followed: study tour, short-term study, cross-cultural contact program, cross-cultural encounter program, and cross-cultural immersion program (Engle & Engle, 2003)³.

³ For detailed discussion see Engle & Engle, 2003, p. 9 ff.
As a follow-up study, Engle and Engle (2004) then collected data from a half-year and simultaneously from a full-year study abroad program for students. The primary purpose is to determine the relationship between the study abroad program design and the students' educational and cultural experience. In particular language acquisition and intercultural sensitivity was assessed and the results demonstrate that full-year students significantly increase their cultural understanding and cross-cultural communication skills. In comparison to this, improvements regarding the language acquisition can only be examined within the first term, while this has decreased significantly within the second term. Similar to Engle and Engle (2003), Crowne (2008) proposes a typology of international programs, yet she goes beyond study abroad programs. Within her research, she indicates that cultural exposures include contexts such as employment abroad, education abroad, vacation abroad and other experiences abroad (e.g. missionary work or military experience). In addition to this, the depth of exposure is of great significance. Moreover, Crowne (2008) identified that the number of countries one has visited for education and employment purposes has a significant impact on CQ, yet the number of regions for vacation or any other reasons does not influence CQ.

An outstanding advocate of experiential learning relating to Cultural Intelligence is MacNab (2012), who developed a somewhat successful seven-stage CQ development program. MacNab (2012) pioneered the experiential Cultural Intelligence education program that serves as a basis for subsequent research and follow-up studies. In detail, within his research, the participants were exposed to new cultural experiences and subsequently, reflect upon it. In this regard, the situated learning theory served as a basis for the study by MacNab. In this regard, it focused on collaborative learning followed by a discussion of the experiences in small groups. As can be derived from the findings, the process heightened all facets of a participant’s CQ with significant increases in the metacognitive, motivational and behavioral realms. In addition to this, the importance of self-efficacy in line with experiential learning is highlighted by MacNab and Worthley (2012a); MacNab and Worthley (2012b); and MacNab, Brislin and Worthley (2012). Besides this, MacNab, Brislin and Worthley (2012) argue that self-efficacy “influences internalization of CQ development” (p. 1334) and within their research, they further emphasize the role of direct contact quality. Furthermore, MacNab and Worthley (2012a) contend that individuals exerting higher self-efficacy can demonstrate the intended education outcomes more effectively.

Conversely, Yamazaki and Kayes (2004) demonstrate how the ELT by Kolb (1985) can be used to describe a rather transactional approach to learning across cultures. Furthermore, it emphasizes individual learning as a continuous process of adjustment to a greater number of cultures. Consequently, their findings add further insights into the existing body of literature about cross-cultural learning and education. In detail, Yamazaki and Kayes (2004, p. 372) created a typology of nine cross-cultural capabilities, which are in accordance with what is commonly seen
as successful intercultural learning and are demonstrated by the following skills: building relationships; valuing people of different cultures; listening and observation; coping with ambiguity, translating complex information; taking action and initiative; managing others; adaptability and flexibility; and managing stress. Thus, they propose that this holistic model of cross-cultural learning should enable managers to be moved in the right direction towards being successful in a cross-cultural work environment. In comparison to this, Reichard et al. (2015) investigated what effects an individual’s engagement in cultural trigger events abroad has on the development of cultural competence. With trigger events, Reichard et al. (2015) refer to rather discrete incidents, which are often perceived as negative or traumatic (as cited in Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa, 2005). It can be derived from the findings by Reichard et al. (2015) that an increase in CQ and a decrease in ethnocentrism can be identified after training. More precisely, training focused on cultural trigger events that replicate actual experiences during an international assignment.

4.3.1.3 Outcomes and effects of experiential learning

Concerning the outcomes of experiential learning, it can generally range from rather broad ones like enhancing global leadership effectiveness (e.g. Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2009a) to specific impacts on a particular CQ facet (e.g. Engle and Crowne, 2014). Following this, with regard to global leader development, Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2009a) highlight CQ as a learning capability and moderator that assists individuals in transforming experiences into experiential learning outcomes. Thereby, they emphasize that individuals on an assignment abroad undergo the experiential learning cycle elaborated within chapter 4.3.1.1. Learning outcomes further include increased self-efficacy, accurate mental models of leadership across different cultures and flexibility regarding the use of leadership styles. Figure 5 further summarizes the process of turning experiential learning into learning outcomes and thus, demonstrates the impact of CQ. Similar to Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2009a), Ng, Tan and Ang (2011) suggest that organizational routines that assist individuals in developing global leadership skills within an international assignment contribute extensively to the worldwide cultural capital of companies. Consequently, based on the situated learning theory elaborated above, Ng, Tan and Ang (2011) argue that the theory’s emphasis on authentic experiences is an essential asset regarding learning and skill acquisition.
Conversely, Crowne (2008) elaborated on the different types of cultural exposures an individual might be confronted with. Within her research, she further depicts the relationship between the various exposure types and the underlying CQ competences. Furthermore, Crowne (2008) proposes that training individuals having diverse vacation experiences might entail using this particular as a foundation to build CQ. Thus, they might receive additional training on how to interact appropriately and effectively within other cultural realms. In comparison to this, Engle and Crowne (2014) collected data from participants within a short-term structured program and it can be derived from the results that each of the four CQ facets was increased. A similar approach regarding the study design of a short-term project was made by Lopes-Murphy (2013), yet slightly diverging results can be examined. Thus, students did not exert an increase in CQ between the pre-test and post-test survey. This is mainly due to the short-term nature of the engagement. Therefore, Lopes-Murphy (2013) proposes that exposure and engagement should receive a place within the overall education of students.

In addition to this, Rosenblatt, Worthley and MacNab (2013) highlight within their research the move from cross-cultural contact to development of CQ within experiential education. In this context, expectancy disconfirmation is predicted to be a mediating influence. In general, expectancy disconfirmation relates to a particular state in which an individual expects a specific behavior of someone they interact with it, but then experiences a different one (Brislin, Worthley, & MacNab, 2006). This expectancy disconfirmation, in turn, is then associated with Cultural Intelligence development. Consequently, it can be derived from the study by Rosenblatt, Worthley, and MacNab (2013) that there is a significant relationship between the experience of expectancy...
disconfirmation and the development of all four facets of the CQ concept. This further enables individuals to learn during a cross-cultural experience.

Apart from this, Alexandra (2018) examined the relationship between social dominance orientation, the propensity of changing stereotypes and CQ development within an experiential cross-cultural training setting. Concerning the social dominance theory, it mainly explains that socially dominant individuals want to hold their social hierarchies and status by holding onto stereotypes and ideologies (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Based on the findings, it can be stated that there is a positive correlation between the propensity to change stereotypes and three out of four CQ development competencies, namely metacognitive, motivational and behavioral. The results indicate that individuals exerting a greater tendency to change stereotypes following a cross-cultural encounter have an increase in CQ. Opposed to this, individuals scoring high on the social dominance orientation spectrum demonstrate lower propensity to abolish stereotypes and as a result, showed lower CQ development. Therefore, Alexandra (2018) concludes that the social dominance orientation “was negatively related to the propensity to change stereotypes and CQ development” (p. 72), whereas the propensity to change stereotypes served as a mediator between the relationship of social dominance orientation and CQ development.

4.3.2 Cross-cultural management (CCM) education

When analyzing the available literature closer, it can be seen that an additional stream of CQ development is originating from the management literature. Within the previous chapter, actual experiences were examined, yet this chapter is devoted to the theoretical preparation of individuals being exposed to cross-cultural encounters. In addition to this, a light is shed on the internationalization of the university curriculum. Consequently, the research paradigm elaborated within this sub-chapter highlights cross-cultural management (CCM) education (e.g. Eisenberg et al., 2013) as a contributing factor to CQ amplification. Subsequently, this form of CQ antecedent includes various types of CCM education such as cultural sensitivity training, cross-cultural management courses, cultural briefings and intercultural role plays (e.g. Ahn & Ettner, 2013; Eisenberg, Härtel, & Stahl, 2013; Eisenberg et al., 2013b; Fellow et al. 2014). However, in comparison to the body of literature on experiential learning, CCM has limited research. In spite of the limited amount of documentation, its relevance for the development will be highlighted within this chapter.
4.3.2.1 Concept of CCM education

According to Eisenberg, Härtel and Stahl (2013), within the past years business schools introduced and expanded the offerings of CCM education within the curriculum. In this context, multiple schools moved from integrating a limited number of courses to adding a comprehensive offer of CCM classes with different specific focuses (e.g. Doing Business in Asia; Leadership Across Cultures). Due to the rapid growth of CCM within the university curriculum, discussions and debates were held on what approach should be taken, such as focusing on the key cultural dimensions or presenting culture as a complex set of unidentifiable practices (Osland & Bird, 2000). Within their research, Eisenberg, Härtel and Stahl (2013) have pinpointed several trends contributing to the dynamic body literature of CCM education.

According to Eisenberg, Härtel and Stahl (2013), one trend having a tremendous impact on CCM learning and education is a tendency to move beyond the traditional emphasis of CCM education on comparative and cross-cultural management. This further implies ensuring the relevance of the content of CCM classes. Thus, reflecting on current challenges managers face including addressing current phenomena such as corporate social responsibility and ethical issues. In line with Calgiuri, Mencin and Jiang (2013) and Pless, Maak and Stahl (2011), it can be stated that cross-cultural skills are an integral part when considering social responsibility and sustainable development in organizations. Consequently, CCM courses must be designed to equip individuals with the necessary skill set to manage a global stakeholder environment with all its complexities and ethical dilemmas. In addition to this, Eisenberg, Härtel and Stahl (2013) state the fact that technological advances boost the use of globally dispersed multicultural virtual teams. “The ease of access to and availability of electronic social media channels and online collaboration technologies make this approach increasingly feasible in international business and CCM education” (p. 324).

Moreover, it has been recognized that CCM courses based on Western pedagogy might not meet the expectations of non-Western students. According to Eisenberg, Härtel and Stahl (2013), other pedagogical traditions may need to be introduced to satisfy the needs of non-Western students. Thus, it is argued that the focus of recent CCM activities has been rather bi-cultural, meaning that culture is mostly examined from an East versus West perspective. Within the past business contexts, this approach was once appropriate. However, the phenomenon of globalization produced a rather complex and dynamic picture for which a “one-size-fits-all” approach cannot be applied.
4.3.2.2 Context and process of CCM education

In general, there is no universal approach when it comes to CCM education and thus, a wide array of settings will be described. More precisely, curriculum internationalization and rethinking international higher education have gained attention within the past years. In this regard, Crosling, Edwards and Schroder depicted (2008) how to implement experience in a faculty of business and economics. In line with Edwards et al. (2003), changing the curriculum to be more international requires steps at various stages. Thus, they propose that the first stage emphasizes international awareness, followed by multicultural competence and immersion in a global setting. Similarities can be drawn to the research by Clifford and Montgomery (2015), who examine transformative learning through internationalization of the higher education curriculum. In this context, Clifford and Montgomery (2015) explore the obstacles tertiary teaching staff face when considering issues of transformative learning. However, the participants within the study “express a broad willingness to engage in a transformative process to explore holistic educational goals for their students to empower their students to be agents of change” (Clifford & Montgomery, 2015, p. 60). Contributing to the body of literature on including CQ within institutions of higher learning is the research by Fellows, Goedde and Schwichtenberg (2014). According to them, universities have a tripartite mission of knowledge creation, student learning, and social charter. Thus, they propose that CQ should be used as an ideological platform to universities and its students in driving forward the cultural competence development while remaining loyal to its mission.

Concerning CCM context research, Fischer (2011) examined students within a brief cross-cultural intervention of four weeks. This intervention is part of a university course consisting of six lectures, one simulation game, and a behavior modification session. The primary purpose of this study was to examine which effects cross-cultural training has on cultural essentialism beliefs and CQ. The term cultural essentialism refers to the essentialist beliefs and attitudes towards the concept of culture, in which an underlying meaning is assumed (e.g. Chao et al., 2007). Consequently, the findings of the study depict the fact that cultural essentialism increased throughout the intervention, yet cognitive and metacognitive CQ competences decreased. A similar approach was taken by Eisenberg et al. (2013) as they examined CCM courses. The classes were held in a traditional academic environment yet attempted to include experiential aspects. It can be derived from the study that CCM courses lead to a higher CQ level after the session and thus, CCM interventions can be seen as a suitable instrument in preparing students for a global work environment. According to the findings by Eisenberg et al. (2013), it must be noted that CCM courses influence the cognitive and metacognitive CQ level more as opposed to the motivational and behavioral facet.
In addition to this, cultural simulation games can be used as a tool for developing CQ (Bücker & Korzilius, 2015). According to Bücker and Korzilius (2015), the relevance of cross-cultural role plays, and simulations games has increased tremendously over the past years mainly due to the possibility of practicing behavior in a safe setting. As a result of it, an increase in the metacognitive, motivational as well as the behavioral CQ facet can be identified. Following this, due to the safe environment, confidence is boosted regarding the self-efficacy within a cross-cultural encounter. Thus, a positive impact on cross-cultural interaction and learning within the classroom setting can be seen. Despite the positive aspect of a cross-cultural simulation game, no correlation can be made to communication improvement. Thus, Bücker and Korzilius (2015) conclude that students generate a greater understanding, but do not have a strategic approach when it comes to interaction.

4.3.2.3 Outcomes and effects of CCM education

Concerning the outcomes and effects of CCM, Ahn and Ettner (2003) conducted a study to investigate the influence CQ has on an MBA curriculum. As a result of it, students exert a high motivation regarding studying about other cultures. However, the results indicate that the sample of MBA students participating in the study lack in-depth knowledge of traditions, practices, beliefs, and values of other cultures. Thus, the cognitive facet of CQ is the category receiving the lowest rating, whereas motivational CQ exhibit the highest average score. Ultimately, according to Ahn and Ettner (2003), it is of not of great significance to possess a paramount knowledge about every aspect of another culture, instead exerting a high level of awareness of oneself and others is of tremendous importance for successfully encountering cross-cultural interactions. According to Clifford and Montgomery (2015), the potential goal of a transformed international curriculum is developing global citizens.

To demonstrate the evidence-based management approach to CCM education, Erez et al. (2013) and Taras et al. (2012) investigate this field to examine the effect particular CCM educational interventions have on students’ CQ development. This further contributes to the fast-growing research paradigm of investigated how and why students’ CQ changes before and after being exposed to CCM educational activities. Consequently, based on a collaborative experiential learning approach, Erez et al. (2013) explored whether management students’ CQ, global identity and local identity can be heightened within a 4-week virtual multicultural team project. Results from this study clearly show that both CQ and global identity has increased over the period of the study, whereas no effect on local identity can be identified. In this context, the lines are blurred between experiential learning and CCM education. In comparison to this, Taras et al. (2012) conducted a so-called X-Culture Project, which can be described as a multicountry collaborative in which students work in global virtual teams with the aim of completing an assignment. The
results of this study show that the project significantly improved cognitive and motivational levels. Additionally, a change in behavior as well as improved performance can be identified. Despite these positive arguments, the results of the study suggest that not all students benefit from such projects. Similar to this, Rehg, Grundlach and Grigorian (2012) examined the effects of cross-cultural training on CQ and specific self-efficacy in a pre- and post-test survey setting. According to them, cross-cultural training through a lecture format only significantly improves the cognitive and behavioral CQ competences, whereas the motivational facet increases less significantly. Additionally, Rehg, Grundlach and Grigorian (2012) demonstrated a positive correlation between Cultural Intelligence and specific self-efficacy.

