Bio-Determinants of Cultural Intelligence in DR Congo-Kinshasa and Need for its Related Policy within Organizations

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Abstract

This study investigates the causal relationship between the three cultural intelligence (CQ) aspects (meta-cognitive, cognitive and behavior) and biographic characteristics and both CQ level and CQ competences. The 430 Congolese workers that volunteered to participate by completing a CQ Self-Assessment Scale demonstrated an indistinct CQ level and lack of CQ competences. The findings of this study reveal that besides CQ aspects, only gender predicts CQ level, while gender (1), age, marital status (2) and language group (2) made a significant contribution to the prediction of CQ competences. This study further provides recommendations for future studies to duplicate its research kind countrywide and investigate the phenomenon longitudinally in order to identify structural determinants. Lastly, it advises leaders to introduce learning and training programs within enterprises to enhance integration in workgroups for business success and to improve workers' cross-cultural adjustment in a culturally-diverse environment.

Keywords: Cultural Intelligence; Cross-cultural Adjustment; Tribalism; Workplace; Kinshasa

1. Introduction

In a country that accounts for an estimated more than 183 culturally distinct tribes and sub-tribes, including Pygmies, Nilotic, Sudanese and Bantu (Crowley, 1963), the promotion of harmony as well as "living and working together" is a necessity in order to safeguard the general interest and the collective emergence of all the layers making up the community. This includes leaders' and workers' capabilities in understanding beliefs, customs, habits, gestures and actions occurring in a multi-cultural environment, in order to adjust attitudes and behaviors to promote job performance and productivity (Azevedo, 2018). Hence, the importance of cultural intelligence (CQ) training within organizations. However, the recent outcry over the various nominations for the President of the Republic, labelled as tribalists, has hampered efforts to unite the country's various cultural groups to work together for the emergence of a nation-state (Jeune Afrique, 2019). Indeed, for many, this has come to consolidate the fact that beyond the political sphere, companies and administrations, both public and private, recruit, manage and promote workers because of their membership of one group rather than another, although one evolving in a culturally-diverse environment (Mulongo, 2021). Consequently, the guilty silence of Congolese academics in investigating cultural intelligence and its level in the workplace, as well as their determinants, challenged this study which proposes to treat the question in a dispassionate way in order to awaken managers' consciousness in considering this as a key to business success in a world that is moving in a culturally-globalizing logic.

2. Theoretical Background

Since Earley and Mosakowski (2004) highlighted the imperious necessity of applying CQ in a culturally-diversified workplace to ensure employees' effective business relationships, the concept has gained interest across scientific disciplines, including psychology, sociology and management. It is acknowledged today as the "essential business intelligence to succeed in the 21st century", even by professionals (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2015).

Primarily, CQ, although coined for the first time in 2002 (Klafke et al., 2019), finds its roots in two psychological concepts known as emotional intelligence (EQ), unveiled in the 1990s by Goleman (1998), and social intelligence (SQ), highlighted in the early twentieth century by Thorndike (1920). EQ is described as an individual's ability, capacity, skill or self-perceived ability to identify, assess and manage the emotions of oneself, of others, and of groups (Serrat, 2017). SQ, on the other hand, refers to the development through an individual's knowledge, skills and abilities to understand himself/herself, self-behavior, actions of other people and to build effective interaction and also to achieve a goal communicative competence (Karl, 2005, p. 304). The combination of both meta-cognitive (EQ) and cognitive (SQ) aspects of intelligence gave birth to CQ, as stated in Gardner's "multiple intelligences" concept, for whom the emotional refers to what is intrapersonal, while the social refers to interpersonal exchanges when it comes to intelligence (Cherry, 2019). However, it is generally acknowledged that CQ is made of four components that are Meta-cognitive CQ, Cognitive CQ, Motivational CQ and Behavioral CQ.

Understanding cultures that are different from one's own and acquiring the necessary knowledge to point out similarities and differences, in order to check and adjust assumptions in culturally diverse situations, is referred to as Meta-cognitive CQ (Brislin et al., 2006), but when the focus is one culture or another, then it is about Cognitive CQ (Solomon and Steyn, 2017). The latter's awareness is raised through personal experience and education in relation to economic and legal systems, social norms, religious beliefs, practices and conventions across cultures (Triandis, 2006). Abilities and motivation shown by an individual to learn others' cultures and adjust his behavior according to the culturally diverse situations he is in refers to Motivational CQ (Guðmundsdóttir, 2015). Individuals with high Motivational CQ are confident about their capacity to function effectively in cross-cultural environments. However, when this motivation, knowledge and skills turn into action to exhibit appropriate verbal and non-verbal behavior during interaction with people from different cultures, it refers to Behavioral CQ (Khodadady and Ghahari, 2011). It requires aptitude to adjust verbal and non-verbal behavior using appropriate words, tone, gestures and facial expressions through a wide repertoire of behavioral responses.

