Effect of Cross-Cultural Competences on Adaptive Performance among United Nations Peacebuilding Practitioners

Jean Bosco Nzitunga[*]   Strategic Planning & Project Management, Peacebuilding, and Development Consulting; Nzitunga Retail & Consulting Close Corporation; Windhoek, 9000, Namibia

Christine Monica Nyanway-Gimeh   Human Resources; United Nations Regional Service Centre Entebbe (RSCE); Entebbe, Uganda

Abstract: Given the complexity and challenging nature of environments in which peacebuilding practitioners operate, their Cross-Cultural Competences (CCCs) are very crucial for them to effectively adapt and function in foreign countries. The ability to effectively maintain positive interactions with local people is so vital that the overall success of a peacebuilding mission is every so often considerably affected by it. Therefore, in order to gain an understanding on how peacebuilding practitioners successfully navigate in local culture and achieve successful performance in competitive environments, adaptability is an essential measure of their performance to be analyzed. Despite heightened interest by both scholars and practitioners in studying and better understanding the importance of expatriate adjustment, limited research has so far been conducted on adaptive performance in United Nations peacebuilding context. A review of the literature in this regard revealed a research gap that culminated in the following research question: *What is the influence of Cross-Cultural Competence (CCC) on Adaptive Performance (AP) in United Nations missions?* Hence, an empirical study of 100 staff members of the Integrated Peacebuilding Mission in Guinea-Bissau was designed to answer this research question.

Keywords: Adaptive performance; Cross-cultural competence; United Nations; Peacebuilding missions.

1. Introduction

Peacekeeping/peacebuilding missions have gradually increased following the establishment of United Nation Security Council. Adaptive Performance is considered as a key dimension of job performance for peacebuilding personnel in these contemporary peacebuilding missions. Peacebuilding practitioners not only work in new cultural settings, but also have frequent interactions with local people with different expectations, beliefs, and cultural values. The lack of ability to appropriately deal with stress mainly resulting from cultural differences can generate very harmful consequences to peacebuilding personnel (Abbe *et al.*, 2007).

Traditionally, the success of peacekeeping/peacebuilding missions was measured by their ability to restore peace and harmony with the least number of injured and deceased peacebuilding/peacekeeping personnel. This means that the effectiveness of the peacebuilding practitioner was not properly measured; instead, the effectiveness of a peacebuilding mission was measured from the overall performance of the whole unit assigned to a specific country. Recent research conducted among peacekeepers on foreign assignments underlines that the assessment of peacekeepers' effectiveness should include their adaptability to local culture and living condition (McFarland, 2005). Contemporary and future United Nations operations require peacebuilders to interact with people from diverse regions and cultures. Throughout their various current reports, peacekeeping leaders have emphasized cross-cultural aspects as crucial factors for the effectiveness of peacekeepers. Adjustment and adaptability are differently impacted by cross-cultural aspects, especially among peacebuilding practitioners; thus, studying these aspects is indispensable.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Adaptive Performance

The necessity for adaptive employees is becoming more and more essential in contemporary organizations which are characterized by forever altering, dynamic environments (Edwards and Morrison, 1994; Hollenbeck *et al.*, 1996; Ilgen and Pulakos, 1999; Smith *et al.*, 1997). Though adaptability is not a novel concept, changes in today's organizations are so fast that scholars and practitioners are progressively developing a heightened interest in understanding and improving adaptability in the workplace. For instance, employees are continuously required to learn new skills in order to achieve performance in their jobs, as a result of shifting technologies and automation which continue to change the nature of work tasks (Patrickson, 1987; Thach and Woodman, 1994). For many work

*Corresponding Author

assignments, especially peacebuilding, it is a requirement for individuals to learn to function efficiently in various countries or regions that are characterized by diverse cultures and other challenging environments (Black, 1990; Noe and Ford, 1992). Employees need to develop adaptability, versatility, and tolerance of uncertainty to be able to effectively function in these multifaceted environments.

