

Developing Senior Ecclesiastical Professionals' Emotional and Cultural Intelligence: A Longitudinal Preliminary Case Study Research Investigation

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ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

Emotional intelligence (EI) and cultural intelligence (CQ) are constructs that have recently received much attention and have been investigated in work contexts. It is possible that a high EI and CQ both contribute generally to improved intercultural and interreligious understanding and dialogue. However, this relationship has hardly been researched in ecclesiastical contexts in Germany. This study investigates the development of EI and CQ during a 12-day training course for developing intercultural and interreligious competencies for senior professionals in an ecclesiastical context over a period of nine months. Pre- and post-test scores of EI and CQ were measured during the training period. Besides the quantitative survey, a literature analysis and participant observation in the training course was used for data collection. It was found that with regard to the EI total scores, all dimensions except the dimension of "appraisal of emotions in the self" improved from the beginning of the training until the end. Looking at the pre- and post-scores of CQ, the scores increased in six participants, and decreased in two.

FULL TEXT

Headnote

Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) and cultural intelligence (CQ) are constructs that have recently received much attention and have been investigated in work contexts. It is possible that a high EI and CQ both contribute generally to improved intercultural and interreligious understanding and dialogue. However, this relationship has hardly been researched in ecclesiastical contexts in Germany. This study investigates the development of EI and CQ during a 12-day training course for developing intercultural and interreligious competencies for senior professionals in an ecclesiastical context over a period of nine months. Pre- and post-test scores of EI and CQ were measured during the training period. Besides the quantitative survey, a literature analysis and participant observation in the training course was used for data collection. It was found that with regard to the EI total scores, all dimensions except the dimension of "appraisal of emotions in the self" improved from the beginning of the training until the end. Looking at the pre- and post-scores of CQ, the scores increased in six participants, and decreased in two.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, Catholic Church, Germany, ecclesiastical professionals,

training, intercultural training course, longitudinal study

After weeks on the road, listening to a language you don't understand, using a currency whose value you don't comprehend, walking down streets you've never walked down before, you discover that your old "I", along with everything you ever learned, is absolutely no use at all in the face of those new challenges, and you begin to realize that, buried deep in your unconscious mind, there is someone much more interesting and adventurous and more open to the world and to new experiences.

Paulo Coelho, 2011,11

Introduction

The Catholic Church in Germany is currently facing various challenges on spiritual, economic, social, cultural, political and intercultural levels (Jenkins 2015; Kasper 2015; Woods Jr 2012). Due to these rapid changes and newly developing challenges, particularly with regard to intercultural and interreligious encounters within ecclesiastical contexts, the Catholic Church is providing new training opportunities not only for employees of the Catholic Church, but also for interested professionals of different denominations and fields of expertise, to participate in intercultural and interreligious training courses. During these training courses, intercultural competencies are developed at cognitive, behavioural and emotional levels (Behrnd & Porzelt 2012; Cargile & Giles 2012; Landis & Brislin 2013). These training courses therefore aim at increasing emotional and cultural intelligences.

The concept of general intelligence is currently a much discussed and highly debated topic (Brouwers & van de Vijver 2015; Conway & Kovacs 2015; Ortiz 2015). Since the 1980s intelligence has been referred to in terms of different foci on areas of intelligence; and emotional intelligence (EI) garnered much interest in organisational and work contexts. Since then EI has been much researched in leadership contexts (Caruso, Fleming & Spector 2004; George 2000; Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee 2013). High EI is usually valued and viewed in a very positive light (Caruso 2015; Sax & Gewertz 2015).

At the same time, especially during the past few years, the concept of cultural intelligence (CQ) has come to play a more prominent role in organisational and work contexts (Ang, Van Dyne & Koh 2006; Earley & Peterson 2004; Earley, Ang & Tan 2006) in terms of globalisation processes and in view of the question of what is needed to deal more effectively with increased diversity and cultural hybridity in global work contexts (Ng, Van Dyne & Ang 2009).