Much empirical evidence has demonstrated that increasing cultural adjustment and work performance, improvement of cultural judgement and decision-making, greater effectiveness in intercultural negotiations, a higher level of trust, idea-sharing and creative collaboration are the key benefits offered by CQ (Azevedo, 2018). Tribal attitudes and behavior mediate significantly the relationship between workers' empowerment and organizational commitment as shown in Yemen (Emam et al., 2019), and efforts made by business organizations to build teamwork as a strategy of success are often jeopardized by the existing gap between workers' perceptions about teams and their actual intentions to participate in team due to the rampant problems of conflicts, nepotism and tribalism within it (Okyere-Kwakye et al., 2010). Hence, no business organization should ignore the challenges of intercultural learning and collaboration in a multi-cultural environment such as the DR Congo's workplace.

Historically, as documented, the conflict between Congolese cultures from a political and economic point of view has been exacerbated by the demand for independence from Katanga made by Moïse Tshombe, their political leader at the time, following the Congo's accession to national sovereignty. Katangese were reluctant to join any confederations of provinces unless they controlled the revenue, as Katanga alone was contributing

one-third of the national budget towards its mining company, Union Minière du Haut Katanga (Crowley, 1963). And since then, the nationals of this province have often maintained a tumultuous relationship with other communities, particularly the Kasaians. Another illustrative episode of the relationship evoked is the "Debout Katanga" (translated as "Arise Katanga") campaign under the motto "Katanga yetu" ("Our Katanga" in Swahili), launched by Gabriel Kwungu wa Kumwanza, the then governor of Katanga, in complicity with Ngunz a Karl-I-Bond, the then prime minister of the country. They committed and supported the coordination of mass violence against Baluba from Eastern Kasaï, before extending attacks against all Kasaians and non-natives of Katanga, whom they blamed for the collapse of Katanga's economy and the subsequent poverty and exploitation of the Katangese (Vinckel, 2015). Such revendications are not limited to the Katangese alone, as recently a religious movement in the Kongo central province illustrated itself by targeting people from other cultures on the basis that they feel that Kongo people are oppressed and have little access to high-level positions, even in their home province (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

In a context where individuals from different cultural groups representing the country and those coming from outside the borders are called to live and work together in order to meet common challenges, including those of a socioeconomic nature (Yates and De Oliveira, (2016), understanding the real-life decision-making process and its various stages in relation to culture on a social level, as well as the organization of activities to strengthen CQ in the workplace, are imperative (Azevedo, 2018). Thus, this study aimed to identify bio-determinants of CQ in order to provide both political and business leaders with clues to start setting up appropriate policies and strategies to enhance the workers' will to engage effectively and sincerely in teamwork. To arrive at more realistic ends, this study used two approaches, consisting of answering two research questions, as follows:

1. What are the determinants of workers' CQ level in DR Congo-Kinshasa?
2. What are the determinants of CQ competences in DR Congo-Kinshasa?

3. Materials & Methods

3.1. Data collection

Data have been collected by means of questionnaires randomly distributed by trained research assistants to workers at their workplace for a self-assessment that provides insight into their current CQ. The reason for not adopting a face-to-face approach was guided by the challenges caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. Compliance with strict rules to keep interpersonal contacts to a minimum, at least 1-metre social distancing, applying 70% alcohol hand sanitizer regularly and the wearing of a face mask that fully covers the mouth and nose was observed, following recommendations from Université Protestante au Congo's research ethics committee. Workers who received the questionnaires and wanted to participate were offered assistance, if necessary, to better understand the objectives of the study and meaning of questions by means of a cell phone, as well as email and social media platforms including Facebook, Messenger, Twitter and WhatsApp. In addition to voluntary consent to participate in this study, respondents were assured about the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. They had one week to complete the questionnaires, after which the research assistants returned to collect the completed questionnaires.

3.2. Data Analysis

Given the specific nature of this study's aims, linear regression and binary logistic regression were chosen to analyze data. Indeed, the first approach required transforming CQ aspects' scores to a four points Likert

scale determining level of CQ with "0" indicating no competences in all three CQ aspects and "3" showing competences in all. On the other hand, the second approach consisted of determining if respondents possess CQ competences or not. Therefore, it adopted a binary approach with "0" indicating lack of CQ competences and "1" showing capacity, ability and knowledge to function effectively in cross-cultural situations.