Nevertheless, it is challenging to predict, train effectively, and measure the notions of adaptability, flexibility, and versatility given that they are elusive conceptions which have not been well defined in the literature. Often using different definitions and names for the notion, scholars have analyzed adaptability in relation to various aspects at the organizational, team, and individual level (Ilgen and Pulakos, 1999). For example, Hesketh and Neal (1999) have discussed Adaptive Performance, Murphy and Jackson (1999) referred to "role flexibility," and the research of London and Mone (1999) discussed about proficient self-management of individuals' new learning experiences. Furthermore, adaptation has been discussed in relation to various variables which are organizationally pertinent, and which include wide-ranging behaviours across a range of diverse task demands (such as new technologies, physically challenging conditions, new people and teams, new and ill-defined problems, diverse cultures, etc.).

Adaptive Performance is progressively considered as a crucial dimension in work environments, given substantial changes occurring constantly in contemporary organizations. With regard to performance in general, Campbell *et al.* (1993) insisted that there is a need to understand and build consensus about the meaning of Adaptive Performance across job, occupational, or role assessment situations, in order to be able to pinpoint what is important and to allow clear variable definition by researchers. The literature (Chan, 2000; White *et al.*, 2005) defines AP as an effective adjustment as a result of a changed/new situation, in which it is required to change existing behaviors. Based on the literature, six dimensions of AP have been identified and are discussed below.

2.2.1. Solving Problems Creatively

To be able to adapt to new and/or changing situations, one's ability to solve novel and unfamiliar hitches is frequently required. Hence, the effectiveness with which employees solve unusual, complex, and ill-defined problems is one aspect of adaptive performance that many scholars have emphasized (Hatano and Inagaki, 1986; Holyoak, 1991). This aspect of adaptive performance is concerned with designing innovative solutions to new and challenging problems or ensuring that multifaceted matters or situations are effectively brought to their desired end.

2.2.2. Dealing with Uncertain/Unpredictable Work Situations

Several scholars (such as (Dix and Savickas, 1995; Goodman, 1994; Hall and Mirvis, 1995) have stressed that these situations can originate from various factors, such as joining a new organization or group, revised organizational priorities, organizational restructuring, or changes/reduction in available resources. This aspect of adaptive performance focus on how employees effectively adjust to and deal with the volatile nature of these situations, how resourcefully and easily they can reprioritize when needed, and the extent to which they take realistic and effective steps, despite the fact that the situation may be characterized by inherent uncertainty and ambiguity.

Despite the fact that this aspect of adaptive performance is without doubt related to the problem-solving aspect discussed in section 2.2.1 above, constructs such as general intelligence, problem-understanding, and problem solving make exclusive contributions to creative problem solving performance (Hoover and Feldhusen, 1990; Krietler and Krietler, 1987; Owens, 1969). On the other hand, as demonstrated by scholars (such as (Andersen, 1977; Callan *et al.*, 1994; Jones, 1986), dealing with uncertain and impulsive situations is effectively predicted by personality constructs such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and locus of control.

2.2.3. Learning New Tasks, Technologies, and Procedures

This aspect of adaptive performance has also been emphasized by the literature (Kinicki and Latack, 1990; Noe and Ford, 1992; Thach and Woodman, 1994), and has increasingly become crucial because of the fast pace of technological innovation and the resulting need for constant learning in organizations. In contemporary organizations, rapid technological changes are increasingly forcing employees to learn new ways to perform their jobs (Hesketh and Neal, 1999). Moreover, continuous learning entails preparation for potential future job requirements through an enduring process of planning for and participating in development (London and Mone, 1999). For effective performance in today's organizations, one has to anticipate forthcoming needs and adapt to changing job requirements by learning new tasks, technologies, procedures, and roles.

2.2.4. Interpersonal Adaptability

As a result of current work situations that are ever more characterized by work or project teams (Hollenbeck *et al.*, 1996; Kozlowski *et al.*, 1996) and constant increase in service-oriented organizations (Schneider B., 1994; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996), the need for this aspect of adaptive performance is becoming significant. Its aspects that have been discussed by scholars include the ability to demonstrate interpersonal flexibility; to easily adapt interpersonal behavior to work excellently with a new team, co-workers, or customers; to adjust interpersonal style for the achievement of an objective; to successfully anticipate and live up to customer expectations (Aronoff *et al.*, 1994; Bowen and Schneider, 1988; Spiro and Weitz, 1990).

2.2.5. Cultural Adaptability

The literature underlines the importance of being able to function effectively in different cultures and environments, given the factors such as globalization, as well as the extent to which today's employees change jobs and organizations (Ilgen and Pulakos, 1999; Noe and Ford, 1992). This does not simply involve the ability to learn about a new culture or setting. Most importantly, this aspect of adaptive performance involves the ability to effectively *integrate* into a new culture or environment by gaining a full understanding and willingness to behave in line with the established rules, values, customs, and structures operating within it.

2.2.6. Demonstrating Physically Oriented Adaptability

This aspect of adaptive performance is becoming an essential requirement in many different jobs and importantly so in military and related jobs. Many scholars have discussed and emphasized its importance. It involves the ability to adapt to different physical factors such heat, noise, uncomfortable climates, and difficult environments (Edwards and Morrison, 1994; Fiedler and Fiedler, 1975; Weinstein, 1978). Contemporary missions have a distinctive nature in terms of quality compared to missions in the past, as they often involve a variety of operations that are performed by small intervention units in many diverse cultures and climates. The ability to speedily adapt to these many different and difficult physical conditions is a crucial aspect of effective performance in these types of jobs.

2.3. Cross-Cultural Competence (CCC)

Cross Cultural Competence (CCC) is defined as "a set of cognitive, behavioral, and affective/motivational components that enable individuals to adapt effectively in intercultural environments" (Abbe *et al.*, 2007). It refers to one's competency that enables intercultural efficacy irrespective of the specific cultural intersection. While some cognitive or behavioral aspects may be of particular relevance in a specific unique context of a country or region, scholars have stressed that the ability to adapt to any culture is allowed by a core set of competencies (Hammer, 1987). The literature reviewed for this study identifies four components of CCC, namely Culture Intelligence (CI), Emotional Intelligence (EI), Social Intelligence (SI), and Language Proficiency (LP) which are discussed below.

2.3.1. Culture Intelligence (CI)

The literature identifies four dimensions of CI: meta-cognitive, motivational, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions. It has a particular significance in helping one to function in environments characterized by cultural diversity (Earley and Ang, 2003). Thus, CI is defined as one's ability to function successfully in culturally diverse environments (Ang, 2007). It is also defined by Earley and Ang (2003) as "a person's capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts".

The cognitive aspect of CI refers to knowledge acquired through both formal education and experience about different cultural practices, conventions, and customs, both culture-specific and universal (Ang *et al.*, 2004; Ang, 2007). This involves the understanding of different cultures and sub-cultures' values as well as their social, legal and economic aspects. Individual with high levels of cognitive CI have high understanding of cultural similarities and differences (Brislin *et al.*, 2006).

The meta-cognitive aspect of CI refers to an individual's understanding or control over awareness that enables to deeply process information that relates to culture (Ang *et al.*, 2004). It involves the intellectual stratagems that are used for coping strategy acquisition and generation (Ng and Earley, 2006). Individuals with high meta-cognitive CI are culturally conscious and aware and hence have the ability to question assumptions about culture (Ang *et al.*, 2004). Capabilities related to this construct include the ability to plan, monitor, and revise mental models of countries' or groups of people's cultural norms (Ang, 2007).

The motivational aspect of CI goes beyond the ability to recognize differences and similarities of cultures. It involves the individual's willingness to adapt to other people's culture and interest to engage with others (Ang, 2007). This aspect of CI is motivated by three factors: desire to feel good about oneself (enhancement); desire to challenge and advance oneself (growth); and aspiration for continuity and predictability in ones' life (continuality) (Earley *et al.*, 2006). This aspect of CI is crucial in directing and motivating an individual's ability to adapt to new cultural environments (Earley and Ang, 2003; Ng and Earley, 2006).

The behavioural aspect of CI refers to one's ability to demonstrate adaptive conduct in line with motivation and cognition grounded on specific settings' cultural values. This involves possessing a flexible comprehensive behavioural repertoire. Individuals with high levels of this behavioural aspect of CI have the ability to display wide-ranging appropriate verbal and nonverbal capabilities through gestures, facial expressions, words, and tone that are culturally suitable (Earley and Ang, 2003).

In the international assignments, individuals with high levels of CI have the specific abilities for information gathering and manipulation, drawing inferences and enacting on cognitive, emotive, and behavioural actions in line with host country cultural cues (Earley and Ang, 2003), thereby minimizing the expectation-perception gap of role to perform in novel cultural settings. These individuals have the unique competency for cultural schemes elaboration, and consequently should have precise knowledge of role expectations in a new assignment. Individuals with high levels of CI can appropriately make sense about how and when to use their cultural knowledge (Earley and Ang, 2003; Earley *et al.*, 2006). Instead of merely relying on usual knowledge structures, they effectively choose from several knowledge structures in order to accommodate the specific context's expectations (Ang, 2007). Being able

to exhibit culturally suitable comportment during interactions with persons from diverse cultural backgrounds may have a positive influence on peacebuilders' performance by boosting their understanding about culturally appropriate behaviours and norms.

Individuals with high CI levels have demonstrated high levels of performance (Fakhreldin, 2011). CI has been emphasized by scholars as an essential factor in aiding effective adaptive performance in culturally diverse settings (Amiri *et al.*, 2010; Ang, 2007; Fakhreldin, 2011; Kumar *et al.*, 2008; Reza, 2012; Sri Ramalu *et al.*, 2010).

2.3.2. Emotional Intelligence (EI)

According to Bar-On (2000), EI is a set of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills which include general mood (e.g., optimism and happiness), adaptability (e.g., flexibility), interpersonal skills (e.g., empathy and emotional self-awareness), and stress management (e.g., impulse control and stress tolerance), that influence one's ability to deal with environmental demands and pressures. It is defined as a group of social and personal competencies that include empathy, motivation and persistence, self-awareness and control, and relationship-building ability (McCollum and Broadus, 2007). This type of skill can be learned and enhanced. It changes one's behavior and ultimately enables the improvement of personal adaptive performance. CI also enhances managers' decision-making and problem-solving abilities (Weston, 2010).

This aspect of CCC is greatly influenced by prior experiences. It indicates one's ability to understand oneself, to effectively interact with others, and adjust behavior in line with situational needs to accomplish his/her objectives (McFarland, 2005). Research shows a positive relationship between organizational commitment and EI (Khalili, 2011), and between EI and job satisfaction (Najafi and Mousavi, 2012).

2.3.3. Social Intelligence (SI)

SI is defined as one's ability to have an effective understanding of people behavior, feelings, and thoughts, including oneself, in interpersonal environment and to take appropriate action upon that understanding (Marlowe, 1986). Scholars have defined SI in many different ways, but two general elements are shared by all these definitions: awareness of others, as well as response and adaptation to others in social circumstances (Goleman, 2006). Three perspectives of SI have been identified by the literature: SI is the aptitude to demonstrate cognitive reaction to an interpersonal stimulus; behavioral outcomes are affected by one's capability for social adaptation; SI contains cognitive and behavioral orientations (Zaccaro, 1995).

A positive relationship exists between SI and individual performance in team environments (Zaccaro, 1995). Furthermore, the literature has demonstrated a positive association between SI and enhanced social problem-solving capabilities (Jones and Day, 1997), between SI and experienced leadership (Kobe *et al.*, 2001), and between SI and positive interpersonal skills. SI is multi-dimensional and different from general intelligence domains (Marlowe, 1986). The significance of SI for effective expatriates' performance has been underlined (Cheng *et al.*, 2001; Goleman, 2006; Jones and Day, 1997; Schneider R. *et al.*, 1996).

2.3.4. Language Proficiency (LP)

Many scholars have confirmed that language is a significant element in understanding culture (Jackson, 2005). Moreover, the literature emphasizes the importance of language ability in predicting interaction adaptation (Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005) and adaptive performance (Mol *et al.*, 2005). Researchers have also underlined that Expatriates with their host country's language proficiency have shown better adaptability and better performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005). Language skills play a crucial role in cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) and research has shown that language and performance are positively correlated (Takeuchi *et al.*, 2002).

3. Research Model and Hypotheses

Based on literature and the research questions, this study seeks to deepen our understanding of Cross-Cultural Competences and Adaptive Performance by proposing and testing a model that is made of a set of hypotheses which postulates Cross-Cultural Competences as an antecedent to Adaptive Performance. Figure 3.1 presents the **research model**.

Culture Intelligence (CI) is defined as one's ability to function successfully in culturally diverse environments (Ang, 2007). It is also defined by Earley and Ang (2003) as "a person's capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts". Given that successful adaptive performance has been characterized by openness to experience in environments characterized by cultural diversity (Ang, 2007) and that an expatriate's job performance is significantly influenced by his/her CI (Kumar *et al.*, 2008), the first hypothesis is therefore developed:

- H1: *Adaptive Performance (AP) is positively influenced by a peacebuilding practitioner's cultural Intelligence (CI).*

Figure-3.1. Research Model (adapted from Nzitunga, 2015)
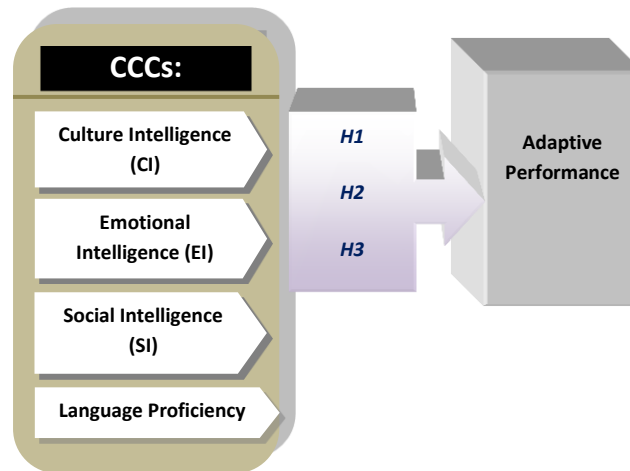
Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a set of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills which include general mood (e.g., optimism and happiness), adaptability (e.g., flexibility), interpersonal skills (e.g., empathy and emotional self-awareness), and stress management (e.g., impulse control and stress tolerance), that influence one's ability to deal with environmental demands and pressures (Bar-On, 2000). Research shows a positive relationship between organizational commitment and EI (Khalili, 2011), and between EI and job satisfaction (Najafi and Mousavi, 2012). It therefore stands to reason that adaptive performance is the product of job satisfaction and job commitment. Hence the second hypothesis:

- H2: *There is a positive relationship between Adaptive Performance (AP) and a peacebuilding practitioner's Emotional Intelligence (EI).*

Social Intelligence (SI) is defined as one's ability to have an effective understanding of people behavior, feelings, and thoughts, including oneself, in interpersonal environment and to take appropriate action upon that understanding (Marlowe, 1986). The literature has noted that a positive association exists between SI and enhanced social problem-solving capabilities (Jones and Day, 1997), experienced leadership (Kobe *et al.*, 2001), and positive interpersonal skills. Given that the significance of SI for effective expatriates' performance has been underlined by many scholars (Cheng *et al.*, 2001; Goleman, 2006; Jones and Day, 1997; Schneider R. *et al.*, 1996), the third hypothesis is developed:

- H3: *A peacebuilding practitioner's Social Intelligence positively influences his/her Adaptive Performance (AP).*

Many scholars have confirmed that language is a significant element in understanding culture (Jackson, 2005). Moreover, the literature emphasizes the importance of language ability in predicting interaction adaptation (Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005) and adaptive performance (Mol *et al.*, 2005). Since researchers have also underlined that Expatriates with their host country's language proficiency have shown better adaptability and better performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005), the fourth hypothesis is deduced:

- H4: *There is a positive relationship between Adaptive Performance (AP) and a peacebuilding practitioner's Language Proficiency (LP).*

4. Methodology

This study was an exploratory study of Adaptive Performance in United Nations peacebuilding missions. An online questionnaire survey based on the Likert scale was administered to 100 staff members of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Mission in Guinea-Bissau. The collected data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Partial Least Squares Regression).

4.1. Reliability and Validity in this Study

The measurement instrument[1] was developed to assess the influence of Cross-Cultural Competences (CCC) on Adaptive Performance in United Nations missions. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument, it was essential to accurately and clearly define the key variables. Appropriate questions was formulated by the researcher (based on the literature) to ensure that each variable in the instrument is represented by at least three items. Face validity was used for this study and was achieved through a thorough literature review and by developing and using theoretical definitions and validated measurement instruments.

Culture Intelligence (CI) was measured by the peacebuilder's understanding own cultural identity; checking cultural lenses; global consciousness; shifting perspectives; intercultural communication; managing cross-cultural conflict; multicultural teaming; managing bias; and understanding the dynamics of power.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) was assessed by the peacebuilding practitioner's self-awareness and self-control; empathy; social expertness; personal influence; and mastery of purpose and vision.

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[1] In this study the terms measurement instrument and questionnaire are used interchangeably.

Social Intelligence (SI) was evaluated by the peacebuilding practitioner's ability to understand contexts within which she/she is called upon to interact; ability to navigate within and between various contexts; and to know how to behave in various contexts so as to achieve his/her objectives.

Language Proficiency (LP) was as assessed by the respondent's fluency level in the host country's language; propensity to learn foreign languages; and ability to speak at least one more international language.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used as a measure of internal consistency-reliability of the scale used in this study (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Sekaran, 1992). Table 4.1 provides the reliability statistics of the scale used in this study.

Table-4.1. Reliability statistics for the scale used in this study

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Adaptive Performance	0.81	6
Culture Intelligence	0.83	9
Emotional Intelligence	0.76	5
Social Intelligence	0.85	3
Language Proficiency	0.82	3

As table 4.1 shows, the measurement instrument was reliable (Sekaran, 1992).

5. Findings and Discussion of Results

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Partial Least Squares regression).

5.1. Descriptive Statistics

A composite score was obtained for each constructs by totalling the individual scores of the relevant items and calculating the average. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the descriptive statistics of the composite variables.

Table-5.1. Descriptive statistics of the composite variables (n=100)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Average %	Std. Deviation
Adaptive Performance	100	3.000	5.667	4.142	73.08	0.520
Culture Intelligence	100	3.000	5.444	4.054	74.46	0.466
Emotional Intelligence	100	3.000	5.400	4.102	75.96	0.519
Social Intelligence	100	3.000	5.333	4.063	76.19	0.454
Language Proficiency	100	4.333	6.000	5.547	92.44	0.422

5.2. Correlations

Spearman correlations were used to determine influence of CI on AP; the influence of EI on AP; the influence of SI on AP; and the influence of LP on AP. A summary of Spearman correlation coefficients (ρ) and p-values for the different variables is provided in Table 5.2 below.

Table-5.2. A summary of the Spearman correlation coefficients and p-values (n=100)

Variable 1	Variable 2	Spearman correlation (ρ)	P-value
Culture Intelligence	Adaptive Performance	0.956	<0.01
Emotional Intelligence	Adaptive Performance	0.753	<0.01
Social Intelligence	Adaptive Performance	0.894	<0.01
Language Proficiency	Adaptive Performance	0.007	0.944

Table 5.2 shows statistically significant positive correlation between CI and AP (ρ = 0.956); EI and AP (ρ = 0.753); an SI and AP (ρ = 0.894). However, there is no statistically significant correlation between LP and AP.

5.3. Partial Least Squares (PLS) Regression Analysis

The various relationships between the variables were tested using *Partial Least Squares* (PLS) regression (Wold, 1981;1985). PLS method was favoured because it does not require a large sample or normally distributed multivariate data (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

The significance of the paths and path coefficients in the PLS model is assessed using the bootstrap confidence intervals (Efron and Tibshirani, 1993). The bootstrap interval's lower and upper limits should not include 0 (Efron and Tibshirani, 1993) recommend that. The bootstrap confidence intervals used to determine the statistical significance for the paths and path coefficients in the PLS model are presented in Table 5.3 below.

Table-5.3. Bootstrap confidence intervals and paths coefficients (PLS, n=100)

Path	Bootstrap lower (2.5%)	Bootstrap mean	Bootstrap upper (97.5%)	Path coefficients
Culture Intelligence -> Adaptive Performance	0.316	0.509	0.660	0.510
Emotional Intelligence -> