

# Experience Abroad and Its Relation to Intercultural Competence and Cross-Cultural Tolerance

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## Abstract

Successfully managing diversity is becoming more and more important in today's working environment. In this context, the development of intercultural competencies is of significant importance. The presented study gives an overview of the relationship between dimensions of multicultural effectiveness and two factors that are relevant in diversity settings: xenophobia, and international experience. It is shown that, while sole personality dimensions only have limited impact on a positive attitude towards persons with a migration background, a multicultural personality, as a whole, is very important in this context. Furthermore, a person with international experience shows higher values in open-mindedness, but is often also characterized by a lower degree of emotional stability.

**Keywords:** cultural competence, cultural empathie, identity, stress, cross-cultural psychology

## 1. Introduction

Considering profound social and economic changes during the last decades, society and organizations are currently affected by increasing heterogenization and diversification. Developments that play an important role in this context are demographic change and progressive globalization processes. The social structure in Germany is characterized by a reverse gender ratio. Constantly low birth rates as well as an increase in life expectancy will induce the almost double proportion of retired people in relation to employable persons by 2060 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2007). The described demographic development is combined with radical sociopolitical and economic consequences. In regards to a determination of the qualified domestic labor force, businesses are threatened by a shortage of skilled workers and managers (Esslinger, 2007). In light of the above, the human capital of fringe groups gains a significant meaning in work life. Besides women, this includes, for example, people with an immigration background and older employees. The successful integration of these groups into professional life and the usage of their potential is becoming a key competitive factor. At the same time, globalization induces economic integration beyond national borders, increases international cooperation as well as competitive pressure. On a national level, these global developments, especially the mobility of employees within the European Union, lead to an ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse population (Stuber, 2009). The German population currently consists of 19.5 % immigrants and, according to statistical projection, is forecasted to increase to 40 % by 2040 (Bundesregierung, 2012).

The afore mentioned developments are intensified by a change in values which contributes to an individualization and, in consequence, a diversification of society (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2005; Stuber, 2009).

As a consequence, organizations become more diverse and 'multicolored', not only in their socio-demographic structure, but also in regards to their employees' value systems. Considering the previously mentioned basic parameters, companies are facing the challenge of integrating existing diversity successfully and to utilize its potential to the fullest. Only with this focus an organization can stay competitive and sustainable; especially if the increasing international competitive pressure is considered.

In this context, a main focus point is the reduction of prejudices and social discrimination accompanied by the development of intercultural competencies. The goal is to not only prevent possible negative consequences of existing diversity, but to benefit from untapped potential (House, 2006; Plummer, 2003; Hohl, 2013). To help to support this objective, Diversity Management can provide a valuable framework.

### 1.1 Diversity

The term diversity refers to the degree of objective and subjective differences within an organization on individual, group-related and organizational levels (Trump, 2006; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007).

On an individual level, diversity describes the multiplicity of partial identities within the self-concept of a person (Trump, 2006). This refers to the fact that a person can feel part of and be a member of different groups at the same time. The specific combination of these partial identities forms the social identity of a person and makes he or she a unique individual that is, in itself, characterized by diversity (Tajfel, 1978; Sackmann et al., 2002). On a group level, diversity illustrates the heterogeneity of a team regarding certain characteristics. The composition of a group can be homogenous when looking at certain characteristics (e.g. cultural background) and, at the same time, relatively heterogeneous when looking at others (e.g. age) (Sackmann et al., 2002). On the organizational level, diversity refers to the existence of multiple different groups that result from the group memberships of the individual organization members (Trump, 2006).

Every organization is, in view of this, characterized by diversity. It influences the behavior and the success of each organization member and, eventually, the performance of the organization as a whole. On an individual level, diversity leads to a wider base for stereotypes, prejudices and social discrimination. Due to these selective perception processes, a person is not acknowledged as an individual any more, but is instead attributed to the characteristics of the group he or she belongs to. For the people affected, negative effects on work motivation and productivity are to be expected (Erdönmez, 2004). In addition, the employee may not be entrusted with a job according to his or her potential (Gebert, 2004). In contrast, confrontations with diversity can, if consciously experienced and reflected, represent a unique chance for personal learning experiences and the development of intercultural competencies.

Possible negative effects of diversity on a group level can be explained with the *Theory of Similarity* (Jans, 2004). Apart from that, social categorization processes lead to a formation of ingroups and outgroups. Both processes are very likely to result in communication problems and intensify group conflicts, and suspicion. Consequently, group cohesion is weakened and performance is diminished (Northcraft et al., 1996). Conversely, it is important to note that group diversity also implies valuable potential. Different backgrounds and mentalities, for example, increase a group's creativity, promote innovative ideas and, therefore, improve problem solving skills and lead to higher performance (Triandis et al., 1994; Cox, 2001).

The complexity of these relations illustrates that, in order to counteract negative effects of diversity and utilize its immense potentials, it is very important to implement a structured and comprehensive Diversity Management (Rosken, 2010). If diversity is not managed by an organization, economic disadvantages are to be expected (Stuber, 2008).

For a successful implementation of Diversity Management, it is necessary that employees actively participate in the process and form a new diversity-oriented organizational culture through their own actions (Schreyögg, 1991). It should not be underestimated that the formal change of values and supporting systems does not guarantee that they will be lived and embraced on an operational level (Rosken, 2010). In consequence, personnel development measures on an individual level, especially with focus on management positions, are of great importance. In this context, trainings should focus on creating awareness of existing social categorization processes, stereotypes, prejudices and social discrimination. Their reduction is a first step to develop intercultural competencies, which, in turn, enable and facilitate successful and effective communication in a diverse work environment (Erdönmez, 2004; Lloyd & Härtel, 2010). In a study with 1200 Australian employees, Lloyd and Härtel (2010) could prove that intercultural competencies influence the interaction in culturally diverse work groups and, consequently, improve not only team atmosphere and integration, but also personal evaluation of the team.

The following paragraphs elaborate relevant theoretical backgrounds of intercultural competence to demonstrate its effects in the context of a diverse working environment.

### 1.2 Intercultural Competence

In order to understand the meaning of intercultural competence in an interaction marked by diversity, reflecting on the relations between culture, intercultural interactions and intercultural competence is helpful.

Thomas (1993) defines culture as a universal, but for a society, organization or group very typical, orientation system. This orientation system influences the perception, attitudes and behavior of every member of the respective system. The basis for the development of cultures is that the need for orientation is firmly anchored in human identity. Cultural codes have a coordination function and facilitate the interaction and cooperation within a group. In order to be able to function effectively, human beings constantly develop cultures in different social settings (Thomas, 2003; Thomas & Utler, 2012).

An intercultural situation occurs when individuals with different cultural backgrounds interact with each other. In today's living and working environments, which are characterized by complexity and diversity, intercultural communication has become a significant part of everyday life. In intercultural interactions, the cultural orientation systems of both communication parties are activated, but generally do not give orientation in regards to the behavior of the other person. Known values, norms and behaviors fail as evaluation standards and, in consequence, provoke incorrect reactions, misunderstandings and insecurities (Thomas, 2003; Thomas & Utler, 2012). In order to maintain a certain level of behavioral confidence under these challenging conditions, it is likely that a person resorts to stereotypes and prejudices, which give one a frame of reference and orientation (Thomas, 2006). More important though, these attribution processes inhibit adequate successful communication.

Research in the field of intercultural competence raises the question of which characteristics, attitudes and skills are essential for the effective communication between people that have different cultural backgrounds.

Despite multifaceted and numerous studies in this field, scientific literature still lacks a homogenous conceptualization and definition of the term intercultural competence. With the goal of achieving an agreement for this issue, a Delphi-study, in which 23 well-known scientists with intercultural expertise participated, was conducted. A definition that received the highest level of acceptance understands intercultural competence as "*The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes.*" (Deardoff, 2006, p. 247). Although the definition only roughly specifies the content of the construct and, therefore, illustrates the difficulty of reaching a generally accepted and concrete understanding of the term, it also indicates two important external criteria: efficiency and adequacy. These can be found in different models and illustrate two basic meta-concepts of intercultural competence (Müller & Gelbrich, 2001; Spitzberg, 2000; Mertesacker, 2010).

For further examination of the characteristics of intercultural competence, a methodical systematization and differentiation of its elements is helpful. Thus far, list- and structure models dominate scientific literature (e.g. Gertsen, 1990; Bolten, 2007; Müller & Gelbrich, 2001). They focus on an additive listing of relevant characteristics and, by their majorities, divide them into emotional, cognitive and behavioral components. Although these models often lack empirical evidence and are characterized by incompleteness and randomness, they give a valuable initial orientation when approaching the concept of intercultural competence (Straub et al., 2010). The characteristics related to intercultural competence are interdependent and complementary. It is important to note that they are not to be considered an idealistic personality profile, but that their relevance always has to be questioned based on the context. (Straub et al., 2010; Barmeyer & Davoine, 2011). In addition to the competencies of the individual, the social environment and the interaction between person and situation should also be considered (Stahl, 1998; Thomas, 2003).

Gaining intercultural competence is a complex learning and development process. It is always initiated by the confrontation with behavior that, due to the own cultural background, does not meet the expectations. By reflecting on these incidents, intercultural experiences are consciously lived and allow for intercultural learning. The focus should be on informing and reflecting the own reference systems as well as that of the one of the foreign culture.

In this context, personality traits, on the one hand, represent the basis of attaining competence and, on the other hand, are subject to change and can, in spite of their general stability, be developed in critical life situations, like a stay abroad. Zimmermann and Neyer (2013), for example, found that stays abroad during studying make the individual more open-minded, agreeable and emotionally balanced. This is primarily attributed to new international contacts.

The above mentioned explanations concerning intercultural competence insinuate that scientific research in this field is characterized by very heterogeneous considerations. However, it is not controversial that there are general characteristics, attitudes and motivations that support intercultural learning and facilitate communication in intercultural interactions. Differentiated empirical results prove relations between personality, attitudes and knowledge, as well as motivation and international success (e.g. Van Oudenhoven et al., 2002; Caligiuri, 2000; Genkova & Huber, 2011; Chen et al., 2010). These elements of intercultural competence should be further examined in regards to their contextual and relative meaning, so that their practice-oriented integration into the business world, especially in recruiting, training and development, can be advanced. Although a consistent theoretical framework may not exist in the near future, a context-specific examination of relevant connections is of great value and importance nowadays, due to diverse living and working environments.

When focusing on the development of intercultural competence, the understanding of how individual differences are perceived and how different groups and their members are approached should be a main focus of reflection.

Only when existing, often unconscious, categorizations are revealed and critically questioned, the possibility of effective intercultural communication and an active diversity culture exists.

In contrast to the background of social identity theory (SIT) and the theory of self-categorization, social psychological research has developed different models for the reduction of discrimination and, in consequence, the development of a diversity culture (Farwick, 2009).

One approach for improving intergroup relations aims for the elimination of categorization (reduction of salience) in both, the in- and outgroup. This process is also referred to as decategorization (Kessler & Mummendey, 2007). According to Brewer and Miller (1984), one option of decategorizing is the personalization of contact. Correspondingly, one basic assumption of the decategorization model is that frequent personal contact leads to a reduction of attribution mistakes, judgment biases and discriminating behaviors. The determination of the two groups is eliminated and people perceive each other as unique individuals, each with their own specific characteristics (e.g. Bettencourt, Croak, & Miller, 1992). A point of criticism is the missing generalization of experiences. Often, positive experiences of an interpersonal contact situation do not affect the view on an entire foreign group, but instead are limited to the perception of the individuals involved (Farwick, 2009).

The model of recategorization proclaims improvements of intergroup relations through the rearrangement of existing group categories into a common, superior, category (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). The formerly foreign group becomes part of the new and extended group definition and profits from ingroup preferability; the characteristics of its members are evaluated more positively and the focus is on similarities rather than on differences (Kessler & Mummendey, 2007). Critical remarks relate to the fact that for this theoretical model, to be applicable and effective in practice, the willingness of persons involved to give up previous categorizations, is necessary. Due to aspiration for social identity and respective fears, especially in the context of migration, these conditions are often not met (Brewer & Gaertner, 2001). According to the social identity approach, the identity of an individual is based on the membership in not only one, but numerous categories. As a consequence, the model of dual identity (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) is built upon the assumption that recategorization on a more inclusive level does not require giving up the original categorization. Correspondingly, according to this approach, maintaining subgroup identities, accompanied by the introduction of a common, superior category is the best strategy for improving inter-group relations (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002). Hornsey and Hogg (2002) could prove that, compared to a singular categorization on a superior level, a double categorization leads to a more positive attitude towards the foreign group. As subgroup identities are maintained, this model involves less the threat of identity losses (Hewstone, 2004).

## 2. Method, Hypotheses and Sample

The empirical study at hand deals with the construct of intercultural effectiveness in diverse work settings. The focus is on differences in the personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness depending on existing international experience, as well as their effect on toleration of foreigners. For these purposes, the following hypotheses were formed:

Hypothesis 1: *Persons who have already lived abroad possess higher characteristics in the personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness than persons that have not experienced a longer stay abroad.*

Hypothesis 2: *The personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness predict low xenophobia.*

Hypothesis 3: *The personality dimensions Social Initiative and Cultural Empathy moderate the relationship between the dimensions Open-mindedness, Flexibility and Emotional Stability and xenophobia. The higher the values for Social Initiative and Cultural Empathy, the stronger the influence of the other personality dimensions on the attitude towards persons with a migration background.*

In addition to questions concerning socio demographic factors (27 items), the instrument is comprised of three parts and only consists of existing and validated scales. The first part is composed of a scale by Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber and Waldzus (2003) (18 items), which surveys: *Identification with one's own German group* (6 items), *Identification with the superordinate category of Europeans* (5 items) and *Attitude towards Russians, Turks and other ethnic minorities* (7 Items). The latter can be divided into several subscales, namely: *Sympathy, interest in inter-group contact, Sympathetic behavioral intentions towards the foreign group and Tolerance towards the foreign group.* In the second part of the instrument, the personality of respondents is measured with the *Multicultural Personality Questionnaire* (MPQ) by van der Zee and van Oudenhoven (2000). It contains 79 items and covers five intercultural personality factors that predict multicultural effectiveness: *Cultural Empathy* (18 items), *Open-mindedness* (18 items), *Emotional Stability* (20 items), *Social Initiative* (17 Items) and *Flexibility* (18 items) which are rated on a five-point Likert scale. In the third part of the

questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate xenophobic attitudes on a four-point Likert scale. In this context, a shortened version of the scale *Schülerbefragung des Kriminologisches Forschungsinstituts Niedersachsen* (Strobl & Kuehnel, 2000) was used.

The sample consists of 435 persons, of which 135 are male (31%) and 300 females (69%). The age varied between 19 and 56 years ( $M = 26.3$  years,  $SD = 7.06$ ). The sample consists of both persons with German ( $N = 279$ , 64%) and foreign cultural backgrounds ( $N = 154$ , 35%). The sample was divided into four subgroups based on their fields of work: Persons working in public administration ( $N = 98$ , 22%), the health care sector ( $N = 110$ , 25%), free economy ( $N = 132$ , 30%) and students of different disciplines ( $N=105$ , 24%).

### 3. Results

The empirical data was analyzed in dependence of the hypotheses. Firstly, hypothesis 1 was further examined. It states: “Persons who have already lived abroad possess higher characteristics in the personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness than persons that have not experienced a longer stay abroad.”

A comparison of means for persons with and without international experience shows differences in the personality dimensions *Open-mindedness* and *Emotional Stability*. A person that has already lived abroad for a certain time and has therefore experienced numerous intercultural interactions, is more open-minded. Surprisingly, *Emotional Stability* is, in contrast, higher for people without international experience.

Table 1. Comparison of means for persons with and without international experience

	Experience abroad (N= 219)		No abroad (N=196)		t-Test for comparison of means		
	AM	SD	AM	SD	T	df	Sig.
Cultural Empathy	4.00	.45	3.90	.50	1.13	432	n.s.
Open-mindedness	3.79	.45	3.59	.47	2.43	432	p < .05
Emotional Stability	3.06	.57	3.14	.60	.77	432	p < .05
Social Initiative	3.52	.59	3.47	.53	.48	432	n.s.
Flexibility	3.18	.45	3.13	.49	.51	432	n.s.

A more detailed consideration of the duration of stays abroad does not reveal further differences in the personality dimensions. No significant differences between people with a minimum duration of stay of one year ( $N = 123$ ) and people with shorter ( $N= 96$ ) or no experience abroad ( $N = 123$ ) (Note 1) were found. The duration of stays does not seem to have an impact on the personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness. All in all, the hypothesis is partly confirmed.

In order to illustrate the relations between personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness and attitudes toward people with a migration background, hypothesis 2 was examined: “The personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness predict low xenophobia.”

A regression analysis of the effects of the personality dimensions on xenophobia shows significant relations in both directions. The strongest effect was found for the dimension Flexibility. A person that can easily switch from one strategy to another and adapt his or her behavior to a new cultural environment, is less xenophobic. A similar relationship was found for the dimension *Open-mindedness*. Having an open and unprejudiced attitude towards out-group members and different cultural norms and values leads to a positive attitude towards a person with a migration background.

In addition, two positive effects of multicultural personality dimensions on xenophobia were found. The dimensions *Social Initiative* and *Emotional Stability* point to a more negative attitude towards people with a migration background ( $\Delta R^2 = .345$ ).

Table 2. Effects of multicultural personality dimensions on xenophobia

	Cultural Empathy	Open-mindedness	Emotional Stability	Social Initiative	Flexibility
<b>Xenophobia</b>	$\beta = -.107$ n.s.	$\beta = -.209$ $p < .05$	$\beta = .254$ $p < .01$	$\beta = .273$ $p < .01$	$\beta = -.397$ $p < .001$

It must be noted that in the present sample the values for xenophobia were mainly very low, while the values in the personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness were medium to high. As a result, the data cumulates on the levels of low xenophobia and high multicultural personality; which does not allow for a distinct linear slope.

The hypothesis that the personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness predict low xenophobia, is partially confirmed. While the effects of *Open-mindedness* and *Flexibility* point in the expected direction, it is contradictory to the hypothesis that *Cultural Empathy* has no effect on the attitude towards people with a migration background, and *Emotional Stability* and *Social Initiative* even increase xenophobia. These controversial results suggest that the relations between a multicultural personality and xenophobia are more complex.

Potential positive effects of multicultural personality dimensions on xenophobia might be based on the interdependency of the five dimensions. This would mean that, in order to have an impact on one's attitude towards persons with a migration background, they have to exist in a certain combination. Since the effectiveness of *Open-mindedness*, *Flexibility* and *Emotional Stability* depends on the existence of intercultural interactions and requires intercultural sensibility, it is hypothesized that the action-oriented dimension *Social Initiative* and the culture-oriented dimension *Cultural Empathy* represent moderators for the relationship between the three personality dimensions and the attitude towards people with a migration background. The respective hypothesis is: "*The personality dimensions Social Initiative and Cultural Empathy moderate the relationship between the dimensions Open-mindedness, Flexibility and Emotional Stability and xenophobia. The higher the value for Social Initiative and Cultural Empathy, the stronger the influence of the other personality dimensions on the attitude towards persons with a migration background.*"

The structural equation model, which specifies the hypothesized relations between the personality dimensions and xenophobia, shows that the effects of *Open-mindedness*, *Flexibility* and *Emotional Stability* on xenophobia are indeed moderated by *Social Initiative* and *Cultural Empathy* (Chi-Quadrat 8.373 df 5;  $p = .137$ ; CMIN/df 1.675; CFI .964; RMSEA .099 (LO90 .000; HI 90 .212). Without *Cultural Empathy* and *Social Initiative*, the impact of *Flexibility* and *Open-mindedness* on a positive attitude towards persons with migration background is lower. For *Emotional Stability*, without the influence of the moderators, there is no impact on xenophobia at all.

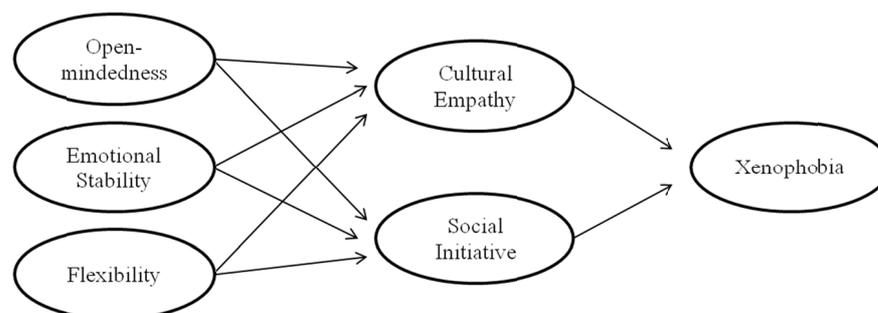


Figure 1. Relationship between the dimensions of a multicultural personality and xenophobia

#### 4. Discussion

The goal of the presented study was to give an overview on the importance of a multicultural personality in diverse work situations. For this, two factors that are relevant in diversity settings- xenophobia and international experience- were examined regarding their relation to the five personality dimensions of intercultural effectiveness.

It was shown that an open-minded person is more likely than others to have already experienced a stay abroad. A

possible explanation is that persons with this characteristic are more motivated to gain international experience and actively seek it. Furthermore, it should be considered that the respective person has become more open-minded due to the experiences he or she had abroad. While personality dimensions are in general stable, and it is unlikely for them to change in a short period of time, a stay abroad may represent a special situation. It can be seen as a critical life event which promotes personal development due to numerous and multifaceted intercultural interactions. The argument of a personality development through intercultural experiences is supported in a study by Zimmermann and Neyer (2013). In an empirical study with 1134 students, the authors were able to show a change in the personality dimension Openness during a stay abroad. In addition, Roberts, Caspi and Moffitt (2003) propose a combination of self-selection through motivation and personality development as an explanation for the differences in *Open-mindedness*. In a study with 910 young adults, they could prove that “*the traits that people already possess will be deepened and elaborated by trait-correlated experiences*” (Roberts et al., 2003, p. 592).

While the differences in *Open-mindedness* pointed in the expected direction, it was surprising that *Emotional Stability* was higher for people who have not previously lived abroad. It is possible that a person ascribes him- or herself higher values in a personality dimension than he or she actually has, if he or she has never been confronted with relevant complicated or difficult situations. A person that has never lived abroad may not have experienced as much stress and emotionally demanding situations. As a result, he or she might rate their emotional stability higher than a person that has already experienced these demanding situations and is familiar with their effects on his or her emotional state. The conclusion of this argument is that personal judgment of the dimension *Emotional Stability* can change through international experiences. The confrontation with a foreign culture might, without thorough preparation, lead to a culture shock which, in turn, provokes emotional insecurity that cannot be overcome.

Along with the hypothesis about the effects of multicultural personality dimensions on xenophobia, *Open-mindedness* and *Flexibility* both predict a positive attitude towards people with a migration background. They are therefore of great importance when dealing with a diverse working environment. Nevertheless, it is surprising that the dimension *Cultural Empathy* does not influence xenophobia at all and *Emotional Stability* and *Social Initiative* even seem to promote a negative attitude towards foreigners. It is possible that the negative effects are due to the fact that an active approach to social situations and the ability to stay calm in stressful situations are two characteristics that, amongst others, illustrate that a person is not unsettled by differences. Possibly, this attitude is partially due to a high self-focus and a strong self-appreciation, which indicate that one's own personal background, as well as the home country, are considered their frame of reference. Due to this ethnocentric perspective, there is less appreciation for people with different norms and values.

Furthermore, it was considered that the controversial effects of the multicultural personality dimensions on xenophobia result from their interdependency. As hypothesized, *Social Initiative* and *Cultural Empathy* function as moderators and influence the effects of *Open-mindedness*, *Flexibility* and *Emotional Stability* on the attitude towards a person with migration background. *Open-mindedness*, *Flexibility* and *Emotional Stability* cannot unfurl their entire potential and promote a diversity-oriented work culture if they are not accompanied by an active approach to social situations and the ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of culturally diverse group members. Consequently, although *Cultural Empathy* and *Social Initiative* do not influence xenophobia directly, they are still essential in diverse work environments. Without them, intercultural effectiveness will always be limited in its potentials.

All in all, the results of the presented study highlight the relevance of intercultural competence in diverse working environments. Since a multicultural personality as a whole prevents xenophobia, its dimensions should be a focus in personnel selection as well as during personnel development. Intercultural development measures play a decisive role in this context. Developing comprehension and sensibility for cultural differences and building confidence to actively seek intercultural interaction should be key aspects in an intercultural training.

Since persons with international experience show higher values for *Open-mindedness*, which are, in turn, of great importance for a positive attitude towards people with a migration background, international experience of the workforce is of great value for every organization. In order to avoid insecurities and negative effects of international experience on *Emotional Stability*, international assignments should always be accompanied by formal learning processes in the form of intercultural trainings. They can help to anticipate challenging situations abroad, diminish the consequences of a culture shock and promote intercultural learning and development.

Important to note is that the sample was quite homogenous with only a few significant differences in the personality dimensions. As a cause for these similar values, social desirability has to be considered. Also, the

measuring of xenophobia, for which the values were very low, appeared to be difficult. The xenophobic statements used seemed to have a deterrent effect on this sample, which has a comparably high education level. More sensible questions probably would have been able to capture "modern prejudices" and, therefore, better measure the attitude towards people with migration backgrounds.

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## Note

Note 1. For 20 respondents no data on this matter was available.

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