3.3. Sampling procedure and sample size

The sampling techniques employed in this study consisted of drawing twenty enterprises from two pools created for both public and private sectors. However, a quota of twelve public enterprises and eight private ones was set for each pool in the following, to reflect on their respective population distribution's weight to obtain a realistic representative distribution of the workers' population. In the absence of data about the real number of enterprises in Kinshasa, the 60/40 quota was set on the basis that the public sector employs the greater number of workers.

It is acknowledged that reliable equations are subjected to adequate sample size (Ayikwa & De Jager, 2016). Thus, this study conducted a Factor Analysis using the statistical package SPSS version 26 to determine the suitability of the 430 participants' sample size. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin coefficient of .7 well above the acceptable level of .5 suggested that data were sufficient. Also, this study made sure that each predictor had at least 15 participants per recommendation for a social science research (Protogerou and Turner-Cobb, 2011). Furthermore, Tabachnick and Fidell's sample size formula was applied and the 430 participants for this study were well above the minimum 74 required (Ayikwa & De Jager, 2016).

3.4. Survey instrument

The instrument used by this study considered only three out of four CQ aspects that are Meta-cognitive CQ, Cognitive CQ and Behavioral CQ. Each CQ aspect was measured through six items that use a five-point Likert scale, ranging from never to most of the time. The study's instrument that assessed the three aforementioned CQ aspects was proposed by Richard Bucher and Patricia Bucher (2008). Besides, the questionnaire gathered biographic information from respondents such as gender, age, level of education, marital status, place of living, sector of industry and linguistic group. Reliability of this study instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and all three constructs of the questionnaire had an Alpha coefficient well above the .5 threshold.

3.5. Participants (Bio data)

This study approached 430 Congolese workers who volunteered to participate, the majority of whom were males (245, 57.0%), aged between eighteen and thirty years old, having obtained a Bachelor's degree (n = 220, 51.2%), were legally married to their partners (201, 46.7%), were living in Lukunga district (n = 190, 44.2%) and were working in the public sector and speaking Kikongo. Further details regarding participants' demographic profile are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. The Demographic Profile of the Participants (n = 430)

Bio-characteristics	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Bio-characteristics**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Gender			Marital status		
Male	245	57.0	Single	168	39.1
Female	185	43.0	Married	201	46.7
Total	430	100.0	LivePartner	21	4.9
Age			Divorced	5	1.2
18 – 30 yrs old	166	38.6	Separated	7	1.6
31 – 40 yrs old	113	26.3	Widow[er]	28	6.5
41 – 50 yrs old	74	17.2	Total	430	100.0
51 – 60 yrs old	66	15.3	District of residence		
61 – older	11	2.6	Funa	88	20.5
Total	430	100.0	Lukunga	190	44.2
Level of education			Mont-Amba	116	27.0
Some Primary schooling	5	1.2	Tshangu	36	8.4
Standard 6/Grade 8	15	3.5	Total	430	100.0
Standard 8/Grade 10	9	2.1	Sector of industry		
Matric	34	7.9	Public	240	55.8
Undergraduate degree	97	22.6	Private	190	44.2
Bachelor degree	220	51.2	Total	430	100.0
Master degree	47	10.9	Language group		
Doctorate degree	3	0.7	Kikongo	185	43.0
Total	430	100.0	Lingala	40	9.3
			Swahili	68	15.8
			Tshiluba	134	31.2
			Other	3	0.7
			Total	430	100.0

4. Results

Prior to performing linear regression and binary logistic regression analyses, descriptive statistics were conducted to describe the current CQ level of Congolese workers. As indicated in Table 2, respondents demonstrated an indistinct level regarding all three CQ aspects (Meta-Cognitive CQ: M = 3.16, SD = .80; Cognitive CQ: M = 3.10, SD = .90; Behavioral CQ: M = 2.67, SD = .86). Consequently, the transformed scores indicated a low CQ level (M = .97, SD = .94) and lack of CQ competences (M = .30, SD = .46).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

		Meta-cognitive CQ	Cognitive	Behaviour CQ	CQ (Scale)	CQ (Binary)
N	Valid	430	430	430	430	430
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.15914	3.10233	2.66590	.96740	.29530
Std. Deviation		.80291	.90489	.86232	.94059	.45673
Minimum		1.00	1.00	1.00	.00	.00
Maximum		5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	1.00

The linear regression performed established that meta-cognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, behavioral CQ and gender could statistically significantly predict workers' CQ level, F (10, 419) = 47.63, p = .00 as illustrated in Tables 3-5. All four predictors accounted for 52.1% of the explained variability in workers' CQ level. The regression equation was: predicted workers' CQ level = -1.978 + 0.085 x (meta-cognitive CQ) + 0.093(cognitive CQ) + 0.085 (behavioral CQ) - 0.132 x (gender).