What is more, within a cultural psychology class setting, Buchtel (2014) examined the positive and negative effects and accordingly, whether it leads to cultural sensitivity or cultural stereotyping. Thus, the results show that students participating in a class of cultural psychology perceive cultural misunderstanding more accurately and are generally more conscious of cultural elements within an interpersonal encounter (metacognitive CQ). Moreover, participants completing the course tend to be less judgmental, yet no increase within the realms of cognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ can be identified. Besides that, Buchtel (2015) claims that in contrast to previous cross-cultural training interventions (e.g. Fischer, 2011), the course embedded within this study does not influence students to think of other individuals as having “fixed essences that unavoidably, unchangeably, and conclusively direct thinking and behaviour” (Buchtel, 2015, p. 49). A similar approach has been taken by Reichard, Dollwet and Louw-Potgieter (2014) as they investigate the development of cross-cultural psychological capital through a training intervention. Furthermore, it has been examined how it is related to CQ and the concept of ethnocentrism through a pre-test and post-test experimentally designed study. It can be concluded from the findings that psychological resource training leads to significant increases in cross-cultural psychological capital and Cultural Intelligence. Additionally, a decrease in ethnocentrism can be identified.

Apart from this, Ramsey and Lorenz (2016) examined the effects of students' satisfaction and commitment to the studying of CCM. It can be be concluded from the study that students exerting a high level of CQ are more satisfied as well as committed to CCM classes. This goes hand in hand with the fact that satisfaction was higher for students, who increased their CQ throughout the class. Additionally, Ramsey and Lorenz (2016) demonstrated evidence that a student's CQ can be significantly amplified through CCM over one semester. This result is further in line with the previously generated findings by MacNab (2012) and Eisenberg et al. (2013) that CQ can be heightened through CCM as well as experiential learning.
4.4 Synergies between CCM education and experiential learning

Regarding the conceptualization of the two research paradigms, clear distinctions between experiential learning and CCM education can be drawn only to some extent due to their different origins and underlying theories. In this regard, scholars observed that the former stream can be derived from actual experiences, whereas the latter can result from theoretical input such as cultural briefings (e.g. Hofstede’s dimensions). However, synergies between these two streams are visible since some elements of experiential learning may sometimes be incorporated in CCM education and vice versa. This can be seen for example in the context of cross-cultural role-plays or simulations, as participants receive a theoretical input beforehand, yet the encounter is fabricated and thus, not authentic (Fischer, 2011). However, experiential learning is different from traditional CCM in many aspects. Areas, where significant differences have been found, include the genuine nature of experiential learning. Furthermore, the validity of CQ outcomes is more notable in an experiential learning context. Despite this, somewhat recently there has been a move towards including experiential elements within the traditional CCM education setting. Therefore, Eisenberg, Härtel and Stahl (2013) observed a distinct trend that CCM educational standards move beyond just being about cultural briefs. Among CCM scholars it is recognized that to grasp one’s full potential of CQ, creating synergies between CCM education and experiential has become inevitable.

Consequently, the status quo of CQ development emphasizes both experiential learning and CCM education, whereby one cannot exist without the other and thus, these two research paradigms have a reciprocal relation. Within the last decade, business schools exponentially focused on integrating both research streams in the internationalization of its curriculum (e.g. Ahn & Ettner, 2013; Clifford & Montgomery, 2015). According to Ahn & Ettner (2013), the critical elements in developing an individual's CQ are work experience abroad, learning a foreign language apart from English as well as obtaining an undergraduate degree from a country other than your own. This argument demonstrates that a synergy of both experiential learning and CCM education contributes extensively to the development of CQ. Following this, Kurpis and Hunter (2017) gives an example of complementing the traditional curricula with experiential learning. The setting of this study was to reflect on the distinctions in consumer behavior between marketing students and advanced English as a Second Language students. Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test survey Kurpis and Hunter (2017) note that such an experiential learning activity within a traditional lecture scenario increases students’ cognitive and motivational CQ. Overall, students’ confidence in communicating with people originating from other cultures has improved notably.
Apart from this, clear distinctions can be drawn between the outcomes and effects of experiential learning and CCM education as noted by Eisenberg et al. (2013) and Rosenblatt, Worthley and MacNab (2013). Results of both studies shed light on the fact that specific cross-cultural training interventions, as well as educational approaches, have varied effects on the development of specific CQ competences. In this regard, Eisenberg et al. (2013) conclude that “intellectual-centered learning grounded in a traditional academic approach centered on lectures and readings affected the development of meta-cognitive and cognitive dimensions of CQ more strongly than motivational and behavioral dimensions” (p. 371). Following this, they further stress the fact that the behavioral CQ facet is seemingly unaffected by intellectual-centered cross-cultural learning. In comparison to this, Eisenberg et al. (2013) argue that experiential learning gained through an authentic and direct cross-cultural experience leads to noticeable increases in the motivational and especially behavioral CQ dimension. Above all, based on this argument, it can be concluded that experiential learning affects the areas that remain unaffected by CCM education. Consequently, it can be argued that both experiential learning and CCM education contribute to an individual’s CQ development, yet it is still somewhat subjective, and a universal approach can hardly be applied.

With regard to the identified research gap in this topic, the main research question is defined as follows:

**How do cross-cultural management education and experiential learning contribute to students’ self-perceived Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development?**

This research question addresses the gap in the literature regarding a comprehensive approach of CQ development interventions. The goal of this master thesis is to provide insights as well as theoretical and practical implications about the role of cross-cultural management education (CCM) and experiential learning as contributing factors to students’ self-perceived CQ development. In general, the research is built on the literature review from chapter 1 to chapter 4 and accordingly, the research question will be answered based on semi-structured interviews of Austrian and Italian business students. Additionally, it will be investigated if there are clear distinctions among the sample of Austrian and Italian interviewees. Therefore, in doing so, the identified research gap will be closed. Following this, within part 2 of this master thesis, the research methodology will be discussed.
Part 2: Empirical Research

After having depicted the literature review on the evolution of the concept of CQ, its research focus and most importantly the CQ development research paradigms, this section is devoted to the empirical research section of the thesis. The subsequent chapters elaborate on the research process followed by the results generated through the interview. Lastly, the analysis of the findings is illustrated. Besides this, practical and theoretical implications are given to demonstrate the relevance of the generated insights. Lastly, as no empirical study is without limitations, recommendations for further research are displayed, and the thesis is concluded.

5 Method

5.1 Research design

“Research approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation” (Creswell, 2014, p. 3). In this context, the choice of research approach is of fundamental importance to create a link between all the elements. In general, three main research approaches are commonly used within research realms, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Despite this, clear distinctions between these three research approaches cannot be drawn. This implies that qualitative and quantitative methods should not be regarded as rigid tools, which are characterized by their polar opposite nature. However, Creswell (2014) points out to the fact that studies can tend to be more on the qualitative or quantitative continuum. In this regard, mixed methods are situated in the middle of this continuum as this could be comprised of qualitative and quantitative elements.

Regarding qualitative research, Creswell (2014) elaborates on the fact that it used as an explorative gateway to understand what meaning individuals or groups give to a social or human problem. Furthermore, Bryman and Bell (2011) state that the relationship between theory and research is inductive within qualitative research realms. In other words, theory is generated out of research. In addition to this, as the empirical research process is quite complex, Creswell (2011) argues that a qualitative approach helps to render the complexity of a situation. Similar to this Denzin and Lincoln (2018) stress that qualitative research turns the world “into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self” (p. 43). Consequently, qualitative research assumes a more interpretive and
naturalistic approach to the description of the world. Among the key strengths of qualitative research is the fact that it gives the researcher an in-depth understanding of the investigated field and thus, contributes to a profound comprehensiveness (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Apart from the positive arguments about qualitative research, this approach exerts some limitations and downsides. Hence, Bryman and Bell (2011) argue that qualitative research is too subjective and thus, relies on the researcher’s perspective on what is significant and what is insignificant. Other critical arguments against the use of qualitative research are expressed through the following statements: challenging to replicate, problems of generalization and lack of transparency.

In contrast to this, Creswell (2014) elaborates on the fact that quantitative research’s primary purpose is testing scientific theories in a deductive manner by examining the relation among various variables. The used variables can be measured and assessed, so that numbered data can be generated and then analyzed through statistical tools. Bryman and Bell (2011) argue that this measurement allows the researcher to delineate fine differences between the people with regard to the research questions. The key strengths of quantitative analysis are its causality, generalizability, replicability, and validity. Nevertheless, some limitations might include the significant dependence on instruments and procedures. In addition to this, concerning the measurement process, Bryman and Bell (2011) argue that the vigorously promoted precision and accuracy of quantitative research might, in fact, be artificial. Mainly, it has been subject to criticism since a natural science model is seen as inappropriate for studying and collecting data from the social world. Above all, Patton (2002) stresses the fact that quantitative research facilitates comparison due to the generalizability of the statistical data.

In addition to this, mixed methods deal with the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. According to Creswell (2014), this approach enables researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. What is more, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data can fill the gap and thus, shed light on potential blind spots (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Creswell (2014) and Edwards and Holland (2013) argue that by combining both approaches, researchers can generate a complete comprehension of an issue or research problem that one method alone cannot merely provide.

When considering the criteria for selecting a research approach, Creswell (2014) points out that the research problem, personal experiences, as well as the audiences for whom the study is conducted, are of great significance. In other words, the choice of the research design and approach strongly depends on the research intention and the research problem. Concerning this master this, both quantitative and qualitative studies emphasizing Cultural Intelligence development can be found within the literature (Fang, Schei, & Selart, 2018). However, quantitative research mostly intends on gathering data about the fact whether CQ has increased
over a particular course of time and therefore, emphasizes pre-test and post-test surveys (e.g. Rehg, Grundlach, & Grigorian, 2012). Conversely, qualitative research achieves to collect in-depth data about the personal experiences and thus, generates a greater understanding of the attitudes, values, and perspectives of individuals. Consequently, due to the explorative nature of the research topic, a clear focus lies on qualitative interviews as only these allow gathering rich information about determining a link between experiential learning and CCM education to students' CQ development. The qualitative approach is the best tool in answering the proposed research questions as the nomological network of CQ by Ng, Van Dyne, and Ang (2012) demonstrates the complexity of this concept, as well as the dynamic nature of it.

Thus, the underlying aim of this thesis is to provide a more comprehensive perspective regarding the reasons for CQ development through the various interventions, especially in a student setting. This cannot be provided by a quantitative research approach. Besides finding students’ current CQ status quo (“how they perceive themselves”), this study intends to get to the core of why students' have attained a certain level of CQ. This further implies finding out why they have particular beliefs and perspectives about their cross-cultural abilities, why they behave in a manner that might lead to a higher or lower CQ level, and where these perceptions about their cross-cultural competencies derive from. As suggested by Creswell (2014), only qualitative interviews allow collecting answers to those questions. This is mainly due to the fact that the individual is put into the center and thus, a rather flexible and in-depth approach can be applied. To receive and gather data about both “how” and “why”, it is intended to use a qualitative approach within this master thesis as quantitative research would not yield in the desired results. However, as a trigger element before conducting the interview, the so-called Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) by Ang et al. (2007) is given to the interviewees. In this context, the interviewees are exposed to the CQS to get acquainted with the topic. Thus, the core focus is put on the interview and not on the results collected from the CQS. Above all, in accordance with Creswell (2014) as well as Edwards and Holland (2013), rich information and profound data on the students’ self-perceived CQ level (“how”) and a comprehensive understanding about their perceptions as well as attitudes (“why”) can be obtained.

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), interviews are a conventional technique for data collection when a small number of respondents should be reached, and in-depth results should be gathered. Even though qualitative research in the form of interviews is very time-consuming due to all the tasks involved in making the data presentable (e.g. conducting, transcribing, analyzing), it is still a commonly used method for qualitative research. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) identified a wide range of qualitative interviews types and these are represented by the following: structured interviews, semi-structured interview and unstructured interviews. Consequently, Wisker (2009) states that structured interviews are defined by a predetermined set of questions as well as answer
possibilities. In comparison to this, the unstructured interview allows the researchers to be more flexible in their research approach due to the fact that no specification of questions or answers is required. In addition to this, a semi-structured interview is comprised of elements of both a structured and unstructured setting. Concerning this specific master thesis, semi-structured interviews are the selected type of qualitative research. Bryman and Bell (2011) elaborate that this kind of way to discuss a phenomenon allows the researcher to have an interview guide including a list of questions on reasonably specific topics. In most cases, the interview process is flexible, and questions are not required to follow a linear order. Additionally, the researcher can also pick up on things said by the interviewees and thus, include further items not included within the interview guideline due to focus on the single person within the interview (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In addition to this, the interviewer should try for a natural conversation flow.

5.2 Research methodology

The following research methodology depicts how the research approach within this particular master thesis is structured to answer the research question(s). Thus, it aims to explore the role of experiential learning as well as CCM education as amplifiers of CQ development across different cultures, namely Austria and Italy. As already mentioned, this empirical study has applied a qualitative approach in the form of a semi-structured interview.

5.2.1 Data collection

The first step within the data collection process was that the participants receive a so-called Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) test, which was developed by Ang et al. (2007). In general, Ang et al. (2007) were among the first to conceptualize the measurement and test the effects of Cultural Intelligence were Ang et al. (2007). They developed the so-called Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS), which assesses an individual’s level of cognitive, metacognitive, behavioral and motivational CQ on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) as can be seen in the Appendix A. According Ang et al. (2007), the respondents have to read each statement from the 20-item scale and rate, based on their self-perception, their capabilities. Additionally, across several studies on CQ, the CQS is mostly used to quantify an individual’s ability for multicultural effectiveness. In this context, the previous studies have demonstrated the reliability, stability, and validity of CQ across different times, samples, cultures, yet also professions. Due to this, the CQS has expanded the empirical opportunities of Cultural Intelligence research, yet also boosted its research growth. Concerning this particular thesis, it should again be pointed out to the fact that this 20-item test only acts as a trigger to get the interviewees acquainted with the topic and thus, is not viewed as empirically significant.
As a second step, a semi-structured interview was conducted and has been divided into several sections with related sub-questions. By using semi-structured interviews, profound and in-depth data on the attitudes, causes, and perceptions of the participants is collected. Consequently, this is in accordance with the aim of the research as a comprehensive understanding of participants’ CQ development can be gained. Thus, it has been of great significance within the interview to investigate why interviewees feel, think and act in a particular manner. In this regard, experiential knowledge is of great importance to grasp the nature of the interviewees’ identity and experience (Maxwell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). As the core focus of the interview is the person itself, the interview guideline is comprised of a predetermined, yet quite flexible and open-ended structure. This guideline assists the interviewer as a sort of framework and guarantee to reach the desired outcome. Thus, the most crucial topics are always considered within the master thesis and this leads to comparability among the interviews. Nevertheless, the sequence in which the questions are answered can readily be changed, and the items can be adapted or even omitted. This implies that the interviewer has more freedom in terms of understanding the reasons for answering in a particular manner and exploring the underlying attitudes towards CQ. Regarding this, Edwards and Holland (2013) point out to the fact that such a structure provides a potential for comparability across the interviews.

5.2.2 Research sample

Regarding the sampling, ten business students from Italy and Austria were selected, who participated on a voluntary basis. The first group of students comes from the University of Bergamo and the second group from the Johannes Kepler University Linz. A small sample has been chosen due to the qualitative research framework of this study. In general, all interviewees were part of the Joint Master program Global Business, which takes place in Austria, Italy, and Russia. Moreover, the students are on an advanced level regarding their academic education, meaning that they are towards the end of a master program. Consequently, the sample has been reached through my attendance in this particular Master’s program, which has international experience built into the university curriculum. In this context, the international group comprised of Italian, Russian and Austrian students has spent three months in Russia, followed by three months in Austria and the last term is in Italy. As a result of this, the sampling process is somewhat based on opportunism (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In addition to this, Edwards and Holland (2013) stress the concept of saturation regarding the number of conducted interviews as interviewers “should continue sampling and identifying cases until their interviewees are not telling them anything that they have not heard before” (p. 65). Thus, ten interviews have been conducted in which the number was split equally among Italian and Austrian students. In this context, the interviewees were in a similar age cohort between 24 and 26 years and thus, with a mean of 25 years.
Regarding gender separation, it has been aimed to be equal. In this context, two female Austrian students and three male Austrian students participated. However, within the Italian sample, four female students and only one male student were interviewed. In addition to this, according to Ronen and Shenkar (2013), these two specific groups come from different cultural clusters, namely the Germanic and Latin European Cluster. Due to this fact, country-specific differences were highlighted to be able to conduct a comparative study.

5.2.3 Development of interview guideline

The development of the interview guideline has been based on an extensive literature review. The literature about the concept of intelligence and culture as well as the evolution of the construct of CQ has been reviewed in-depth to develop suitable questions for the interview guideline. Most importantly, the body of literature on the various facets of CQ research and CQ development has been examined to gather input for the question design process. Following this, the interview guideline has been structured into specific themes with sub-questions, which aim to explore the topic in more detail as can be seen in the Appendix B. Thus, the interview directive consists of following main categories:

- Culture
- Intelligence
- Cultural Intelligence
- Development of CQ
- Practical implication of CQ

The first step within the interview guideline emphasized the domain of culture, in which it was aimed to grasp the overall nature of a person’s understanding of culture. At the forefront of this section was to provide the interviewees with a preliminary introduction to the topic of cross-cultural competences in which the individual’s perception is already of significance. Due to this, insights could be gained on the attitudes and ideas towards the concept of culture, in which the general impact on the interviewees could already be determined.

Subsequently, within the next section, the primary purpose was to generate data of the interviewees’ understanding about the construct of intelligence. Following this, it was fundamental to grasp whether interviewees give relevance to this concept concerning the global business environment. In general, the questions on the concept of culture as well as intelligence have been used as a gateway to Cultural Intelligence. As the literature review demonstrates, both concepts
are vital elements within CQ and thus, the interviewees’ perception of them has been of great significance.

As a next step, the core focus was on the concept of CQ and a definition by the Cultural Intelligence Center has been given to provide the interviewees with a short glimpse of its nature. The chosen definition is the following:

“Cultural intelligence (CQ) is the capability to relate and work effectively in culturally diverse situations. Going beyond existing notions of cultural sensitivity and awareness, it is important to identify the recurring capabilities of individuals who can successfully and respectfully accomplish their objectives, whatever the cultural context. Awareness is the first step, but it is not enough. A culturally intelligent individual is not only aware but can also effectively work and relate with people and projects across different cultural contexts.” ("What is CQ?", 2018).

Hence the questions embedded within this section emphasized the participants’ self-perceived status quo of CQ. Another vital element within this section was to determine how the interviewees believe to have acquired the CQ competences. Thus, the prerequisites for being successful on a global scale were explored. In addition to this, the interviewees’ perceptions of potential obstacles to cross-cultural success were determined. This is of great significance as the antecedents as well as outcomes of CQ are depicted to a great extent within the body of literature on CQ. Within this section, interviewees drew from their personal experiences to go beyond theories.

When considering the development of CQ, which is the integral topic of the next section, it has to be argued that both experiential learning and CCM education are of significant relevance as has been elaborated within Chapter 4.3. Thus, some questions followed about the fact if the respondents have received any form of cross-cultural management (CCM) training or experiential learning before taking part in this master program. Moreover, the perceived importance of CQ development interventions (experiential learning & CCM education) is investigated. Since all interviewees were part of the Joint Master program, it has been necessary to differentiate the experiences associated with the international exchange prior to the program. The interviewees were then asked whether they have received intercultural training, cultural briefings or cultural sensitivity training before the date of the interviews. Additionally, it has been investigated if the attendance in any CCM educational training is mandatory, voluntary or might not even be included in the university curriculum.

The last part of the interview intended to add further value regarding the practical implications of the concept of CQ. Regarding each segment within this section, the interviewees were asked to recall any intercultural incident that stuck in their mind, which can be viewed as challenging or unique. The main intention behind the questions was to determine if the interviewees have learned something as international exposure does not automatically presume learning. Moreover,
questions about concrete situations and circumstances were an integral part such as: What have you picked up from e.g. an intercultural encounter? What have you learned? What would you do differently in the future? Consequently, the purpose behind these questions has been to not merely scratch the surface but to arrive at a more detailed and in-depth level to get to know the underlying reasons behind a particular action or incident. Based on this information, recommendations for both academic institutions, its students as well as organizations could be delivered.

5.2.4 Interview setting and context

About the setting, Edwards and Holland (2013) point out to the fact that the interview space should be “available for use, convenient and accessible to participant and researcher, where you could avoid interruption and make an adequate sound recording of the conversation” (p. 43). Thus, concerning this master thesis, interviews have been conducted from June to July 2018 in both Austria and Italy. This further represented the end period of the 9-month Master program the interviewees have been participating. The setting of the interviews was similar as they have been held either in university location or in private places. The main aim was to create an environment in which the participants felt comfortable in speaking about their personal experiences. Additionally, before the interviews, every interviewee was told that participation is on a voluntary basis and thus, without any form of compensation. In order to collect honest and immediate answers, the interview guideline has not been sent to the participants, and the topic of the interview was broadly named to avoid preparation in advance. Before each session, the purpose of the interview has been explained to the participant. Consequently, it was emphasized that the collected data would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and only for research purposes.

After naming the purpose of the interview, each participant was asked to give permission for audiotaping to save all relevant data and to facilitate the subsequent analysis. Following the receiving of the consent, the interviews have been recorded with two different devices, namely a laptop and a mobile phone. This is of utmost importance to guarantee that all relevant data is collected, and no information gets lost. Additionally, the duration of the conversations was on average 33 minutes with a minimum of 27 minutes and a maximum of 38 minutes.

5.2.5 Material editing and description

All conducted interviews were transcribed directly after the execution of the last interview at the beginning of July 2018, so no information gets lost. Thus, the transcription was conducted by using a computer program called F5 transcription, which facilitates this particular process. According to Mayring (2014), various transcription systems exist, which describe an exact set of rules specifying
how to transform the spoken language into written text. Consequently, for this master thesis, a so-called clean read or smooth verbatim transcript style has been applied. The main aim behind this transcription style is to simplify the transliteration process. In doing so, in line with Mayring (2014), all interviews were transcribed word for word. However, utterances (e.g. uhm or ahs) or decorating words (e.g. like, right, you know, yeah) were consciously left out for simplification purposes. Besides, the interviewer was always indicated by the capital letter “I”, whereas it was referred to the interviewees by using the capital letter “S” and a number. Additionally, pauses were indicated by the following symbol (...).

5.2.6 Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

After collecting the data, the analysis was conducted, and the results were generated. Thus, the methodology regarding the analysis is addressed within this section. Concerning this master thesis, the collected data was analyzed under the qualitative content analysis (QCA) by Mayring (2014). This approach is widespread and commonly deployed as it enables the interpretation of the communication material in a systematic manner. In line with Mayring (2014) and Schreier (2014), it can be stated that QCA enables to reduce the data significantly. In general, the QCA can be viewed as a mixed method as it emphasizes the qualities of quantitative context analysis as well as demonstrating how to systematically analyze a qualitatively oriented text. Consequently, QCA is not a “standardized instrument that always remains the same; it must be fitted to suit the particular object of material in question and constructed especially for the issue at hand” (Mayring, 2014, p. 39). In other words, the method is flexible and can be adapted to the subject of interest as no single standard prevails.

Based on Mayring (2014), it must be noted that there are three distinct approaches regarding the qualitative content analysis, namely summary, explication, and structuring. Thus, while the summary type of content analysis aims to reduce the data, explication relates to providing additional data on doubtful text passages. Lastly, structuring refers to filtering out particular aspects of the data. In this regard, the structuring approach was used within this master thesis as it enables to assess the collected material in line with pre-determined ordering criteria. Regarding the sequence of steps needed to be taken, Mayring’s (2014) approach has been chosen as it clearly shows the required phases within a qualitative content analysis and more precisely, the steps of deductive category assignment as seen in the Appendix C. Thus, a procedural model has to created, which portrays the initial framework on which the analysis is based. Within this body of work, the transcribed interviews represented the core of the study.
As a next step regarding the data analysis, the creation of a category system was a crucial point. In this context, as the structuring type of content analysis is a deductive approach, a theory-oriented interpretation regarding the categories was applied. Consequently, the structuring of the various categories derived from the research problem and its subsequent research questions as well as the previously elaborated literature review. Besides, the depiction of coding rules within the category system was of great significance. According to Mayring (2014), coding rules are of an integral part to guarantee an “unambiguous assignment to a particular category” (p. 97). Defining clear categories facilitates the process regarding the allocation of specific text passages to a group.

Following this, Mayring (2014) elaborates that structuring as a content-analytical method enables to extract a particular structure from the material. This further is in line with the understanding that structuring guarantees to understand the internal structure of the material. In this context, the categories and sub-codes are theory-orientated and correlate with the interview guideline. Consequently, an excerpt of the category system is given in Figure 5 to provide a comprehensive understanding of its structure. Furthermore, within this abstract, examples are given to provide the reader with a better explanation. Apart from this, the complete version of the category system is attached within the Appendix D. Besides, it must be pointed out to the fact that this category system and guideline was developed following the work by Mayring (2014) and Schreier (2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code/subcode</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Anchor samples</th>
<th>Coding rules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understanding of culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Defining culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>Includes all explanations that relate to defining the term “culture” and the underlying understanding of it.</td>
<td>This category only includes the perception and general understanding about the concept of culture, its development and cultural awareness. It does not already refer to “Cultural Intelligence” in particular, yet does include statements about the participants’ cross-cultural abilities.</td>
<td>All aspects that concern the concrete methods in which cultural knowledge is acquired belong to category 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Learnable nature of culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>Description whether culture is learnable or not. Perceived reasons for it being on either end of the spectrum (i.e. given from one generation to another; innate).</td>
<td>The framework, yes, I mean how to deal with culture, yes, but culture itself can be also learned. But I truly believe that most of the time it is an unconscious process (6, L7-10).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Cultural Awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived awareness of cultural differences when being exposed to a different cultural setting and measures that describe why they might affect the participants.</td>
<td>All the beginning probably not, but then as much as the knowledge of that culture goes further then you (8L, L10-11).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understanding of Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding of the participants’ view on the concept of intelligence and description what it means to them. Perception whether it is a requirement for being successful globally.</td>
<td>This category exclusively deals with the participants’ understanding of the construct of intelligence. This includes seeing it from an objective viewpoint, while giving statements about the significance of intelligence for a global career.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Abstract of the developed category system
Subsequent to the development of the category system, selected and relevant text passages of the collected material were extracted and then allocated to the related category. To visualize the category system and execute the coding, the software program MAXQDA was used. In line with Mayring (2014), it must be noted that software programs lead to a more systematic and controlled analysis of the transcribed material. In recent years, the deployment of such applications has increased significantly not only targeting quantitative research, but also aiming at the qualitative one. Besides, it must be pointed out to the fact that the category system is flexible. In other words, a partial reformulation or even a complete revision might be triggered by the allocation and analysis process. As a next step, Schreier (2014) stresses the fact that relevant text passages are summarized, and the core message is depicted. More precisely, by using the processes of paraphrasing, generalizing and reduction, the main points were generated and were then visualized by excel charts within this particular thesis.

Due to the cross-cultural nature of the comparative study, it was of utmost importance as a first step to analyze the Austrian and Italian students separately. As a next step, the comparison of these two respective groups has taken place. Consequently, due to the two within-country analyses, this technique helps to make a well-structured approach in handling the data with groups of similar codes being together. It was of utmost significance to create a comprehensive picture of the underlying reasons why individuals originating from two specific countries act, behave, think and live in a certain manner. When the analysis phase was finished, another focal point has been to link the gathered result to the literature review to examine potential similarities or differences. Finally, some conclusions from the results could be drawn that can provide research and practice with interesting and useful insights.
6 Research findings and results

The research goal of the master thesis was to determine the impact of experiential learning and cross-cultural management education as contributing factors to students’ self-perceived CQ development. Thus, the empirical part of this master thesis was built on qualitative semi-structured interviews with students from both Austria and Italy. The research methodology intended to gather in-depth statements about feelings and perceptions of the interviewees. Consequently, the following chapter is concerned with the results and presents the findings, while being guided by the main research question:

**How do cross-cultural management education and experiential learning contribute to students’ self-perceived Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development?**

This chapter depicts the results of the interviews. Therefore, the findings are divided into different topics based on the category scheme elaborated in Chapter 5.2.6 and attached within Appendix D. The topics of the category scheme are the following: understanding of culture, understanding of intelligence, perception of Cultural Intelligence (CQ), perception of CQ development, and practical implications of CQ.

As the data analysis is of cross-cultural nature, it is of utmost significance to follow a distinct order regarding the procedure of country comparison within each category. Each category and sub-code are comprised of two within-country analyses. This separate procedure should assist in filtering cultural peculiarities and characteristics. Apart from this, following the within-country interpretations is a short cross-country comparison, which portrays the most striking findings. As a next step, the discussion part interprets the data and gives a more comprehensive overview. Overall, the portrayed findings were gathered in line with the process developed by Mayring (2014) and are thus, results of a generalization and reduction process. As emphasized by him, this process enables to summarize the vocal points of each category. Within each group, interviewees’ statements are presented to give convincing findings and are indicated in parenthesis and italic style. Additionally, the interviewee number, as well as the line to which the statement belongs in the transcribed document is attached to the statement (e.g. I5, L7-8). However, due to the wide range of statements, all examples cannot be included in this thesis and therefore, only a part of the statements that lead to a certain conclusion.

Moreover, due to the elusive nature of the topic, statements highlighted within one category might relate to different aspects and do not exclusively relate to this specific category. Above all, it was
easy for participants to answer the questions regarding how they perceive something, yet sometimes they struggled why they perceive a topic or issue in a particular manner. This further indicates that the topic emphasized within this master thesis is difficult to explore. However, the following illustrations of the findings give a glimpse of the interviewees’ feelings and perceptions. In spite of this, one should always take into consideration the complex and dynamic nature of this topic and thus, never lose sight of the individual being the subject of interest. The findings show that all factors and variables are very intertwined and demonstrate a reciprocal relation. Thus, it can be concluded from that there is not one single statement that relates to all interviewees. This should be taken into consideration when going through the following analysis.

6.1 Understanding of culture

As literature suggests, managers face obstacles due to increased diversity in today’s business environment not only across borders, yet as well in their home country. Thus, our cultural upbringing not only directs our actions, but culture is the root of them (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). Hence, as a first step, the interviewees were asked to give their definition of culture to demonstrate the general understanding. Secondly, it was emphasized whether culture is innate or learnable. Lastly, the participants’ perception and feelings towards Cultural Awareness was examined. Consequently, the following analysis demonstrates in greater detail the participants’ general feeling and perception of the concept of culture as well as other contextual variables that might influence it.

6.1.1 Defining culture

This section helped to understand how the construct of culture appears to the interviewees and thus, be described with their own words. Due to the elusive nature of this concept, participants drew upon different already elaborated definitions of culture.

Austria

The Austrian students demonstrated a great understanding of the construct of culture, which they often supported with already established beliefs about culture that they have been exposed to prior to this interview. Additionally, they highlighted essential facets of the concept culture with profound statements.

“There are formulated ones and unformulated ones. The formulated ones are [...] more strict, easier to pursue, but the unformulated ones are the ones that are hard to attain and hard to keep track of them and stick to them” (I5, L7-8)
Interestingly, almost all of them mentioned that culture is a construct, which holds society together and is shared with one’s surrounding environment. However, there have been various distinctions between culture and nation.

“Culture are the same attitudes, habits or thoughts […], the same values of a certain group of people. Not only the Austrians, but for example the Upper Austrians, not only in terms of nationalities, but also in terms of to which society you belong” (I4, L6-7);
“Culture is a set of beliefs and traditions that are kept among people that live among each other in a country, town or a city” (I5, L7-8);
“Culture is a set of shared values, beliefs and behavior that one group of people” (I2, L6-7)

Besides that, the variables and elements of the concept of culture were acknowledged and how it relates to everyday life and society

“Culture is […] the values, beliefs, religions in a certain society. For example, the daily routines, also what people usually do in the morning, how is their eating behavior” (I3, L7-8)
as well as its correlation to history and religion.

“based on historic and social values and norms, […] also religion” (I1, L6-7)

Italy

The Italian students have been giving in-depth statements regarding the definition of culture. This further implies that the knowledge about this construct is extensive and can be addressed from various perspectives. When analyzing the statements from Italian participants, the context of culture being shared was emphasized to a great extent,

“A glue of the society” (I6, L6-7);
“something that […] you can share with people who are near to you” (I8, L7-8);
“group of people that share some values, some habits, the language and maybe feelings” (I10, L8-9)
while it was also seen as a factor to differentiate individuals from one cultural group to another.

“Culture is a kind of a system of values that distinguish a society from others” (I9, L7-8)
Related to this, the subconscious nature of the concept has been addressed and in this context the beliefs, assumptions, perceptions, attitudes and feelings of individuals within a particular culture that were hard to grasp.

“Most of the time you see […] the tip of the iceberg, but the really difficult part is to go deep and understand why there are things you can’t see” (I6, L6-7)
Moreover, some statements were in line with the fact that culture is closely linked to everyday life in various contexts.

“according to me, culture is something that has to do with the things that you do regularly, so what for you is something like a routine, but also strict rules such as social interactions, I mean as for example in business meetings” (I7, L8-9)
The Italian interviewees addressed the fact that various cultures can reside within one nation
“I am Italian, and I think maybe the Italian culture is similar everywhere, but actually if you look beyond it also within the Italian culture, there are a lot of differences” (I8, L7-8)

and culture being intertwined to various other elements relevant to the functioning of society as well as the satisfaction of individuals’ needs.

“elements like for example language, religion, but also more practical like economy, politics […]. It is all based […] on the history of the country” (I9, L7-8)

Country comparison

The analysis of this category reveals that both Italian and Austrian students have a similar understanding of culture. Three elements are essential for both countries namely that culture is being shared, inherently subconscious, and affects and is influenced by various spheres of life (e.g. everyday routines, religion, economy, politics, history etc.). For example, several interviewees extensively stress the fact that culture is something shared with the people in your immediate surroundings. Besides this, Austrian students, as well as Italian, students acknowledge the fact that several cultures can exist within one nation. Above all, both Austrian and Italian students demonstrate a profound understanding of the concept of culture and its contributing elements.

6.1.2 Learnable nature of culture

Next, to the conceptualization of culture, the literature tremendously deals with the fact of whether culture can be learned or is innate. It is sometimes argued that aspects related to culture are passed on from one generation to another and thus, somehow learned. However, others suggest that culture is innate. Hence cannot be learned. The interviewees revealed that they believe that a) culture can be learned, b) culture is innate or c) some elements of culture can be leaned. Consequently, the following analysis highlights the stance that the interviewees take regarding the learnable nature of culture.

Austria

The analysis of the Austrian students shows that the majority of them agrees on the fact that culture is ingrained within our minds during childhood and thus, passed on from one generation to another one. This further implies that cultural elements reside in our minds.

“for example, if you are a child from Africa, but you grow up in Austria, then […] you learn all the behavior from the time when you were a child” (I1, L9-10);
“I believe that we learn certain values during the childhood”(I3, L13-14);
“you are used to one culture, because you grew up in this culture” (I4; L9-10)
In this regard, the interviewees addressed the importance of the individuals within the surrounding environment to enable the dissemination of cultural elements within their minds (e.g. parents, relatives).

“when you grow up you get a lot of things from your parents, you learn how to behave in your own culture” (I4, L9-10);
“learning from parents for example” (I3, L15-16)

Conversely, some Austrian interviewees argued that when entering a new culture, one cannot rely on the parents, but on the individuals within the new setting. Thereby, ways to adapt to a new culture and learn its peculiarities are given.

“By actively interacting with people of the culture, by also questioning their cultural beliefs and values, not just accepting them, but also asking why they do that, how could that derive from, where could that derive from” (I5, L11-12);
“when you want to adapt to a new culture, you have to also take a look at other people […] because you want to adapt to this new culture” (I3, L15-16);
“by observing and mimicking” (I2, L10-11)

Nevertheless, one might face obstacles when entering a new culture and one Austrian interviewee drew the following distinction regarding the type of culture:

“formulated culture can be learned […]and the unformulated culture, but for that it is really hard, you have to probably live for a long a time in that culture or context to really understand the values and beliefs of this culture” (I5, L9-10)

Italy

For the Italian students, the concept of culture is closely connected to it being learned during early childhood

“It is something that you have from your childhood” (I10, L9-10)
or even it being innate since birth.

“when you were born you have certain cultural elements inside you” (I8, L8-9)

Despite this, some Italian interviewees argued that you could modify culture through further experiences and the surrounding environment (e.g. family, school, etc.). Consequently, the contextual variables play an important role in the learning process of culture.

“You can modify it, but cannot change it all” (I10, L9-10);
“you can get closer to a culture, learning from books, directly from experience” (I9, L8-9);
“It depends on your experiences […], how your family behaves with you” (I8; L8-9)

Another statement referred to the subconscious nature of the learning process of culture.

“I truly believe that most of the time it is an unconscious process” (I6, L7-10)

Besides this, one Italian student stressed the fact that getting completely rid of his or her cultural heritage is impossible as it is so deeply ingrained within the mind.

“I think that there were will always remain something Italian in my way such as gestures, […] this is nonverbal communication that you cannot control” (I7, L9-10)
Country comparison

Due to the similar thinking patterns, all the participants see the childhood as the most crucial period in life in which culture is either consciously or subconsciously ingrained. In addition to this, for the Austrian as well as the Italian students the surrounding environment is a vital factor for learning cultural elements. However, it is mostly suggested that this is a mental process passed on from one generation to another one. Apart from this, Austrian students provide ways to assimilate the behavior of a new culture and ultimately adapt to it, whereas the Italian interviewees firmly believe that only modifications can occur. Nevertheless, the Italian students stress the fact that one might always identify the Italian heritage through nonverbal communication (e.g. gestures).

6.1.3 Cultural Awareness

In general, it is not enough to be knowledgeable about culture, yet to be aware of cultural differences when being exposed to a different cultural setting. Hence, during the interview, the participants were asked about their awareness when being confronted with a culture deviating from one’s own and how it might affect them. More precisely, blind spots or weaknesses in identifying cultural differences are revealed.

Austria

With regard to the Austrian students, the analysis revealed that it depends on the contextual variables, whether a profound cultural difference is noticed or not. Additionally, having gained knowledge about other cultures or already being exposed to individuals from different cultural cohorts assists in the process of becoming more aware.

“we have learned how to be more aware of difference and not to judge the differences too much and to question them why there is the difference” (I1, L11-12)

Nevertheless, obstacles might arise since the Austrian students are not “used to certain differences” (I1, L11-12). Additionally, some differences might not immediately be visible and thus, being aware of cultural peculiarities strongly depends on the time factor.

“sometimes they are more visible and sometimes not so visible” (I2, L11-12); “with the Italians at the beginning of the Master’s program, it was not easy to see the cultural values or differences, because before that year Italy and Austria were not so different for me” (I5, L12-14)

For one Austrian student, a revelation occurred with time of being exposed to the Italian culture.

“it actually took me a couple of months to realize that they are still similar, but also very different in another sense” (I5, L13-13)

In spite of this, one Austrian student noted that being aware is not enough as adjustments to a culture are necessary in order to respect it.
“being aware alone is not enough, you also have to be able to adapt to that and know what is best to say or how to say things to other cultures” (I5, L49-50)

Above all, the most critical aspect addressed by one Austrian interviewee for acquiring CQ capabilities is “to go abroad for a certain amount of time” (I3, L61-61). In addition to this, one cannot know how everything works in a different cultural setting, and the acquisition can be based on a “trial and error” (I2, L43-44) basis.

Italy

The analysis of the Italian students concerning cultural awareness shows that previous experiences play a great significance when entering a new culture. In this context, becoming aware strongly depends on the personal approach as well as openness to experience the other culture. One Italian elaborated that seeing cultural differences cannot be done from afar, but rather by gathering first-hand experience

“until the moment in which you do not experience the real culture you do not” (I7, L11-12)

and by spending an extended period in a particular culture heightens the awareness about cultural differences.

“At the beginning probably not, but then as much as the knowledge of that culture goes further, then yes” (I10, L10-11)

What is more, it was suggested that being exposed to a different culture leads to a greater reflection on one’s own culture.

“understand more your own culture through the comparison with others” (I8, L10-11)

Some Italian student students revealed a higher cultural awareness and thus, confidence in being able to react upon a cultural difference quickly.

“I know that there are people that have different thoughts, different needs and I need to understand them to avoid some misunderstanding or problems” (I10, L11-14);

“I notice them immediately under different perspectives, such as behavioral or cognitive, […], then I can decide which behavior should I assume” (I6, L11-14)

Country comparison

Concerning the analysis of this category, it is noteworthy to state that the both Austrian and Italian students need time to see the cultural differences, yet then they can distinguish between different cultures. In this regard, the Italian participants are more confident in adapting to cultural change. Additionally, they tend to reflect more on their own culture when being exposed to a different one. For both cultures, it is of great significance to avoid making false assumptions about a culture.
6.2 Understanding of intelligence

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<td>Practically and analytically orientated intelligence</td>
<td>Analytical approach</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Analytical decision-making process regarding tasks and problems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Ability and speed to attain new knowledge</td>
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<td><strong>Awareness and empathy</strong></td>
<td>Linked to emotional intelligence and social intelligence (e.g. empathy)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Going beyond education</strong></td>
<td>Not linked to grades</td>
<td>Not just learning from books</td>
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Table 3: Comparison of Italian and Austrian students’ understanding of intelligence

**Country comparison**

The analysis reveals that the understanding of intelligence is relatively similar in some aspects yet deviates in others. As the table above shows, for both cultures, a rather smart, analytical and practical perception of intelligence prevails. The characteristic of intelligence most frequently mentioned relate to it going beyond education and grades (e.g. I10, L28-29; I9, L24-25; I6, L25-26; I3; L27-29). This table further shows that soft skills are essential for all the interviewees regardless of the culture. For example, several interviewees mentioned that an intelligent individual should be able to “sense what other people feel and how they cope” (I5, L29-30). The participants further acknowledged that this further assists an individual in being more effective in an international work environment.

6.3 Perception of Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

According to Earley and Ang (2003), Cultural Intelligence can be depicted as a “person’s capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts” (p. 59). Consequently, this section deals with the interviewees’ perception of their Cultural Intelligence skills and if they feel confident in their cross-cultural competencies. In particular, the following elaboration reveals how the students perceive their CQ capabilities. Thus, this section focuses on how they currently evaluate their CQ status quo as well as what leads to the acquisition of the skills. Besides this, the perception of prerequisites as well as obstacles for cross-cultural success is depicted within this section.
6.3.1 Perception of CQ status quo

After having explored what is understood under both the terms culture and intelligence, this category is now concerned with the fusion of both and thus, Cultural Intelligence is the topic of relevance. In this regard, the following analyses reveal the subjective evaluation of Austrian and Italian students concerning their CQ status quo. The acquisition of CQ competences is also of significance within this category. This section tries to give an idea of the interviewees' tendencies about their CQ self-perceptions. Thus, the following cannot capture every single case but portrays the most significant findings.

Austria

Regarding the self-evaluation of CQ competences, past experiences seem to impact a lot for the Austrian participant. However, the past experiences can vary widely as the Austrian participants have had various degrees of international exposures before the involvement within this particular Master’s program. Consequently, the majority of Austrian interviewees perceived themselves having higher CQ competences mainly due to this specific Global Business Master’s program or other international experiences.

“I think it is high. The year abroad or working closely with foreigners […] really helped me a lot” (I5, L37-38);
“between moderate and high, because I made a lot of experiences abroad” (I4, L30-31);
“Compared to […] people in my hometown, I think that I am aware of cultural differences, Especially because […] of this program” (I3, L41-41)

Moreover, one Austrian interviewee acknowledged that the extensive amount of multicultural teamwork led her having an above average CQ status quo.

“above average, because we already worked a lot in multicultural teams” (I1, L39-41)

Another Austrian interviewee highlighted the fact that a prerequisite for completing this program was to gain CQ skills otherwise failures would occur.

“it was necessary […] to successfully complete the program to gain some cultural knowledge or to improve one’s intercultural skills” (I2, L33-34)

Apart from this, it was addressed that an evolution and an increase in CQ competences from the beginning to the end of the Master’s program occurred.

“through this year I gained some knowledge and awareness to realize more what is different in another culture, but also how to cope with it” (I5, L38-39)

Italy

When considering the self-evaluation of the Italian participants, it is noteworthy to state that they appeared to be modest regarding the perception of their status quo of CQ. Thus, they rated
themselves on a moderate level and give potential rooms for improvements. One Italian student explained what requires to be on the higher end of the CQ spectrum

“High level of Cultural Intelligence is when you are integrated in another culture” (I10, L-35-36)

and therefore, rated herself on a more modest level “for me, it is a middle level” (I10, L35-36).

Furthermore, an Italian student elaborated that spending an extensive amount of time in a different culture increases her CQ competencies.

“spending maybe only three months in Russia, it is not enough to get enough Cultural Intelligence, but if I would choose to work in Russia, I would already have time to develop my Cultural Intelligence more” (I9, L33-34)

Consequently, the fact was addressed that one has to experience different cultural context to develop CQ further. Therefore, one of the Italian interviewees argued that her high CQ level results from being exposed to “a lot of different contexts of different cultures” (I8, L26-27).

Even though speaking foreign languages is perceived as a valuable asset regarding communication across cultures and heightening one’s CQ level (I8, L26-27; I6, L33-35), one Italian participant further noted that this is not enough.

“I know people that [...] speak a lot of languages, they can interact with people from other countries. But then they are stable on their point of view, so they are not able to look beyond their nose” (I9, L33-35)

The Italian participants are in line when it comes to the acquisition of Cultural Intelligence capabilities as experiences stand at the forefront. In this context, daily life routines are of the greatest significance as well as

“I acquired these skills with experience” (I6, L47-48);
“Through the daily life with foreign people and in other countries” (I10, L51-52)

being curious about acquiring new cultural knowledge as elaborated by one Italian interviewee.

“and curiosity” (I9, L45-46)

**Country comparison**

As it becomes clear from the results, it is valid to note that for all participants their CQ status perception is relatively high, yet might be high in one context, but low in another one. In general, it can be concluded that Austrian students are more confident in their CQ abilities. Based on their statements, the self-perceived CQ status quo is heightened due to the previous experiences abroad, even though if it was only on a short-term basis. Conversely, Italian students are rather modest regarding their self-evaluation. It appears to them that one has a high CQ when there is a full integration into a culture different from one’s own or even being exposed to a high number of different cultural contexts. Thus, notable cultural differences can be revealed.
6.3.2 Perception of prerequisites for cross-cultural success

This subcategory reveals the perceived reasons and requirements for being successful within a cross-cultural encounter. Consequently, a description of the qualities, attributes, and skills an individual should have to be successful in this context are acknowledged. The various elements have a reciprocal relationship and are strongly connected.

Austria

First of all, for the majority of Austrian students’ adaptation is of great relevance when considering the prerequisites for cross-cultural success. Thus, flexibility is vital when meeting obstacles as one should be able to react immediately.

“You should be adaptable, because otherwise it is going to be hard if you just stick to one thought that you are expecting how the other person is behaving and then she is not” (I5, L45-46);
“you need the ability to adapt a little bit to find a compromise” (I4, L32-33)

In addition to being adaptable, having an open mindset regarding changing your behavior

“you have to be open-minded to what other people are saying” (I1, L47-49)

and being aware of differences to avoid misunderstandings might become relevant in an international setting.

“be aware of differences to recognize them” (I1, L47-49)

Another quality for being efficient in a cross-cultural environment is being friendly, yet direct as elaborated by one Austrian student. This can hinder, based on her opinion, a potential conflict due to statements not being perceived as offensive.

“I am a direct person, but friendly and direct. I think the others do not feel offended when I say something. “

Apart from that, one Austrian interviewee referred to success in a group work context. Being together in a team, especially a multicultural one, necessitates setting a goal and working towards it. In this regard, being able to understand the counterparts’ needs as well as defining rules and a common standard is of utmost importance.

“everybody should try to understand his opposite and the group needs to define rules between each other, but most of them are unwritten rules” (I4, L36-37);
“try to find one common standard to work, which is okay for everybody and […] everybody understands it” (I1, L47-49)

As in a multicultural group setting, diverse views and perspectives co-exist, a creation of an “international culture” (I4, L36-37) would potentially preempt some conflicts.

Communication is a further key to success and as one might not always work with people from the same cultural background.
“if you want to reach a good success in a multinational team, you have to find a way to communicate with the others and cooperate […] where the cultural differences do not stand in the way” (I2, L35-36)

Thus, creating a setting in which the cultural differences “are not a liability, but an asset” (I2, L35-36).

Italy

About the requirements for being successful in a cross-cultural, the Italian students portrayed converging opinions. Thus, this refers to attributes they ideally perceive to be relevant in being proficient across cultures. Especially, being proactive is seen as a soft skill a prospective international manager as well as a student emphasizing international studies should acquire. The Italian interviewees revealed that one should be aware of differences,

“see the differences and use them actively in a positive way” (I6, L43-44)

can get into contact with someone from a different culture

“When you are proactive and […] you do something to integrate or to accept the other culture it is easier to be accepted and to grow […] your experience” (I10, L45-48)

and find a common point.

“find a point where you can encounter the other culture […]. Compromise” (I9, L47-48)

What is more, in line with the prerequisites, the Italian interviewees stressed the fact that “being open-minded” (I9, L41-42) facilitates operating within unknown and potentially ambiguous realms as well as reflecting upon one’s own culture.

“knowing your culture first” (I9, L41-42)

Additionally, it is suggested by one Italian interviewee that becoming successful in a cross-cultural setting not only requires exposing oneself to it, but also getting to know the local culture and people of the host country.

“[…] if you are working in an international company, you may not be the only foreign person there. I would suggest getting closer to the local people than the other internationals” (I9, L41-42)

Nevertheless, starting to work closely with people from different cultural cohorts might be more difficult in the beginning, so one Italian student suggested gathering an understanding of the other people is essential. As a consequence, it is becoming inevitable to be patient within such a context.

“especially while working, you have to be […] patient a lot of times” (I8, L28-29)

It is further of great relevance to see the cultural differences as a factor from which individuals, as well as the whole group, can benefit.

“people […] maybe see […] a hindrance. I think that it is important that everyone understands the possibilities of working in a multicultural team” (I8, L32-33)
Country comparison

When contrasting the two countries regarding the prerequisites for success on a global scale, similarities can be drawn mainly in the field of the attributes. Thus, taken together, three elements contributing to greater effectiveness can be identified. In this regard, being open-minded, proactive and seeing multicultural teamwork or diversity not as a liability, but rather treat it as an asset are among the attributes seen as the most vital ones. Despite the occurrence of conflicts or misunderstanding, Italian and Austrian participants strongly suggest that being flexible and motivated to continue should be at the forefront of individuals within global spheres.

6.3.3 Perception of obstacles to cross-cultural success

As conflicts, misunderstandings, and miscommunication are even unavoidable within a culturally homogeneous setting, the frequency of these issues is extensively higher in a heterogeneous one. Thus, this section deals with the students’ perception of any obstacles, barriers or challenges that could stand in the way of being successful or effective within a global context. In this context, the following analyses reveal how the interviewees cope in such circumstances (e.g. merger & acquisitions, group context, etc.) and thus, discover their perceived difficulties.

Austria

One Austrian student summarized his perception regarding the obstacles of companies in a merger and acquisition context like this: “If the American headquarters has no clue about the Chinese culture, then they probably will have serious problems in negotiations” (I5, L42-44). In addition to this, it has been argued by another Austrian interviewee that conflicts occur “due to a lack of cultural awareness […] and a lack of knowledge about the foreign culture” (I4, L34-35). However, in order counteract, some steps must be taken to avoid arising conflicts.

“being aware of […] how they do things […], how to talk to them and how to negotiate, how to address some things” (I5, L42-44)

What is more, another Austrian interviewee revealed that performance can be harmed due to various circumstances within a group setting. It could range from communication issues to not being valued.

“there is a misunderstanding, because the communication is not clear or if a person gets the feeling that the other culture feels superior” (I2, L37-38)

In general, as one cannot fully avoid stereotypes or prejudices in a multicultural context, it is of great significance to find ways to cope with them. As previously mentioned, communication is often the key to success and to not judge before-hand.
“concerning prejudices and stereotypes try to look behind it and ask why it is like this” (I4, L42-43);
“I think it is important to openly talk about this topic with the whole group in a neutral way, so not to offend anyone” (I3, L65-66)

Nevertheless, overcoming cross-cultural gaps (e.g. misunderstandings, miscommunication, stereotype, & prejudices) is feasible. In this context, being open-minded and flexible in approaching obstacles is seen as an advantage.

“explain in a neutral way that it is important that we adapt to each other’s cultures in order to achieve the best possible results” (I3, L65-55)

Furthermore, when conflicts arise one Austrian interviewee suggested a distinction between cultures.

“If the culture is somewhat similar to your own culture, then it is more the personality trait. But if the culture is like really different, talking about far East Asian countries, [...] then probably it is more about the cultural differences” (I5, L59-60)

Italy

When analyzing the statements of the Italian interviewees of what is perceived as an obstacle within an international context, it can be derived that the perception of different behaviors as well as stereotypes and prejudices is of tremendous relevance. Thus, one Italian interviewee elaborated on the fact that information is perceived differently.

“It depends how facts or how behavior is perceived, [...] so when you try to overcome [...] issues, it is not easy because people get offended” (I6, 49-50)

Regarding determining the basis of an issue, the root can be distinguished being due to cultural values or personality traits. Consequently, it is suggested to not judge in advance regarding stereotypes or prejudices as individuals within a culture might exert different attributes. In this regard, always have in mind the within and across culture distinction as well as determining the cause of behavior based on culture or personality. Despite this, if all action is justified due to the culture, there is no limit.

“then if you say, ‘okay it is because of culture’ then everything is allowed, but you have to find a limit between personality and culture” (I6, L53-54)

One Italian interviewee revealed the fact that at the beginning of the first term of the Master’s program in Russia, she upheld a vast number of stereotypes. Further Italian interviewees acknowledged the fact that one should not be influenced by them, but instead try to go beyond them.

“Cultural Intelligence consists in going over and getting beyond and in certain cases destroy these kinds of stereotypes” (I7, L38-39);
“do not think about these stereotypes, because the majority of times they are not correct” (I10, L53-54)
Additionally, it is pointed out to the fact that even in one nation different stereotypes might be upheld. However, this further leads to obstacles regarding being effective even in a national context.

“In the North, there are a lot of stereotypes about the South […], so these kinds of stereotypes, mainly bring a miscommunication between people that belong to the same national culture” (I7, L39-40);

“you also have a lot of misunderstandings among Italian people” (I8, L41-42)

What is more, it has been perceived among the Italian interviewees that being aware of underlying cultural facets is of great significance when entering a new market. Otherwise, it might occur that one unintentionally offends a culture due to the non-existent knowledge about underlying assumptions and values.

“there could be a reason for failure, because maybe many times you take for granted a lot of things, you do not think they are important […] the real cultural things such as the meaning of different colors” (I8, L30-31);

“if you prepare a marketing campaign that is completely out of the culture […] that would be a complete failure” (I9, L37-38)

As a further obstacle to cross-cultural success, the Italian participants stressed the significance of language. Especially in an international context, English is often seen as the primary business language. Nevertheless, we all grew up with different educational systems and therefore, our level of English command is significantly different.

“[…] the language […] is a hindrance a lot of times” (I8, L38-39);

“clearly English constrains you a lot” (I6, L43-44)

Country comparison

As can be derived from the analysis, both the Austrian and Italian interviewees agree on the fact that obstacles arise in a cross-cultural context due to the lack of knowledge about the targeting or host culture. As a result of this, actions without considering significant cultural facets might appear offensive and can lead to severe consequences not only in a business, yet also personal context. What is more, both cultures suggest that to avoid failing, they advise to go beyond existing stereotypes and question them. Conversely, the analysis further indicates that the Italian interviewees tremendously stress the fact that there can be great cross-cultural divides within a nation (e.g. Northern Italy- Southern Italy dispute).

6.4 Perception of CQ development

As literature suggests, the theory and empirical research on CQ development are separated into experiential learning and cross-cultural management education (CCM), which is elaborated in-depth within chapter 4. This is why this category is devoted to the fact how interviewees prepare themselves or receive preparation (e.g. university, private institutions) for a cross-cultural
encounter. This also includes the significance of interventions which have contributed to their CQ development. Besides, it is not only referred to the type of experiences, but also their feelings and perceptions about them. It aims at identifying a comprehensive picture of students' CQ development.

6.4.1 Preparation for cross-cultural encounters

The following analysis explores and gives an overview of the measures and methods the participants engage in or receive as a preparation for a cross-cultural encounter. Consequently, the subsequent analysis of preparation methods portrays a glimpse of the different measures or activities the interviewees already have done.

Austria

Even though all of the Austrian students received preparation for the Master’s program from the educational side in the form of classes, the majority did not perceive them as valuable.

“[…] for me, they were not so helpful, so basically I really had no […] preparation” (I5, L100-101);
“from the university, but it was useless” (I4, L50-51);
“I did not really take it as a serious preparation” (I2, L57-58)

In this context, only one Austrian student valued the classes before going abroad as it assisted him in understanding the distinction between the cultures more easily.

“I think it really helped me a lot to understand the […] culture better and be better prepared […]” (I3, L75-76)

However, some Austrian students suggested that self-preparation facilitated the beginning in and the foray into a new culture.

“I try to inform myself about what I have to do, what I should not to do.” (I4, L48-49);
“I try to do some research on cultural differences, […] so I will not behave in a wrong way that may offend people the new culture” (I3, L16-17)

Nevertheless, one Austrian participant made a distinction regarding the value of self-preparation, especially in terms of open and closed cultures

“when I was in Sweden, […] I did not need to change a lot, because they are a really open culture, which is close to the Austrian culture […]. For example, when I was in Russia, I really read before it what I have to do, what I should avoid […]” (I4, L48-49)
Italy

The Italian students either try to prepare privately, receive preparation or do not engage in such activities. Concerning the former one, the Italian interviewees, even though they did receive preparation for an international encounter from the educational side, still proactively tried to get knowledge, especially about Russia.

“I asked a Russian friend, because she lives here in Italy and for her it is easier to tell me what the differences are” (I10, L65-66);
“speak with people who have already been there” (I8, L43-44)

It is further suggested that regarding preparation for a cross-cultural encounter one can use two channels: “read or speak with someone” (I6, L55-56). However, one Italian student perceived that this is only a minor part of the cultural experience.

“I think it is only 10% of the cultural experience and the 90% can be experienced […]. If you prefer preparation, then you are like biased, because with these 10% you think that you kind of know the culture” (I6, L55-56)

Nevertheless, the Italian students were in line with the fact that receiving preparation would be valuable.

“a kind of preparation would be better […], because you are aware of at least of something, you cannot know everything […]” (I10, L62-63)

What is more, one Italian participant suggested that preparation would be valuable if stereotypes about a country prevail and to counteract against it.

“when you are moving to a country to which you are full of stereotypes and is really different from your own country, it would be better to have […] preparation” (I7, L43-44)

Some Italian students purposely are not keen on receiving or engaging in preparation as they want to live the experience without any prior knowledge.

“for Russia […] it was an experience completely new, so I wanted to live it like at the first impact” (I9, L56-57);
“it is also nice that if you do not know so many things from the beginning, it is more interesting […] the experience” (I8, L43-44)

However, if engaging in preparation, Italian students elaborated that knowing “how society works in general, what is polite and what is impolite” (I9, L60-61) would be of great significance.

Country comparison

As the analysis reveals, some distinctions about the Austrian and Italian interviewees can be drawn. Most importantly, the Austrian students have received some sort of preparation prior to going abroad, yet the majority did not perceive them as valuable. Only the minority of Austrian students emphasizes the positive attributes of a cross-cultural preparation. Conversely, some Italian students would prefer some kind of preparation as it might result in greater awareness of
cross-cultural differences. However, several Italian participants highlight that they want to truly experience an intercultural encounter without any prior knowledge.

6.4.2 Perceived importance of CQ development interventions

As already mentioned, past experiences seem to impact a lot when it comes to CQ development. Despite this, cross-cultural management education is revealed to be less relevant for the CQ increase. After having shown what kind of preparation the students assume as well as receive, the following analysis emphasizes the perceived significance of CQ development interventions on the part of the participants. As the research shows, a strict separation of CQ development interventions is not possible as the lines between these two methods are relatively blurred to some extent. However, a broad distinction into two intervention streams and thus, into cross-cultural management education and learning through experiences is made. Within this section, an overview of the CQ development interventions is presented in order to demonstrate the interviewees’ feelings and perceptions towards them.

Austria

It is commonly perceived among the Austrian participants that for heightening one’s CQ, experiences are seen as highly valuable. Especially in the context of getting to know the values and beliefs of another culture.

“How the other culture is doing just everyday things in their life and also […] if you are working, how to negotiate, what they expect when you are negotiating” (I5, L65-66);
“basic beliefs you cannot really name or describe in any case, they are just unspoken values” (I5, L77-78);
“certain rules or certain behaviors, which are completely different to your home country” (I4, L52-53)

Nevertheless, it is suggested that both development interventions streams are considered as significant. Consequently, when working or studying abroad, it is of utmost importance to have in mind that it is not like at home and this already starts with the language

“the first major part is the language, it is different, so you have to understand that if you are able to speak the language, you still have to aware of that a word is not exactly a word” (I5, L75-76);
“the non-verbal language […] and if you know such little things, you can avoid a lot of misunderstandings or problems” (I3, L77-78)

and goes on to the traditions.

“The traditions can also be very different, because for example we learned in Italy that about the major festivities they have […] and although the country is close, I did not hear about them before” (I5, L76-68)
Despite this, several Austrian interviewees stressed the importance of theoretical preparation before going abroad.

“It is important to get theoretical input […] and say 'I keep it in mind. You need the theoretical input to […] know how to behave in practice’” (I4, L54-55); “maybe at the beginning to get aware and to receive the basic knowledge” (I1, L79-80)

It is further noted that a combination of both practice and theoretical inputs leads to the most significant outcome.

“learning through experience plus some theoretical inputs to be prepared […] I would say 70% practice, 30% theory” (I4, L69-70); “only theory is probably not enough, you have to also use this theory in practice in order to better understand the cultural differences” (I3, L79-80); “the combination makes the experience abroad even more worthy, because you are prepared […] and therefore, you already know some stuff about certain behavior” (I3, L99-100);

“It can always be helpful if you can combine the things you have read in a book and the things that you have experienced” (I2, L74-75)

Additionally, it was suggested by one Austrian interviewee that one can benefit from the prior experience and apply it in further contexts. He further observed that the others made experiences and were confronted with issues, he already has been exposed to.

“During my exchange semester in Sweden, I made a lot of experiences, which I used in Italy and in Russia. And I saw that some of my colleagues, who have not been abroad before, made the […] same experience that I have made three years ago in Sweden” (I4, L72-73)

Italy

In general, the importance of previous experiences becomes visible when considering the interviews of the Italian participants as it was suggested that experience is paramount when considering CQ development

“being in the different country” (I10, L66-68); “experience is more important than learning from books” (I9, L82-83); “for me, it is practical experience” (I7, L45-46); “for me, it is more important to experience” (I6, L61-62)

and that just learning about the theory of a culture is not enough.

“it is not enough to study the different cultures” (I10, L66-68); “theoretical knowledge is very important, but if you do not experience it, you may forget about it” (I9, L62-63); “a course is interesting […], but […] it is not that much put into practice” (I8, L53-54)
Based on the extensive exposure to both experiences as well as cross-cultural management classes, one Italian student depicted the fact that she can distinguish, which one contributes better to her CQ development

“During my academic years, I also received a lot of theoretical training, but I would say that the practical one was the best” (I7, L45-46)

and that language skills play a significant role when considering her CQ increase.

“To learn a language, [...] the most successful way to learn it, [...] is to be in a country in which they do not speak your language” (I7, L45-46)

What is more, it was elaborated by some Italian interviewees that one can learn things in practice, which one might never be confronted with when only taking into account the theoretical input.

“ [...] practically you learn other things, for example [...] the interaction with your peers and with your friends” (I8, L55-56);

“if I have stayed here, I would have never known how Russian people interact with other people, how they react, [...] and these are all small insights you get to know once you are in the country” (I7, L56-57)

Additionally, it is perceived that “people who are not used to travel or to encounter different cultures” (I6, L61-62) do not develop Cultural Intelligence.

Above all, it was revealed by the Italian participants that a mixture of both hands-on experiences as well as theoretical input leads to a CQ increase.

“If you live abroad you experience on your skin how it is, but it is also important to have some theoretical knowledge about it” (I10, L83-84);

“Experience [...] it is the main driver. But it is also important to reach a really good level to learn something in theory. [...] I would say 70% experience, but [...] 30% also theories” (I6, L69-70)

It further can be derived from one Italian interviewee that the theoretical input should be received after the experience as to “frame this experience under some framework that could be cultural theories [...] and then you really grasp how to improve yourself” (I6, L69-70).

Country comparison

In this category, the Austrian and Italian participants show very similar patterns. Consequently, the analysis does not reveal any tremendous cultural peculiarities. One of the only exceptions is the fact that all of the Austrian students have received a mandatory theoretical input before the beginning of the Master’s program. Even though the Italian students have experienced cross-cultural management education classes, they were not exposed to them as a preparation tool for an international exposure. Nevertheless, all of the participants demonstrate that the more significant part of their CQ development results from actual experiences, whereas theoretical input only contributes to a minor part (e.g. 70% practice - 30% theory). Furthermore, it can be derived from the analysis that in line with real-life experiences, the participants appear highly motivated to
get to know other cultures’ value, belief, and tradition systems. Above all, even though the students give a greater significance to experiential learning, they still address the fact that theoretical knowledge is vital as a framework for guidance without an unknown setting.

### 6.4.3 Previous CQ development interventions

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Table 4: Comparison of Italian and Austrian students’ previous CQ development interventions

**Country comparison**

In general, the body of literature on CQ development highlights past experiences as major influencing as well as contributing factors regarding the CQ increase. Hence, during the interview, the interviewees were asked to which previous CQ development interventions they were exposed to before the Global Business Master’s program. According to the statements of the interviews, most of the participants have been already abroad for a while for educational, academic or service purposes (I10, I9, I8, I7, I6, I4, I2, I1). Only two of the Austrian participants have not been abroad for such reasons, yet only for vacation purposes (I5, I3). However, all of the Austrians have been exposed to cross-cultural management education in some form during their academic years as it is included within the university curriculum, while only one Italian student has completed a CCM class. However, the Austrian participants did not perceive it as valuable at the time of the exposure to CCM as they questioned if they would ever apply or use the gathered knowledge. Despite this, it is stated by the same Italian student that this course was offered during his semester abroad and thus, not within the studies in Italy. What is more, all participants pointed out to the fact that the higher the amount of CQ development interventions, the more they get trained and sensitized regarding cultural differences and conflicts. Above all, during the Global Business Master’s program, all students were exposed to CCM education (e.g. Cultural awareness class) as well as to real-life cross-cultural encounters.
6.5 Practical implications of CQ

The following section refers to various fields, which demonstrate CQ in practice. First of all, this category does not only emphasize cross-cultural communication, but also cross-cultural challenges the participants have encountered. Following this, based on the students’ perception potential enhancement tools in the field of academics as well as the private life are given. In detail, this category tries to reveal the students’ satisfaction and confidence in communicating across cultures and within cultures. What is more, it is demonstrated how the participants deal with cross-cultural challenges based on their past experiences. This category should again demonstrate the complexity of the construct of CQ and that a universal stance cannot be taken.

6.5.1 Satisfaction with cross-cultural communication and participation

In general, the following analysis reveals the satisfaction and confidence the interviewees exert regarding their cross-cultural communication and participation. As already mentioned above, past experiences are suggested to be relevant for becoming more effective in an international context. Thus, by being exposed to transparent communication, one can improve communication as well as the participation skill set.

Austria

In order to be effective in communicating and participating within an intercultural context, it was acknowledged by the Austrian students that being sensitive is of great significance. In other words, knowing which topics to address and the ones to avoid might lead to smooth communication.

“...I try to be sensitive [...] and not talk about some things or address something that the other person of another culture is not comfortable with” (I5, L18-19);
“I always talk a lot in the groups and I am trying to push the group a little bit” (I4, L74-75);

In addition to this, the majority of the Austrian interviewees revealed that they are quite confident and satisfied in their intercultural communication and participation.

“...quite satisfied, because throughout the year I tried to be active, to be involved, [...] but also in group works [...] I tried to manage it” (I5, L86-87);
“I think that my contributions in the group context where always appreciated and respected. I did not really have the feeling that I ever harmed or that I insulted someone [...]” (I2, L83-84)

Apart from this, one Austrian student stressed the fact that he is not completely satisfied with his way of communicating. He addressed that in some cases, he might appear intolerant and makes judgments based too much on his Austrian point of view.
“I am a little bit unsatisfied because I am too Austrian with the solutions and how to handle [...] the work [...] and to come to an end” (I4, L74-75)

As already elaborated, it is further perceived, especially regarding a group work context that understanding the counterparts as well as defining common rules becomes inevitable.

“everybody should try to understand his opposite [...] and the group needs to [...] define rules between each other” (I4, L36-37)

What is more, it appears that the Austrian interviewees are open to adjust and change their way of communication if it is necessary for an effective intercultural communication and participation setting,

“If it requires that I change my way of communicating I am willing and open minded to change that” (I3, L18-19)

yet adapting on a continuous basis becomes exhausting for one Austrian interviewee.

“I have to admit that it is somehow exhausting if you always have to work with Italians and Russians and have to adapt” (I3, L104-105)

Besides that, it was suggested that in a group context the members should be more direct as to create a transparent way of communicating.

“If I could change it for like a whole group, I would say that everybody should be more direct [...] and to tell what you think and to discuss it more openly” (I1, L14-15)

Overall, one Austrian interviewee concluded that “you should be adaptable, because otherwise it is going to be hard if you just stick to one thought that you are expecting how the other person is behaving and then she is not” (I5, L45-46)

**Italy**

When considering their past experiences, several Italian interviewees highlighted the fact that if they had the chance to come back to the beginning of the Master’s program, they would consider changing the way of communication within a multicultural team. In addition to this, they have gathered a new attitude towards cultural differences.

“If I would have the possibility to come back one year ago, I was completely different. I have a different attitude towards differences” (I10, L91-92);

“you think maybe I could have behaved in a different way, but of course you cannot change it anymore” (I8; L60-61);

“I would like to reduce my gestures, [...] because it is normal for Italian people to use them” (I10, L17-18)

What is more, it was revealed within the interview that it is a requirement to adapt one’s way of communicating within a cross-cultural context. However, it is a reciprocal relationship as the counterparts within such a setting need to adjust as well.
“I have to adapt myself, my behavior, my way of speaking maybe to the other cultures [...] but I think that the others have to do the same, so it is just a vice-versa situation” (I9, L84-85)

In general, when it comes to communicating across culture, the Italian students acknowledged that there is a clear distinction among the communicating cultures. As Italian, Austrian and Russian students were within the Master’s program, it is compared how the way of communication significantly changes.

“I saw a lot of differences, not only [...] for Russia, but also with the Austrians, you think that we are nearby countries, [...] but then you realize that there are a lot of differences [...] between Italy and Austria” (I8, L14-15);
“working with the Russian part was hard, [...] they are open to interact with other people, but they are not that much flexible to adapt [...]. While Italians and Austrians, [...] were a little bit more flexible” (I7, L58-59)

These differences in communication are especially visible when it comes to the use of irony as it is a way of communication heavily deployed by the Italian participants.

“Italian people widely use irony while speaking, but the Russian people do not understand [...] When I am approaching my Russian friends, I always [...] have to explain everything what I am saying, and I cannot leave some arguments implicit” (I7, L13-14);
“Italians sometimes tend to make jokes more than the others, we are still having problems with the others” (I8, L17-18)

Nevertheless, one Italian student pointed out to the fact that the language barriers are often obstacles to smooth intercultural communication. Thus, learning the local language might result in better communication, as English might not necessarily lead to an in-depth understanding.

“I would like [...] to learn the language, because I think that it is a really important barrier and it tells you a lot about the culture” (I6, L17-18)

Therefore, one should consider learning the local language in order to understand cultural traits.

“English is a mean of communicating, but if you really want to understand some traits of culture, you should learn the local language” (I6, L17-18)

Above all, it can be derived from the statement of one Italian interviewee that in order to ensure good intercultural communication “the key is to understand the people you are working with” (I6, L73-73).

**Country comparison**

Interviewees from both Austria and Italy are very sensitive to contextual factors and might change their feeling of confidence based on the task, setting, problem or their perceptions. In addition to this, both cultures appear to be confident in specific capabilities, yet sometimes seem unsatisfied regarding past experiences and incidents in a communication context. It can be derived from the
analysis that both Italian and Austrian participants reveal their openness to adapt their behavior as well as the underlying motivation for it. However, the Italian participants reveal that the use of Italian peculiarities in communicating (e.g. irony, gestures) are sometimes perceived negatively by their counterparts. Other cultural distinctions cannot be identified.

6.5.2 Perception of cross-cultural challenges

In addition to the elaboration on satisfaction regarding the participants’ cross-cultural communication skills, the interviewees were asked to comment on their perception of cross-cultural challenges. Thereby, they drew upon past experiences. For that reason, the following analysis includes effects of all types of past challenges within any cross-cultural contexts. Nevertheless, as the following analyses demonstrate, being exposed to difficulties and challenges does not necessarily mean that the participants are discouraged. However, how they deal with challenging incidents depends on themselves and their CQ.

Austria

When considering their perception of cross-cultural challenges, the Austrian students especially pointed out to incidents within group assignments. Some Austrian interviewees elaborated that it was easier to find common ground with the several Italian students when it comes to working together. However, some difficulties were faced with not only the Russian way of doing things,

“with Russians the work behavior was completely different to what we are used to […] and also, the teamwork, because at first, I just thought that they work differently, but I think it is more a cultural thing that […] they want to get their tasks to do and not just really think about what they could do in order to manage to group work” (I5, L23-24);
“the working morale is a bit different and they have other expectations concerning how to work efficiently” (I2, L85-86)

but also, with the attitudes of the Italian students regarding receiving the highest grades possible.

“the Italians have high pressure on their grades and they are not satisfied if they have a grade worse than 1. […] my goal was not always to only have the mark 1” (I3, L109-110)

However, after some time one Austrian student came to the following conclusion: “it is really common in Italy to fight for the best grades, which is not really common in Austria or not many do it as the Italians do” (I3, L115-116).

Apart from this, different values and norms are also perceived to be triggers for intercultural conflicts, especially regarding the role of women.

“with the Russian girls, I discovered that they are more conservative than we are, and they have values that we had 50 years ago” (I4, L20-21)

Besides this, the Austrian participants perceive that intercultural difficulties can also arise from different levels of qualifications
“also because of their qualifications, because the Russians were […] much lower than we were used to” (I5, L88-89)
as well as how the messenger and receiver translate communication.

“I think a lot of misunderstandings are caused by the translation of words and meaning of words” (I4, L19-20);
“I think the most challenging thing was in Sweden, when I was in a group with a Chinese girl. It was completely hard, because she did not understand me. […] And it was hard to find a task for her and not to insult her, […] because she was from a culture in which they are really not direct” (I4, L77-78);
“the use of sarcasm or humor, when some people take things more seriously than others depending on the cultural background” (I2, L19)

Language barriers were often perceived as a challenge by the Austrian participants.

“it was really annoying after three months in Russia that you only could communicate with the Russians if you really spoke Russian” (I3, L107-108);
in Russia when we arrived at the train station and no one spoke English and […] the people were not really friendly to us” (I1, L88-89)

In order to deal with conflicts or issues, it was elaborated that one has to be dynamic as to adapt as well as anticipate potential scenarios and be able to provide solutions to a problem.

“in general, that you have to be expecting everything in order to able to cope with everything” (I5, L91-92);
“ask what the problem is and try to resolve it that way” (I5, L94-95);
“it is really important to open-minded and to be willing to adapt otherwise you will fight a lot with each other” (I3, L111-112);
“maybe to find a shared approach right at the beginning of a project, so that no bad surprises occur” (I2, L91-92);
“I try to talk to the people and try to find a common solution to continue with the project” (I1, L97-98)

Despite this, one Austrian participant revealed that her preference is to avoid conflicts right from the start as she is somewhat risk-averse.

“i always knew that it is not my style to search for a conflict and that I am more trying to avoid this” (I2, L89-90)

What is more, it was suggested by one Austrian interviewee that the learning outcomes could be “about the person, about the other culture and about myself” (I5, L93-94) as well as not getting “offended that frequently anymore” (I3, L118-119).

Above all, it was pointed out by one Austrian interviewee that result within a group assignment counts the most for her and sometimes on the way to achieving it various issues or conflicts are inevitable.

“what counts for me is the end results and sometimes […] little conflicts are maybe unavoidable on the way to a great result” (I2, L88-89)
Italy

It is widely perceived among the Italian participants that when entering a new culture, one is always exposed to cultural misunderstandings from which conflicts can arise. More precisely, one Italian reminisces on an incident in which the Italian and Russian culture misunderstood each other. In addition to this, on the part of the Italian student, this happened due to deviations within the cultural norms,

“In Russia, when we went inside our flat, we did not take off the shoes and the flat owner […] was a little bit upset about this behavior. And then we understood” (I10, L22-23);
“Different norms, especially different from ours. With „our“ I mean European or Italian, the way of doings things” (I6, L21-22)

whereas one Italian interviewee believes that conflicts might occur due to the different approaches of accomplishing a task.

“Russians start everything at the last minute, while I prefer to do everything in advance” (I9, L19-20)

What is more, it was revealed that the Italian students take a different stance after a conflict occurred or when they have been confronted with a challenging incident.

“I would try to explain the things in a different way, I ask to repeat it and maybe it would be easier to avoid these misunderstandings” (I10, L101-102);
“I do not impose my point of view, but I always ask firstly why” (I7, L64-65)

Regarding the learning outcome from cross-cultural challenges, the Italian interviewees suggest that it strongly depends on contextual variables. Thus, in some cases, one might have learned about the inappropriateness of one’s behavior or the counterpart. Subsequently, behavioral changes or adaptations might follow,

“If I misunderstood what he or she was saying to me […] I have to change something” (I10, L102-103);
“change my way of expressing myself” (I8, L64-65)

yet sometimes the Italian participants adopted and learned new ways of dealing with people within challenging circumstances.

“Dealing with other people. I try to understand their point of view and […] how they would deal with the situation as it is a task that we have to solve together. So again, communication is the key” (I9, L94-95);
“I try to at the beginning to immediately speak with the person and explain again […] I am like this, so it is not an insult for him or her or the culture, but because it is linked to my own culture” (I8, L68-69);
“this taught me how to deal with this kind of person and these situations” (I6, L81-82)

Despite this, simple things such as the language barriers concerning grocery shopping can be perceived as challenging, especially in terms of food selection as elaborated by one Italian participant (e.g. dairy intolerance).
“The food in Russia, because there is milk and cheese almost everywhere. […] It was a problem because I was not ready, but also the people surrounding were not ready replying to me in English” (I9, L87-93)

As already mentioned within the previous sub-category, the majority of Italians were faced with issues regarding their continuous use of irony while speaking. The challenges in this context came up more than once during the Global Business Master's program.

“I had some important misunderstanding with people, because I wanted to make jokes […] but then the person got offended” (I8, L63-64)

Nevertheless, in some cases, cultural misunderstandings and conflict cannot be completely avoided as “at one point you have to face this situation” (I6, L85-86)

Country comparison

Regarding this category, both the Italian and Austrian students show relatively similar patterns of dealing with conflicts in an intercultural context. It is suggested that most of the cultural conflicts arise from the fact if the opposing cultures are far away from each other as seen in the several statements about clashes with the Russian culture. However, all students are open to adapt their behavior and are notably proactive in dealing with arising conflicts. While the Austrian students especially highlight communication and language barriers, the Italian statements revealed their stance on getting to the root of a problem.

6.5.3 CQ enhancement proposals

Given that there is always room for improvement regarding CQ capabilities, the following analysis depicts various enhancement recommendations that might help to enhance CQ competences, not only in a personal but also academic context. It includes the perceptions of interviewees, which describe how they could feel more confident in a cross-cultural context. Apart from this, it is revealed what would enable them to improve.

Austria

Regarding CQ enhancement proposals, one Austrian interviewee suggested that individuals should exert awareness,

“Be aware of anything you encounter” (I5, L98-99)

and understandable towards the other culture.

“Try to understand how and why they do things like they do things” (I5, L98-99)

Furthermore, it was revealed by several Austrian students that being open-minded
“be open-minded and not closed minded” (I3, L122-123);
“be open-minded, to be not shy about trying out new things” (I2, L95-96)
as well as getting to know the local culture and people.

“try to get in contact with local people and to gain a better understanding about the way
of living” (I2, L95-96);
“ask them about the differences. What they think, how they feel in a certain situation and
maybe tell them what you feel, so they others understand you” (I1, L101-102)

Another Austrian participant suggested that informing oneself prior to going abroad is a vital
element.

“before going abroad learn […] about the most outstanding differences to your own
culture” (I4, L86-87);
“they should prepare before they go there, maybe talk with someone who knows
something about that culture, who already has been there” (I3, L122-123)

Despite this, it was revealed by one Austrian interviewee that cultural awareness courses, as well
as continuous journal entries reflecting on the intercultural experiences, might lead to an
enhancement of CQ capabilities.

“a Cultural Awareness course, because […] it helped to write this kind of journal entries
[…] about the cultural differences. It helps to reflect on them and I think reflecting on the
cultural differences is really important to be more aware” (I1, L105-106)

Additionally, it is pointed out to the fact that greater integration between students from the home
university and exchange students should occur. On the one hand, it is a preparation for the
students from the local university.

“the best thing you can do for preparing students for going abroad, working abroad to let
them work with foreign students in their home university” (I5, L102-103);
“more international teams at university would be good” (I1, L105-106)

On the other hand, a connection to the host culture and its people are created for the exchange
students.

“then it is also an experience for the exchange students” (I5, L102-103)
More precisely, one Austrian interviewee addressed the fact that his home university currently
lacks the skill of integrating the exchange students with the local culture and people. Thereby, he
reflects on his exchange experience in Sweden.

“The exchange students were more integrated into the social life; they had more contact
with Swedish students and other exchange students. All in all, one of their key strategies
of the […] university was to be international” (I4, L66-67)

Nevertheless, one Austrian student pointed out to the fact that on the part of the university “you
should not force every student to go abroad” (I3, L126-127). However, it is perceived that the sum
of individuals going abroad has significantly increased over the last decade. Overall, it is perceived
that if one aspires for an international career, a focus on culture during the studies becomes inevitable.

“there are many people who are trying to have an international career, they should of course also have to have the Cultural Awareness background” (I2, L99-100)

Italy

With regard to enhancement proposals for individuals, several Italian interviewees advise people entering a new culture to be proactive, learn about the host culture,

“Learn about that culture and ask people that already have been there some suggestions to avoid problems. Nothing more, because he or she has also to experience it” (I10, L108-109);
“at the beginning to inform a little bit about the culture, because otherwise you may be misunderstood” (I8, L72-73);
“Try to use what people really use, to go to places where people really go […] or to try to follow what […] locals do” (I6, L85-86)

be open-minded and to not forget about one’s own culture.

“To be open-minded, to not forget about your own culture, but to somehow leave it a home as […], you as a foreigner you do not have to impose your own culture abroad, but you have to be open to what the others are used to” (I9, L101-103);
“try to be more open-minded […], because then when you go home, maybe you regret not having done some things, because you were too focused on your culture or yourself” (I8, L72-73)

What is more, the Italian students were in line when it comes to the fact that universities should promote going abroad as well as providing a more extensive offers of CCM education as a preparation for an international work environment.

“they have to improve something, because nowadays in our international environment it is very important to know these differences in culture” (I10, L117-118)

Besides that, regarding the Italian university system, one Italian interviewee revealed that language course should be mandatory within the curriculum. Primarily, the inclusion of English due to its pervasiveness as an international business language. These should be then taught by native speakers.

“I think that the language course should be provided in a compulsory way, […] English is very important. Within my studies, all the courses were taught by Italians professors, so again they were talking in English, but with an Italian accent, sometimes using Italian words” (I9, L107-109)

Additionally, it was suggested by one Italian participant that multicultural group assignments should be integrated more within classes. She further elaborated on the fact that if one solely
works for a national company, it is one thing. However, when one is already prepared in working with different cultures, one can easily thrive within a multinational company setting.

“I think the work groups were really important, [...] because it helps you also to learn a lot of things about the culture that you can put into practice also in the future [...], apply these differences in the work-life” (I8, L74-75)

Overall, one student observed a trend within his university and that is “to provide more and more experiences abroad” (I6, L87-88).

**Country comparison**

The analysis of the CQ enhancement recommendation shows that both Italian and Austrian students suggest that individuals should exert similar soft skills when entering a new culture. In addition to this, both cultures reveal the importance of intercultural group assignments. Regarding peculiarities, Italian students highlight the importance of language courses, whereas Austrian students still stress the significance of CCM course, whereby there is room for improvement at their home university.
7 Discussion

As elaborated earlier, it is of great significance to highlight that the topic within this master thesis is rather complex, which complicates the analysis. Due to the qualitative nature of this study, a wide array of statement can be identified, which are not seen as universally applicable, yet highlight the uniqueness of the research. Consequently, this should be taken into consideration during the subsequent discussion.

This research explored the specific CQ development methods aiming at students and to compare them with previous assumptions about the pervasiveness of experiential learning and CCM education as amplifiers of CQ. Therefore, the empirical research within this thesis addressed the following research question and sub-question:

“How do cross-cultural management education and experiential learning contribute to students’ self-perceived Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development?”

“In which ways do Austrian and Italian business students differ with regard to self-perceived CQ development?”

Thus, the goal of this master thesis was to answer these research questions based on semi-structured interviews of students, who were exposed to various forms of CQ interventions during their past academic years. Thus, the objective of this master thesis was to find out if cross-cultural management education (CCM) and experiential learning contribute to students’ self-perceived Cultural Intelligence (CQ) development. Additionally, it was investigated if there are clear distinctions among the sample of Austrian and Italian interviewees. Consequently, the following discussion will demonstrate the theoretical and practical implications based on the empirical research within this thesis. Following this, the limitations of this study will be presented, and the thesis will be concluded.
7.1 Theoretical implications

The findings and results of this research contribute to the CQ development literature. More precisely, the empirical research addressed the identified research gap regarding the self-perceived CQ development of students and whether cross-cultural management education and experiential learning affect it. Following this, the theoretical implications of this research contribute to the CQ development and overall, concept of CQ in different ways as will be elaborated.

First of all, the research on the definition of culture and intelligence adds no further value to the already existing literature as it is in line with the already established understanding of it. Similar to Hall (1976), the participants defined culture as a somewhat elusive concept relating to various fields beginning from cultural systems, the way of doing things, traditions, language up to nonverbal communication. Additionally, in accordance with Sternberg (1997), the interviewees defined intelligence as a concept that enables analytical decision-making as well as an adaption of knowledge to different contexts and situations. Besides that, regarding the learnable nature of culture, some statements of the participants are in line with the literature (e.g. Geertz, 1973) as cultural patterns enable the knowledge transmission from one generation to another.

Secondly, the research addresses the self-perceived evaluation of Cultural Intelligence as well as prerequisites and obstacles to cross-cultural success. Additionally, it is emphasized what constitutes capabilities relevant for being successful on a global scale. In this context, the framework by Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) suggests that various antecedents for Cultural Intelligence exist, which further promote the development for Cultural Intelligence. In line with Ang, and Van Dyne (2008) and Ng, Van Dyne and Ang (2012) the trait-like nature of CQ’s antecedents Intelligence is highlighted. Similar to the Big Five personality construct, the interviewees within this master thesis address that soft skills such as being adaptable, open-minded, aware and proactive are prerequisites for being successful globally. Following this, the majority of participants believed that they exert such capabilities and thus, have a moderate to high level of CQ.

What is more, a connection can be made to Ng, Van Dyne, and Ang (2012) regarding the role metacognition as a facet of CQ as the interviewees highlight the importance of strategizing and adjusting mental models within an intercultural setting. Additionally, regarding the obstacles to cross-cultural success, the students elaborate on the fact that overcoming them is not inevitable and thus, requires the ability to rearrange one’s mindset. Subsequently, the behavioral CQ facet seems to impact for the participants as they continuously reveal behavioral adaptions in order to integrate oneself within a culture, which is in line with the perspective by Earley and Ang (2003). Even though a preparation in the form of classes regarding acquiring cultural knowledge is not the favored mode of developing CQ on the part of the interviewees, some participants still reveal that
it gives them certainty in knowing important cultural cues. This can be further compared to the stance by Earley, Ang and Tan (2006), which stress that the cognitive facet refers to the knowledge about practices, beliefs, and values of a given culture.

Thirdly, this research adds value for CQ development. In this context, Ott and Michailova (2018) addressed the lack of research on the development of CQ and intervention techniques. However, among scholars, there is a lack of consensus regarding CQ development methods. Based on the body of literature on CQ development, two streams can be identified, namely the experiential learning theory (e.g. Kolb, 1984; MacNab, 2012) and cross-cultural management education (CCM) (e.g. Eisenberg et al., 2013). However, these two research paradigms should not be seen as separate research fields. Consequently, a reciprocal relationship can be identified. Similar to this, the participants within the qualitative research stress that both CQ interventions techniques contributed to their CQ increase. Despite, the greater significance is given to experiential learning (e.g. semester abroad), whereas CCM education is perceived as relevant, but to a lesser extent. Additionally, the participants are in line with Kolb and Kolb (2005) as they emphasize that conflicts drive the learning process and thus, should not be avoided. According to Kolb and Kolb (2005), a four-stage learning cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting enables the transformation of experience into a learning outcome. This is similar to the statements by the participants as it is revealed that experiences, as well as a reflection on one’s own culture and of the counterpart, are seen as one of the most effective interventions for developing CQ capabilities.

Moreover, as can be seen in the research by Earley and Peterson (2004), training for the behavioral facet includes learning about acceptable behavior in a culture as well as mimicry. This is in line with the statements by the interviewees as the reveal that CCM courses are perceived as relevant in getting to know important culture-specific rules and standards. Besides this, empathy and respect for the other culture are highlighted by Earley and Peterson (2004) and can be linked to the statements by the students as they continuously stress the fact that respecting and not offending another culture is of utmost importance. Similar to Tan and Chua (2003), the participants highlight the importance of getting to know the local culture and its traditions, rituals, and ways of doing things. Furthermore, in line with Alexandra (2018), the majority of participants show a high propensity to change stereotypes, especially following a cross-cultural encounter. What is more, internationalization of the curriculum is addressed by the participants as a field, which should receive greater attention. Based on Ahn and Ettner (2013) as well as Clifford and Montgomery (2014), both research paradigms of CCM education and experiential learning are of significance when considering the internationalization of the curriculum. Similar to this, the interviewees perceive both research streams as valuable for their CQ development even though some factors might outweigh the others. In this regard, when being exposed to several CQ
interventions methods, they feel more confident and satisfied in participating and communicating within an intercultural setting as can also be seen within the research by Kurpis and Hunter (2017).

Lastly, the country comparison is of importance within the discussion section of this thesis. Subsequently, similar patterns of perceptions, feelings, and attitudes across culture can be identified after contrasting the statements of the Austrian and Italian students. Even though in some cases, single statements deviate from the norm, somewhat distinct cultural differences or peculiarities can rarely be identified. Thus, discrepancies concerning the self-perceived CQ level, the perception of CQ development interventions as well as practical implications of CQ hardly appear. If deviations from the others or distinctions appear, they cannot be solely traced back to cultural norms, but personality traits also have to be taken into consideration.

As can be derived from the interviews, similarities can be drawn between the Austrian and Italian students' understanding of intelligence and culture. In this context, three particular elements are important for both Austrian and Italian interviewees regarding what constitutes the concept of culture. Based on their perceptions, culture is being shared, inherently subconscious, and affects and is influenced by various spheres of life (e.g. everyday routines, religion, economy, politics, history etc.) similar to the research by Hall (1976) and Geertz (1973). Even though Austria and Italy are in different cultural clusters as can be seen in the research by Ronen and Shenkar (2013) (Germanic and Latin European cluster), they still overlap concerning what they perceive the construct of culture is comprised of. Apart from this, deviations occur regarding the perception of the learnable nature of culture. However, in this context within as well as across cultural differences can be identified. Thus, in this context, no country-specific patterns can be identified. Apart from this, the childhood represents one of the most crucial periods in life for both Austrian and Italian interviewees in order to “learn” one’s own culture.

Besides this, regarding their self-efficacy abroad, the majority of interviewees exert profound confidence and satisfaction in their abilities. However, the Italian students perceive that a high CQ status can only be achieved when exposed to a wide array of cultural contexts, which is not in line with the perspective of the majority of the Austrian interviewees. Besides this, awareness of cultural differences as well as transparent communication are highlighted as the most critical elements for effective and fruitful intercultural encounters. While the Italian students point out to the fact that international exposures enrich one’s mindset, the Austrian participants argue that to a certain extent it is perceived as exhausting. However, no correlation can be made to the research by Ramsey and Lorenz (2016), which concludes that a commitment to CCM classes correlates to a high level of CQ. As can be derived from the results of this thesis, only the Austrian students completed CCM courses before the international part of this Master’s program, which are embedded within the university curriculum. However, they did not perceive them as valuable and
thus, their commitment was low. Conversely, they do still perceive themselves as having a high CQ level. Apart from this, some Austrian participants highlight that the received knowledge from CCM classes enabled them to adapt their cognitive mindset as well as their behavior when venturing abroad, which is further in line with the research by Rehg, Grundlach and Grigorian (2012). Above all, Italian and Austrian interviewees stress that both experiential learning and CCM education contributed to their self-perceived CQ increase, whereas a greater significance is given to real-life experiences. Taken everything together, the findings of the cultural analysis do not show a transparent or clear picture.

Overall, all interviewees show similar thinking and perception patterns. In this context, it seems that a combination of personality traits, context, experiences as well as knowledge shapes the students’ CQ status and their CQ development, rather than their cultural exposure alone. Besides that, as in line with Ng and Earley (2006), the participants perceive themselves to be effective across various cultures. Consequently, culture is still an important element regarding CQ development, yet it only influences some aspects within an individual’s experience, personality and context spectrum. In line with Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012), culture is not only the root of our action but directs it. However, when analyzing the students’ statements regarding their perception and feelings, it is difficult to distinguish between the fact how far culture shapes personality traits and to which extent other factors gain significance. As the results are somewhat unclear, the complexity of this study is highlighted, which is further is addressed by Ott and Michailova (2018), who address that literature about CQ development interventions, especially in a cross-cultural context, is missing.

Above all, as it becomes clear from the analysis, the concept of CQ is a very individual construct. Thus, the level of CQ as well as its contributing, influencing and contextual variables differ from individual to individual. In this context, for example, while some students express confidence in specific cross-cultural soft skills, others note that they lack these particular ones. Apart from this, it is perceived among all interviewees that a combination of both theoretical input as well as gaining real-life experiences to develop CQ is the most feasible way, with the balance of them being unequal. It can be seen within this research that this individuality and complexity of the topic leads to obstacles in creating a clear pattern. Finally, it can be concluded that experiential learning contributes to a greater extent to students CQ development than CCM education, while the latter is perceived as a profound basis and framework for effective and promising intercultural experiences. Above all, no clear cultural pattern can be found.
7.2 Practical implications

In line with the findings of this master thesis, some practical implications can be found. First of all, students obtaining a degree in international studies or a field relatively exposed to international influences should be intent on integrating both CCM education as well as experiences abroad (e.g. international internship, exchange semester) in their studies. They should recognize that both theoretical inputs, as well as real-life experiences, can contribute to them being effective on a global scale, while a greater significance should be given to the latter type of interventions.

Secondly, according to the findings of the research, universities should consider restructuring the university curriculum in order to modify it according to more international standards and prerequisites. Therefore, academic institutions should be more aware of today's business needs in order to prepare their students for an international career. However, going abroad should not be on a mandatory basis, yet the internationalization of the university curriculum should only be executed in terms of international studies or students thriving for a global career.

Thirdly, some practical implications can be found for organizations and especially for the Human Resource departments. As Cultural Intelligence development gains more significance within business contexts, it can be highlighted to include both theoretical and practical input to equip employees with a global mindset. In this regard, organizations have the ability and the resources to provide their employees with the opportunity to develop their CQ, which can potentially avoid failures due to cross-cultural differences.
8 Limitations and further research

Within this chapter, the limitations are elaborated, which give the opportunity for further research. First of all, the empirical research executed within this thesis addresses only a sample comprised of business students. More precisely, all of the participants completed the Global Business Master’s program. Thus, the sample consists of an exclusive cohort of students, who have been exposed to the same CQ interventions during the past year, but prior to that have done various types of CQ interventions. In addition to this, the interviewees are within a similar age cohort (e.g. 24-26 years). Besides that, the sampling process within this thesis was based on convenience (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Even though the research provides rich and in-depth data, there is a limitation regarding the generalizability, which is acknowledged within his thesis. Therefore, further research could be done on either different fields of study or across different age cohorts.

Secondly, within this thesis, a qualitative research approach was executed. However, to understand in-depth the CQ development as well as the CQ status quo in a new situation, the findings of this research could be tested following a quantitative approach.

Thirdly, the study focuses on the self-perceived CQ status quo of the participants. This can be further seen as a limitation due to the subjective and individual nature of the assessment. In line with the existing literature, a pre-test and post-test scenario in the form of a longitudinal study is a standard tool to determine the CQ status. Therefore, a similar study could be conducted in this format.

What is more, another limitation is the use of English as the general language within the interview. More precisely, it is not the mother tongue of any of the interviewees. Consequently, this might hamper the participants to fully express their feelings, attitudes, and perceptions due to potential language barriers. Additionally, both cultures belong to the bigger categorization of the Western cultures. This could be taken into consideration regarding further research in order to compare cultures being afar from each other.
9 Conclusion

Above all, this master thesis has offered tremendous insights regarding Cultural Intelligence and its development concerning young business students. Besides this, the data suggests that CQ plays a vital role in their pursuit of an international career position. Thus, the concluding arguments about this thesis will follow. First of all, the self-perceived CQ status quo of the students is determined in which confidence and satisfaction in their cross-cultural abilities are addressed. Moreover, the motivation to master these skills is at the forefront. Secondly, the research, as well as the literature, show how CQ affects aspiration for global success and the confidence in pushing across cross-cultural boundaries. Thirdly, the level of CQ determines how different contexts are dealt with and potential challenges overcome. Thereby, the various CQ development interventions enable to be higher on the spectrum of CQ. In this context, it can be concluded from the study that a greater importance is given to experiential learning interventions rather than cross-cultural management education. However, these two CQ development research streams cannot be completely separated. Therefore, it is not either experiential learning or CCM education. Apart from this, CQ and its development interventions indeed are vital in preparing individuals for an international environment and promising a smooth foray into unknown waters. More precisely, CQ is a system of abilities, which continuously interact and thus, rather dynamic and complex. Therefore, a universal or “one-size-fits-all” statement cannot be made. As the concept of CQ, as well as its development interventions, appear rather volatile and dynamic, this master thesis concludes that a continuously changing process defines its role regarding students. It is further influenced by a rather complex interplay of contextual as well as individual variables. Furthermore, as the concept of CQ is not innate, this master thesis elaborates on the relevance of academic institutions to contribute to the CQ development and thus, urges them to act. The collected findings provide valuable information on what conditions students need in order to strive in international environments.
IV. Reference List


V. Appendix

Appendix A: Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) by Ang et al. (2007, p. 366)

The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)

Read each statement and select the response that best describes your capabilities. Select the answer that BEST describes you AS YOU REALLY ARE (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CQ factor</th>
<th>Questionnaire items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive CQ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC1</td>
<td>I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC2</td>
<td>I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC3</td>
<td>I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC4</td>
<td>I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive CQ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG1</td>
<td>I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG2</td>
<td>I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG3</td>
<td>I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG4</td>
<td>I know the marriage systems of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG5</td>
<td>I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG6</td>
<td>I know the rules for expressing nonverbal behaviors in other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational CQ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT1</td>
<td>I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT2</td>
<td>I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT3</td>
<td>I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT4</td>
<td>I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT5</td>
<td>I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral CQ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEH1</td>
<td>I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEH2</td>
<td>I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEH3</td>
<td>I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEH4</td>
<td>I change my nonverbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEH5</td>
<td>I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Cultural Intelligence Center 2005. Used by permission of the Cultural Intelligence Center.

Note: Use of this scale granted to academic researchers for research purposes only. For information on using the scale for purposes other than academic research (e.g., consultants and non-academic organizations), please send an email to query@culturalq.com. The Chinese version of the scales is available on the MOR website.
Appendix B: Interview Guideline

Firstly, CQS scale by Linn van Dyne as a trigger and introduction to the topic. (Will not receive a score or rating, yet used for the analysis in accordance with the interview guide questions)

1. Culture

   Q. In the media, culture, cultural identity, cultural differences or cultures clashes are prominent topics. In this context, please explain what you understand under the term “Culture”!
   Q. Do you believe culture can be learned and when yes, how?
   Q. When being exposed to a different culture, are you aware of cultural differences?
   Q. What would you like to change about the way you are currently communicating with a different culture? Examples?
   Q. Have you ever experienced cultural misunderstandings, and could you name some examples? And were these conflicts based on cultural norms or something else?

2. Intelligence

   Q. Can you briefly explain what “Intelligence” means to you?
   Q. Do you think “Intelligence” can be related to other aspects than simply being a mental capability that involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems? And when yes, can you recall some aspects from your own experience?
   Q. From your perspective, is “Intelligence” a requirement to successfully act in an international environment?

3. Cultural Intelligence

   Definition: Earley and Ang (2003) introduced the concept of Cultural Intelligence in order to understand why some people work more effectively in intercultural contexts than others (Show interview participants the definition)

   “Cultural intelligence (CQ) is the capability to relate and work effectively in culturally diverse situations. Going beyond existing notions of cultural sensitivity and awareness, it is important to identify the recurring capabilities of individuals who can successfully and respectfully accomplish their objectives, whatever the cultural context. Awareness is the first step, but it is not enough. A culturally intelligent individual is not only aware but can also effectively work and relate with people and projects across different cultural contexts.” ("What is CQ?", 2018).

   Q. How would you categorize your status quo of Cultural Intelligence?
   Q. Do you believe that CQ is necessary in being successful globally?
   Q. Do you think that being “culturally incompetent” leads to failures in today’s interconnected business environment and when yes, could you name some examples?
   Q. In your experience, what does it take to handle cross-cultural encounters successfully? Examples?
   Q. Do you believe that you have the skills to successfully handle such situations? And when yes, how did you acquire them?
Q. Can you characterize any ways how cross-cultural gaps like misunderstandings, miscommunication, stereotypes or prejudices can be bridged?
Q. How would you react to a situation when you’re talking to a person from a different culture and he/she doesn’t react as expected from your perspective? (first getting this question answered)
Is it a cultural difference or a personal trait? How do you know, and how do you deal with it?

4. Development of CQ

Q. Do you prepare yourself or receive preparation before taking part in a cross-cultural encounter? And How?
Q. What is usually important for you to gather knowledge about a different culture? (first getting this question answered). Is practical experience or theoretical input more important to you?
Q. Before attending this program, did you have any previous experience abroad or/and have any classes regarding cross-cultural management education been attended?
Q. At your home university, in which ways does culture or being “culturally intelligent” play a role? Is this something that is discussed, communicated or even to some extent mandatory?
Q. What is, in your opinion more important, for being culturally intelligent: learning through experiences (e.g. stays abroad) or/and cross-cultural management education included in the university curriculum, and why?
Q. Do you believe that experiential learning or/and CCM contributed to the increase of your CQ competences? Could you recall any situation in which this played a role?

5. Practical implication of CQ

Q. How satisfied are you about your way of participating and communicating in a multicultural-team assignment?
Q. Can you recall a challenging incident with someone from a different culture?
Q. What did you learn from these incidents? Something about the other person or about yourself? Have they changed your way of looking at things?
Q. When cultural misunderstanding or conflicts arise, how do you mostly handle such situations?
Q. Can you recall any situation where being “culturally competent” was beneficial for you?
Q. What is in your opinion the best advice to give to someone when entering a new culture or when interacting with a new culture?
Q. Do you see any field of improvement in preparing students for an international work environment?

References:

Retrieved 11 April 2018, from https://culturalq.com/what-is-cq/
Appendix C: Steps of deductive category assignment by Mayring (2014, p. 96)

Step 1
Research question, theoretical background

Step 2
Definition of the category system (main categories and subcategories) from theory

Step 3
Definition of the coding guideline (definitions, anchor examples and coding rules)

Step 4
Material run-through, preliminary codings, adding anchor examples and coding rules

Step 5
Revision of the categories and coding guideline after 10 - 50% of the material

Step 6
Final working through the material

Step 7
Analysis, category frequencies and contingencies interpretation
# Appendix D: Category system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code/subcode</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Anchor samples</th>
<th>Coding rules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understanding of culture</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Defining culture</td>
<td>Culture is a set of beliefs and traditions that are kept among people that live among each other in a country or a town, city, whatever. There are formulated ones and unformulated ones (I5, L6-7).</td>
<td>This category only includes the perception and general understanding about the concept of culture, its development and cultural awareness. It does not already refer to Cultural Intelligence in particular, yet does include statements about the participants' cross-cultural abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Learnable nature of culture</td>
<td>Well as I studied, I think no. It's something that you have from your childhood. You can modify it, but cannot change it all (I10, L9-10).</td>
<td>All aspects that concern the concrete methods in which cultural knowledge is acquired belong to category 4.</td>
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<td>1.3</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>The framework, yes, I mean how to deal with cultures, yes, but culture itself can be also learned. But I truly believe that most of the time it is an unconscious process (I6, L7-10).</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Understanding of intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding of the participants' view on the concept of intelligence and description what it means to them. Perception whether it is a requirement for being successful globally.</td>
<td>Intelligence is for me a mixture of basic wisdom, the ability to get new knowledge and of course, how fast you can attain your knowledge (I5, L27-33).</td>
<td>This category exclusively deals with the participants' understanding of the construct of intelligence. This includes seeing it from an objective viewpoint, while giving statements about the significance of intelligence for a global career.</td>
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*December 19, 2018*  Kerstin Jungreithmeier  XXII
### 3. Perception of Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

**3.1 Perception of CQ status quo**
Subjective evaluation of the current status of participants’ CQ level and an explanation of why as well as how participants have acquired CQ competences.

I think it's high. The year abroad or working closely with foreigners, Italians and Russians, really helped me a lot (15, L30-38).

Compared to for example people in my hometown, I think that I’m very aware of cultural differences. Especially because I took part in this program, where I spent three months in Russia and three months in Italy (13, L41-42).

While obstacles within an international setting are addressed, they appear rather objective as the participants’ own challenges are covered within sub-category 5.2.

**3.2 Perception of prerequisites for cross-cultural success**
Perceived reasons and requirements for being successful within a cross-cultural encounter. Description of the qualities, attributes and skills an individual should acquire in order to be successful in this context.

I think you have to be open minded to what other people are saying. Maybe also be aware of differences to recognize them. But also that you try to find one common standard (11, L47-49).

**3.3 Perception of obstacles to cross-cultural success**
Describes the perception of any obstacles, barriers or challenges that could stand in the way of being successful or effective within a global context.

Yes probably, because I think that for example about my field Marketing. If you prepare a marketing campaign that is completely out of the culture that you are targeting that would be a complete failure probably (10, L37-39).

### 4. Perception of CQ development

**4.1 Preparation for cross-cultural encounter**
Refers to the information if the participants prepare themselves or receive preparation before taking part in a new cross-cultural setting or not.

Maybe if you have to go abroad you try to speak with people who have already been there, so you know how to interact, how to greet people, just not to be arrogant maybe, because you don’t know how to behave (18, L43-44).

This category is devoted to the fact how interviewees prepare for a cross-cultural encounter. This includes also the significance of interventions, which have contributed to their CQ development. Besides, it is not only referred to the type of experiences, but also to their feelings and perceptions about them.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Perceived importance of CQ development interventions</td>
<td>Subjective evaluation about the feelings and perception towards the various CQ development interventions and how they influenced the interviewees' evolution of CQ development. Because if you live abroad you experience it on your skin how it is, but it's important also to have some theoretical knowledge about it, because it's not just living there, but there are also lots of studies that prove that Cultural Intelligence is important (110, 81-85).</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>Previous CQ development interventions</td>
<td>Defines what kind of CQ development measures the participants have already been exposed to (i.e., international experience abroad or cross-cultural management course). Explanation of why interviewees have participated or did not already participate in previous interventions. I had both. I had one experience in the Netherlands for five months and there I had one cultural course; namely, Trompenaar's theories (16, L63-65).</td>
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| 5. | Practical implications of CQ | **Satisfaction with cross-cultural communication and participation**
Includes all feelings and beliefs that explain for what communication and participation skills and abilities the interviewees feel confident and for which they do not. Perception of changeability in cross-cultural communication and confidence in improving them. Explanation whether there is motivation to change as well as benefits of CQ abilities in a cross-cultural setting. I would say that I'm highly satisfied, also because as for example for our business project. Here I have experienced that, also according to, I don't know according to academic standards. Italians and Austrians are really similar (17, L58-59).  
**Perception of cross-cultural challenges**
This category describes the cross-cultural challenges and obstacles the participants have already been confronted based on their own experiences. It further refers to ways to overcome potential barriers and what is the ultimate learning outcome from such an incident. Yes, sometimes, the working moral is a bit different and they have other expectations concerning how to work efficiently, that are in my eyes completely inefficient. But as I experienced it, it is better to avoid conflict and in maybe try to find a bit of a solution in the middle (12, 95-97).  
**CQ enhancement proposals**
Various enhancement recommendations that might help to enhance CQ capabilities. It includes the perception of interviewees, which describe how they could feel more confident in a cross-cultural context and what would enable them to learn and improve. Yes, I think that more international teams at university would be good, but also together with a kind of Cultural Awareness course (1, L101-103). |

All aspects that relate to the impact CQ has in practice. This includes the satisfaction of interviewees with and confidence in cross-cultural communication skills as well as the explanation of cross-cultural incidents perceived as challenging. Further includes situations in which interviewees experienced benefits from CQ capabilities acquired prior to it. Enrichment tools for individuals and university contexts are described.