The purpose of this article is to report on the development of EI and CQ in German senior professionals working in the Catholic Church and who attended a 12-day training course on becoming messengers of "intercultural and interreligious mediators" over a period of nine months. The paper also explores the relationship of the two defined concepts to gain deeper insights into the relationships and their meaning for the particular selected sample. This article thus hopes to contribute to increasing the understanding of the importance and the development of EI and CQ through intercultural and interreligious training in the ecclesiastical context in Germany.

Context of research

Both concepts of EI and CQ seem to play an important role in our increasingly complex and diverse organisational and work situations. The Catholic Church in Germany, operating as an organisation, is currently facing a diverse range of unexpected challenges. The church is undergoing restructuring processes (Gummer 2014), experiencing decreasing membership numbers (Zapp 2012) as well as increased multiculturalism within the church (Fleishman

2007), and undergoing a consolidation of congregations (German Catholic Bishops' Conference Report 2012). Since 2010, the Catholic organisation for adult education has increased training in intercultural topics and mediation to contribute to peaceful and non-violent conflict resolution across cultures and religions (Personal communication, July 2015).

Due to rapid changes in the Catholic Church worldwide, its approach to multi-, inter- and cross-cultural issues is currently shifting towards more effectively dealing with these challenges on all levels. In Spain there is concern about survival due to multi-cultural demographic influences, new trends in religious scholarships and the vitality of popular religious culture (Rawlings 2002). Australia has become more multi-cultural as a result of post-war migration, and the church there has taken steps to address the issue of multi-culturalism and possible intergroup conflict (Bouma 1995). Allievi (2014) points out that the Catholic Church in Italy, as a latecomer among migration countries, has found it difficult to acknowledge the new culture and religious pluralism. Although their corrective steps might be slow, positive signs and actions in favour of migrants can be currently observed. These few examples are an indication that the Catholic Church is aware of the need to better accommodate multi-culturalism and is implementing a variety of actions to equip the Church and its employees to effectively deal with issues around multi-, inter- and cross-cultural issues. With regard to these challenges, German senior professionals in the ecclesiastical context are trained to improve intercultural and interreligious competencies in training programmes. These training programmes will hopefully also develop the EI and CQ of the participants thereby improving their skills in dealing with the current situation within ecclesiastical contexts.

Emotional Intelligence

The concept of EI has been defined in many different ways during the past few decades, with most of the definitions sharing selected theoretical underpinnings, such as: an awareness of one's own emotions, an awareness of emotions in others, an understanding of emotions, and the ability to manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others (Bar-On 1997; Goleman 1995, 1998; Mayer, Roberts & Barsade 2008; Salovey & Mayer 1990).

The once nebulous concept of EI has been rigorously researched over the past few decades and linked to various organisational variables such as positive work attitudes, behaviour and outcomes (Carmeli 2003). It has also been linked to leadership (Barling, Slater & Kevin Kelloway 2000), job performance (Lopes, Grewal, Kadis, Gall & Salovey 2006), work locus of control (Johnson, Batey & Holdsworth 2009), and job satisfaction (Kafetsios & Zampetakis 2008) to name but a few. The relationship between EI and intercultural and interreligious contexts, however, still needs to be explored in more depth. Emotional intelligence is only mentioned in a few publications that deal with intercultural and interreligious contexts (Abdool & Drinkwater 2005; Arweck, Nesbitt & Jackson 2005; Milan & Damini 2012), and has not been thoroughly explored to date.

It was expected that EI would have been researched in the Catholic Church context, but very few studies emerged and did not have the same focus as this research. These studies addressed different elements such as EI amongst elderly nuns in the Catholic Church (Billard, Greer, Sneek, Sheers & Merrick 2005), whilst McGlone, Ortiz and Karney (2010) looked at psychological selection practices using assessment constructs such as EI. Exploration of EI in the German Catholic Church therefore needs further investigation. As pointed out, EI is regarded as important in work and organisational settings and should therefore also be regarded as important in church and more specifically in Catholic contexts. Vale (2014) points out that effective ministry requires pastor competence in four areas: personal soul care, emotional intelligence, ministry education, and leadership. It seems that there is a void in the exploration of EI in intercultural and interreligious contexts, especially in the training of clergymen in EI. According to Hendron, Irving and Taylor (2014), to date there appears to be little exploration of EI in religious

contexts.