Table 3. Multiple regression - Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.729[a]	0.532	0.521	0.65109

a. Predictors: (Constant), Meta-cognitive CQ, Cognitive CQ, Behaviour CQ, Age, District of residence, Language group, Gender, Level of education, Sector of industry, Marital status

Table 4. Multiple regression - ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	201.923	10	20.192	47.633	.000[b]
	Residual	177.621	419	0.424		
	Total	379.544	429			

a. Dependent Variable: CI (Scale)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Meta-cognitive CQ, Cognitive CQ, Behaviour CQ, Age, District of residence, Language group, Gender, Level of education, Sector of industry, Marital status

Table 5. Multiple regression - Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-1.978	0.292		-6.783	0.000	-2.551	-1.404
	Gender	-0.132	0.067	-0.070	-1.972	0.049	-0.263	0.000
	Age	-0.012	0.035	-0.015	-0.354	0.724	-0.081	0.057
	Level of education	-0.005	0.028	-0.007	-0.189	0.850	-0.059	0.049
	Marital status	-0.044	0.029	-0.060	-1.503	0.134	-0.101	0.013
	District of residence	-0.031	0.037	-0.029	-0.838	0.402	-0.103	0.042
	Sector of industry	-0.026	0.075	-0.014	-0.350	0.726	-0.173	0.121
	Language group	-0.013	0.026	-0.018	-0.494	0.621	-0.064	0.038
	Meta-cognit CQ	0.085	0.006	0.505	13.031	0.000	0.072	0.097
	Cognitive CQ	0.093	0.013	0.269	7.330	0.000	0.068	0.118
	Behaviour CQ	0.085	0.013	0.235	6.572	0.000	0.060	0.111

a. Dependent Variable: CQ (Scale)

The binary logistic regression conducted to ascertain the effects of gender, age, level of education, marital status, place of living, sector of industry, linguistic, meta-cognitive CQ, cognitive CQ and behavioral CQ on the likelihood that participants possess CQ competences indicated from Tables 6-9 that the model was statistically significant, $\chi 2(19) = 296.953$, $p < .000$. The model explained 70.9% (Nagelkerke R2) of the variance in CQ competences and correctly classified 88.6% of cases. The Wald criterion demonstrated that meta-cognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, behavioral CQ, gender (1), age, marital status (2) and language group (2) made a significant contribution to the prediction of CQ competences (p = .000; .000; .000; .000; .023; .007; .000; .046). Increasing CQ aspects' competences was associated with an increased likelihood of possessing CQ competences (meta-cognitive CQ = 1.60 times, cognitive CQ = 1.97 times and behavioral CQ = 2.03 times). Females were .22 times less likely to exhibit CQ competences than males, while increasing age was associated with a decreased likelihood of exhibiting CQ competences. The odds of possessing CQ competences in the LivePartner group is 17.00 times greater than in the single group, when controlling for all other variables, whereas the odds of possessing CQ competences in the Baluba group is .37 times lower than in the Bakongo group, when controlling for all other variables.

Table 6. Binary logistic regression - Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	296.953	19	0.000
	Block	296.953	19	0.000
	Model	296.953	19	0.000

Table 7. Binary logistic regression - Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	224.957[a]	0.499	0.709

Table 8. Binary logistic regression - Classification Table[a]

			Predicted		
			CI (Binary)		
Observed			.00	1.00	Percentage Correct
Step 1	CQ (Binary)	.00	280	23	92.4
		1.00	26	101	79.5
	Overall Percentage				88.6

a. The cut value is .500

5. Discussion

This study investigated the incidence of biographic factors and CQ aspects on CQ level and exhibition of CQ competences among workers of Kinshasa. A double approach was adopted to answer the research questions, including linear regression and binary logistic regression analyses in order to predict CQ level and exhibition of CQ competences using gender, age, level of education, marital status, place of living, sector of industry, linguistic, meta-cognitive CQ, cognitive CQ and behavioral CQ as predictors. The analysis of data collected for the purpose of this study revealed that all three CQ components are logically predictors of CQ, while only gender displayed a statistically significant incidence on CQ level. In addition to CQ components, gender (1), age, marital status (2) and language group (2) have statistically significant effects with possession of CQ competences.

In line with these results, it is advisable for business leaders to implement CQ training or learning programs to empower their workers towards a teamwork mindset in cross-cultural situations (Azevedo, 2018), where cohabiting groups experience conflicts, cultural misconceptions and difficulties in accepting other cultures (Okyere-Kwakye et al., 2010) or being able to adjust their attitudes and behavior according to cultural diversity (Guðmundsdóttir, 2015). The recommended CQ training or learning programs within enterprises are provided with clues to design an adapted campaign targeting predictive factors in this study to be effective.

Table 9. Binary logistic regression

								95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)[b]	Lower	Upper
Step 1[a]	Meta-cognit. CQ	0.469	0.063	55.981	1	0.000	1.598	1.414	1.807
	Cognitive CQ	0.678	0.106	40.599	1	0.000	1.969	1.599	2.426
	Behaviour CQ	0.706	0.110	41.423	1	0.000	2.025	1.634	2.511
	Gender (1)	-1.491	0.393	14.412	1	0.000	0.225	0.104	0.486
	Age	-0.535	0.236	5.145	1	0.023	0.585	0.369	0.930
	Level of education	0.153	0.153	0.989	1	0.320	1.165	0.862	1.574
	Marital status			15.862	5	0.007			
	Marital status (1)	0.452	0.448	1.019	1	0.313	1.571	0.654	3.777
	Marital status (2)	2.833	0.813	12.146	1	0.000	16.997	3.455	83.621
	Marital status (3)	-3.638	1.927	3.564	1	0.059	0.026	0.001	1.149
	Marital status (4)	-22.073	14535.345	0.000	1	0.999	0.000	0.000	
	Marital status (5)	0.901	0.962	0.878	1	0.349	2.463	0.374	16.222
	District of residence			3.744	3	0.290			
	District of residence (1)	0.903	0.489	3.410	1	0.065	2.467	0.946	6.433
	District of residence (2)	0.649	0.631	1.056	1	0.304	1.913	0.555	6.590
	District of residence (3)	0.932	0.666	1.962	1	0.161	2.541	0.689	9.368
	Sector of industry (1)	-0.220	0.373	0.347	1	0.556	0.803	0.386	1.668
	Language group			4.415	4	0.353			
	Language group (1)	0.198	0.624	0.100	1	0.751	1.219	0.358	4.144
	Language group (2)	-1.006	0.516	3.812	1	0.046	0.366	0.133	1.004
	Language group (3)	-0.466	0.454	1.058	1	0.304	0.627	0.258	1.526
	Language group (4)	-0.536	1.664	0.104	1	0.747	0.585	0.022	15.268
	Constant	-24.835	3.155	61.966	1	0.000	0.000		

a. Variable(s) in the equation: Meta-cognitive CQ, Cognitive CQ, Behaviour CQ, Gender, Age, Level of education, Marital status, District of residence, Sector of industry, Language group.
b. Odds Ratio

Indeed, conducting a ground-based investigation offers a crucial advantage in seeking such a campaign's success, as the designed program takes into account the realities of the terrain rather than relying on individuals' experience, emotion, imagination or un-contextual facts from literature (Ayikwa and De Jager, 2016).

6. Conclusion

Although the reliability of the study findings is not questioned, it is important to caution that they are representative of the workers' current CQ-related situation in Kinshasa. Thus, biographic factors that were not found to be statistically significant in predicting CQ level or possession of CQ competences are not necessarily inutile. Also, results suggesting that workers in Baluba group are less likely to possess CQ competences require further investigation to see if it is a structural or conjunctural phenomenon. Indeed, one of the weaknesses of this study is its cross-sectional nature which is able to capture current causal relationships without asserting that the truth will remain over time, which necessitates a longitudinal study. Indeed, the actual political leadership being led by a member of a Baluba group might influence the way this cultural group members have displayed CQ competences. Hence, in addition to recommending that longitudinal research be conducted, there is also a need for widening the study countrywide, as well as integrating other related aspects such as burnout, cross-cultural adjustment, job performance, job satisfaction, perceived inclusion, workgroups engagement, etc.

It is worth noting that CQ learning programs in the workplace will help Congolese enterprises to increase workers' perceived inclusion into workgroups in a culturally-diverse situation (Alexandraa et al., 2021). Furthermore, in the context of a cross-cultural environment, embedded conflicts as in DR Congo, CQ is a weapon to use to inhibit the tendencies of tension relating to the culture of the workers, in order to enhance attitude and behavioral adjustment as well as job performance, which will lead to businesses achieving their profit goals (Ramalu et al., 2011). Finally, though CQ has often been associated with globalization, cultural differences have multi-levels and contexts of expression including the ethnic, generational, organizational, national and regional ones (Yates and De Oliveira, 2016). Hence, the pertinence of this study in its context.

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