It has been shown that EI may be enhanced through training (Grant 2007; Lopes, Salovey & Straus 2003; Slaski & Cartwright 2003). Based on the findings by Hendron, Irving and Taylor (2014) that EI levels of clergymen are lower than expected and below those of other diverse populations, they came to the conclusion that religious systems may unfortunately not be conclave of emotional abilities as previously assumed. Training in this regard is therefore needed.

Cultural Intelligence

Although globalisation is taking its course and encounters across cultures are on the increase, growing cultural diversity is creating challenges for individuals, groups and organisations in the 21st century (Mayer 2008). There has been increased research on topics such as intercultural communication, intercultural competence as well as conflict and its management across cultures (Adler 2002; Mayer & Boness 2013). However, we still do not know why certain individuals are more successful and effective in intercultural settings than others (Earley & Ang 2003).

CQ has been recited as "the art of leading cultural complexity" (Plum 2009). Referring to culture, Earley and Ang (2003) developed the construct of CQ to study the individual competencies which improve effectivity in culturally diverse situations. The concept of CQ acknowledges the reality of globalisation (Earley & Ang 2003) and is based on the theories of intelligence according to Sternberg (1986). Cultural intelligence is defined as "an individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings" (Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Yee Kg, Templer, Tay & Chandrasekar 2007) and is a multidimensional construct which is targeted at situations involving intercultural interactions arising from differences in race, ethnicity and nationality.

The four-factor model of cultural intelligence is based on a four-factor framework that synthesises volumes of material and perspectives on intelligence and intercultural leadership. The four factors mentioned below - which are part of managerial cultural intelligence - are interrelated (Van Dyne, Ang & Livermore 2010):

- motivational CQ (showing interest, confidence and drive to adapt across cultures)
- cognitive CQ (understanding cross-cultural issues and differences)
- metacognitive CQ (strategising and making sense of culturally diverse experiences - level of conscious cultural awareness during cross-cultural interactions)
- behavioural CQ (changing verbal and non-verbal actions appropriately when interacting cross-culturally)

Cultural intelligence is a complex and multidimensional construct which influences business and organisations on the described levels (Ang & Inkpen 2008). Only a few recent publications have focused on CQ in ecclesiastical or church contexts (Rah, 2010). Rah (2010) highlights that developing CQ means to dig deeper into the biblical, theological, cultural and sociological context to really understand its meaning. However, the research literature on CQ with regard to conceptual theorising has advanced during the past years (e.g. Triandis 2006; Janssens & Brett 2006), while empirical research is still limited, although promising (Ang et al. 2007).

As cultural intelligence became more of a buzzword, more research on the theoretical and empirical foundation was published. The concept then started to become associated with various organisational variables such as cultural judgement and decisionmaking, cultural adaptation and task performance (Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Ng,

Templer, Tay & Chandrasekar 2007); training and education for global work assignments (Earley & Peterson 2004); successful interaction across cultures (Triandis 2006); team member acceptance, global identity in multicultural teams and interpersonal trust in multicultural teams (Ang & Van Dyne 2015). Cultural intelligence has also been linked to mindfulness (Thomas 2006), but not in spiritual or religious contexts.

Cultural intelligence should be embedded in the Catholic Church, but there is little evidence of this. Rah (2010) refers to the importance of cultural intelligence for a changing church, while Livermore (2009; 2012) explains the importance of cultural intelligence for ministries and the need to apply this across churches. The importance of cultural intelligence was investigated in the USA within the church context (Ramirez 2010). However, it became clear that CQ is not a widely investigated construct in the church context, and especially within the Catholic Church. These limited explorations of CQ within the church context indicate the need for further exploration, since cultural intelligence has become a key skill in functioning globally within multicultural organisational work contexts. There is little evidence that CQ has been explored in interreligious contexts. This void in the literature necessitates further explorations of CQ not only in intercultural and interreligious contexts, but especially within the Catholic Church.

Studies indicate that CQ can be enhanced through training (Helms, Rutti, Lorenz, Ramsey & Armstrong 2014; Livermore 2015; Wood & St. Peters 2014). Leander (2014) found significant relationships between CQ and leadership practices among pastors in diversity-orientated churches, indicating the importance of a cultural intelligent orientation.

The connection of EI and CQ in intercultural and interreligious contexts

From the discussion above it is evident that a systematic and thorough investigation of EI and CQ as individual concepts within religious contexts is limited. In combination these concepts have been hardly explored. As a means of stimulating and enhancing intercultural and interreligious functioning, this topic has not been addressed at all, especially in the Catholic Church domain and specifically in Germany. The need for a preliminary longitudinal case study to investigate this has therefore been long overdue.

Research methodology

Research design and approach

The study made use of a mixed method design by applying a quantitative (questionnaire surveys) as well as a qualitative (participant observation, collateral talks and literature analysis) approach (Leavy 2014). More specifically, a qualitative longitudinal case study strategy was used (Beverton & Millward 2004). Its foundation is grounded in an interpretative hermeneutic paradigm (Cheldelin, Druckman & Fast 2003; Geertz 1987; Salkind 2012). Hermeneutics are used to supplement a descriptive approach by seeking to understand actions and expressions of individuals (Florent-Treacy 2011). The focus is thus on the exploration of a temporary developmental process (O'Reilly 2012) without reproducing what the researcher expects to find or what the researchers has read in the literature (Creswell 2007). At the same time, the case study approach is seen as a narrative of the future self of the narrators which are already known at a subconscious level during the research (Florent-Treacy 2011). The qualitative approach uses a naturalistic perspective to measure the development of EI and CQ within a culture- and context-specific setting (Patton 2002), which in this case is the Catholic Church in Germany. An in-depth understanding of the Church and its professionals is needed and this was addressed through the exploration of "thick descriptions" (Geertz 1987).

Research setting and sample

Data was collected during a 12-day intercultural competence training course for senior professionals in the Catholic Church in Essen, Germany, spread over a period of nine months. The aim of the programme was to develop the intercultural and interreligious competence of participants. Training methods used during the course included theoretical input on culture, intercultural competence and spirituality, as well as group discussions, individual reflections, case study analysis and the development of best practices. Space was created to reflect on personal progress from a qualitative perspective.

The training programme was advertised in newspapers, on the internet, as well as via networks of the Catholic Church. The course language was German and any person who was interested could participate. Eight participants attended the course and therefore the sample of this research project consisted of these eight senior professionals (the total population) attending the intercultural competence training course.

Table 1 provides a description of the characteristics of the sample.

Data collection methods

Prior to the commencement of the programme, prospective participants were invited to participate in the study. The researchers explained the purpose of the study, as well as the ethical considerations pertaining to the investigation. Hard copies of the questionnaires were subsequently distributed to participants for completion at two points in time, namely the first day and the last day of the 12-day training course. The survey questionnaires included a biographical and demographical questionnaire, the Assessing Emotions Scale (33-item self-report version) and the Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire (Ang et al. 2007). Participant observation was conducted throughout the training course by one of the researchers.

The Assessing Emotions Scale (EI) is a 33-item self-report inventory focusing on typical emotional intelligence developed by Schutte et al. (1998), including statements, such as "I know when to speak about my personal problems to others", "I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people", "Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living" or "I compliment others when they have done something well".

Respondents rate themselves on the items using a five-point Likert scale. Total scale scores are calculated by reverse coding items 5, 28 and 33, and then summing all items. Scores can range from 33 to 165, with higher scores indicating more characteristic emotional intelligence. Several studies have reported that women score somewhat higher on the measure than men. In some studies this difference has been statistically significant (e.g. Carmeli & Josman 2006; Ciarrochi et al. 2001; Pau & Croucher 2003; Saklofske, Austin, Galloway & Davidson 2007; Schutte et al. 1998; Van Rooy, Alonso & Viswesvaran 2005). In other studies the difference has not been statistically significant (e.g. Wing, Schutte & Byrne 2006). Internal consistency for the subscales is as follows: Perception of Emotion, .76, .80; Managing Own Emotions, .63, .78; Managing Others' Emotions, .66, .66 and Utilisation of Emotion, .55 (Ciarrochi et al. 2001; 2002). Test-retest reliability is reported as .78 for total scores (Schutte et al. 1998). Schutte et al. (1998) also found that scores on the Assessing Emotions Scale were substantially related to greater attention to emotions, greater clarity of emotions, and less alexithymia.

Cultural intelligence (CQ) was measured by the Cultural Intelligence questionnaire (Ang et al. 2007) which is a 20-item scale, measuring the following dimensions: metacognitive CQ ($\alpha = 0.76/0.70$); cognitive CQ ($\alpha = 0.80/0.88$); motivational CQ ($\alpha = 0.79/0.75$); and behavioural CQ ($\alpha = 0.82/0.87$). Statements in the questionnaire, for example, include: "I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions", "I enjoy living in cultures

that are unfamiliar to me" or "I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations".

Data analysis

According to Collis and Hussey (2003), quantitative data can be analysed using other ways than merely statistical ways of analysis. Quantitative data can be processed systematically by the qualitative theoretical ordering of variables in elaboration tables (Glaser & Strauss 1967). In this study, the systematic ordering and analysis of the quantitative data were processed to identify the potential underlying findings in the data which were then interpreted qualitatively. The EI and CQ scores of the participants, both individually and collectively, were analysed, interpreted and described with reference to the two defined points in time in each of the eight participants. Scores on the two measurements of EI and CQ for each individual were compared in terms of their development from the first measurement to the second measurement. Therefore, no inferential statistical analysis was conducted due to the qualitative nature of this research and the small set of data ($n = 8$) in a quantitative context.

Quality criteria

As the study was conducted within a non-positivistic paradigm, the concepts of validity and reliability were reconstructed in terms of qualitative research criteria (Lamnek 2005). The qualitative criteria applied were confirmability, credibility, transferability and dependability (Mayer 2011). Additionally, "intersubjective reconstruction and indication of the research process, empirical anchoring and communicative validation" were also implemented as part of the quality criteria (von Steinke 2008: 324).

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance for the project was obtained from the Bischöfliches Generalvikariat, Bistum Essen, Essen, Germany, the institutional base for the training courses. During the entire study, ethical considerations were adhered to, such as confidentiality, anonymity, transparency, respect towards the research participants, and informed consent.

Limitations of the study

This study also posed some limitations: Firstly, the study was limited to primary and secondary source analysis. Secondly, the sample researched was rather small and provided only qualitative information about individual and collective changes with regard to EI and CQ. Therefore, this study can only be seen as an exploratory case study that provides longitudinal insights into the development of individuals who attended the described course. Finally, the findings are not generalisable in quantitative terms and refer to qualitative research criteria only. Thus, it is critical to note that the data only focuses on the individual development of participants over a defined period of time and under specific contextual circumstances.

Research findings

The research findings relate to the question of how EI and CQ developed in total in the eight participants during the course of the training course.

The data show that with regard to the characteristics of the participants, most of them were between 41 to 50 and 51 to 60 years old. The majority of participants were female. The majority of the participants were German, four individuals were married, three single and one divorced (see Table 1).

The findings on the individual EI scores (Table 2) show that from the first point in time measurement to the second point in time measurement, five out of eight participants increased their EI scores. In three individuals (including two male and one female participant), the EI scores decreased.

Focusing on the EI total scores per dimension, the entire scores across all the dimensions, except one dimension increased. The only dimension which decreased in score was the dimension of appraisal of emotions in the self (AES). The dimensions of emotional regulation of the self (ERS), emotional regulation of others (ERO), and utilisation of emotions in problem-solving (UEPS) increased slightly, while the dimension of appraisal of emotions in others (AEO), emotional expression (EE) and uncategorised increased considerably (see Table 3). Uncategorised included items 6, 8, 19, 21 and 26. For example, item 6 states: "Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important."

With regard to the development of CQ over the two measurement points in time, the total points of pre- and post-score with regard to the individuals were highest in one female (225 total scores) and one male (211 total scores) participant. The lowest individual total score was scored by a female, single pastoral care manager. Looking at the pre- and post-scores, the scores increased in six participants, whilst they decreased in two participants - one female, married pastoral care manager and one male, divorced pastoral care manager.

Focusing on the individual CQ scores per dimension, the following can be observed: the main increase in individual scores was experienced by a married, female individual who works as a counsellor for the Catholic Church. This participant's highest increases were followed by the increase of a male pastoral referee (Table 4). In total, six of the individual scores increased in the individuals, whilst two decreased.

Focusing on the CQ collective total scores (Table 6) in terms of the four dimensions, the dimension of metacognition increased mainly by 22 points, followed by an increase of 14 points in the dimension of cognition, the dimension of behaviour with an increase of five scores and finally the increase of four scores in the dimension of motivation.

Comparing the findings of the EI and the CQ scores, P1, P5 and P7 decreased in their individual scores with regard to EI and CQ. The other participants (P2, P3, P4, P6 and P8) improved with regard to EI and CQ. Focusing on the collective scores, the collective scores for EI and for CQ increased.

Discussion

There appears to be a megatrend in organisations across the globe to develop the EI and CQ of leadership (Crowne 2012; Hays 1999), particularly in light of its positive association with leadership practices (Hoffman & Frost 2006; Wong & Law 2002) and the global demand for cultural intelligence (Manning 2003; Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, Van Dyne & Annen 2011; Westby 2007). The purpose of the study was thus to explore the development of EI and CQ during a 12-day training intervention. The aim of the training programme was to develop the intercultural and interreligious competence of senior professionals in an ecclesiastical context over a nine-month period. The research has shown that by training intercultural and interreligious competences using cognitive, affective and behavioural methods of training, the development of emotional and cultural intelligences are affected and increased.

The more salient findings of the study seem to indicate that in terms of the individual EI scores, the majority of participants' scores increased from the first to the second measurement. The collective scores per dimension, namely appraisal of emotions in others (AEO), emotional expression (EE), emotional regulation of the self (ERS),

emotional regulation of others (ERO), utilisation of emotions in problem-solving (UEPS) and what is classified as "Uncategorised" increased, except for appraisal in emotions in the self (AES), which actually decreased. The biggest numerical growth was for the dimension of appraisal of emotions in others (AEO). In relation to CQ, the majority of scores also increased, with metacognitive CQ (an individual's cultural consciousness and awareness during cross-cultural interactions) and cognitive CQ (an individual's knowledge of the norms, traditions and conventions of other cultures) reflecting the greatest improvement. Motivational CQ and behavioural CQ reflected the least development. The general trend was collective development with regard to both constructs (EI and CQ) across the two measuring points.

The results of this study highlight a number of important points. Firstly, it appears to be possible to develop both EI (Grant 2007; Hendron, Irving & Taylor 2014; Lopes, Salovey & Straus 2003; Slaski & Cartwright 2003) and CQ (Helms, Rutti, Lorenz, Ramsey & Armstrong 2014; Livermore 2015; McNett & Bird 2002; Wood & St. Peters 2014) through training interventions, which are consistent with the studies cited above. These studies were conducted in a number of different organisational and cultural settings. Given the marginal increase in most cases as well as the marginal decrease in some scores, the gradual evolution of these types of intelligence should be seen as the norm rather than the exception (Alon & Higgins 2005). It was surprising that the collective score for the EI dimension of appraisal of emotions in the self (AES) dropped. This could be attributed to the religious practice of "self-denial" and "dying to self" in the interest of putting the needs and interests of "others" first. The most significant development was the EI dimension of appraisal of emotions of others (AEO). This is an extremely significant finding in the context of the training programme, because this kind of behaviour or capacity is critical from the perspective of emotional intelligence as well as intercultural intelligence. This signifies that one is aware of or in touch with the realities of the "other" as one crosses the boundary into different cultural domains (Brislin & Worthley 2006). The most surprising result is possibly the fluctuation in the scores between participants. One can only speculate, given the complexity and turbulent nature of society and thus the numerous and diverse extraneous variables which could have impacted these findings. Weigel (2015) reflects on the immediate internal church environment of the participants, which he summarises as "a German Church in crisis" - characterised by the increasing disconnect between clergy and laity, largely empty churches, and the crisis of belief in late modernity. Given the difference in development between the metacognitive and cognitive CQ on the one hand, and the motivational and behavioural CQ on the other, the study seems to suggest that it is more difficult to develop motivational and behavioural CQ, which are characterised by the showing of interest, confidence and drive to adapt across cultures, as well as the appropriate changing of verbal and non-verbal actions when interacting cross-culturally.

Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of the study highlight the possibility of enhancing EI and CQ through an intercultural and interreligious training intervention within an ecclesiastical context. An interesting finding seems to be the significant development in the EI dimension of appraisal of emotions of others (AEO) compared to other dimensions, as well as the predominant development in the metacognitive and cognitive CQ dimensions compared to the motivational and behavioural CQ dimensions. Organisations are thus compelled to embrace emotional and cultural intelligence, due to the impact of increased globalisation on institutions as well as on organisational practices. This is even more applicable to the church which has always been an intercultural institution. Willingness to embrace this form of training is likely to result in improved organisational cohesion and performance, as well as intercultural and interreligious understanding. The increasing multiculturalism of the German Church, also due to the influx of other nationalities, makes the development of EI and CQ skills not only more relevant, but also a strategic imperative.

The limitations of this study present a number of opportunities and avenues for future research. The introduction of other variables, for example, personality measures, could also explain the variation in the results by exploring the relationship between personality or organisational commitment and the EI/CQ intelligence construct. Future research could also further explore the relatively new construct of CQ, since some scholars regard it as a subset of social intelligence (SI). A change in design from quantitative to a more explorative qualitative approach could also reveal complexities in the characteristics of the sample. This may perhaps explain the fluctuation in scores between participants and across the two constructs.

Acknowledgements

We thank the Catholic Church in Germany for commissioning this research project and all the individuals who participated.

Declaration of interest

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationship(s) that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Sidebar

About the Authors

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DETAILS

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|---------------------------|--|
| Subject: | Religion; Leadership; Studies; Personality; Emotional intelligence |
| Location: | Germany |
| Publication title: | Journal of Intercultural Communication; Göteborg |
| Issue: | 41 |
| Pages: | N_A |

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Publication year: | 2016 |
| Publication date: | Jul 2016 |
| Publisher: | Immigrant Institute |
| Place of publication: | Göteborg |
| Country of publication: | Sweden |
| Publication subject: | Anthropology, Sociology, Linguistics, Communications |
| Source type: | Scholarly Journals |
| Language of publication: | English |
| Document type: | Journal Article |
| ProQuest document ID: | 1963398806 |
| Document URL: | https://search.proquest.com/docview/1963398806?accountid=14648 |
| Copyright: | Copyright Immigrant Institute Jul 2016 |
| Last updated: | 2017-11-14 |
| Database: | Social Science Premium Collection,ProQuest Central |

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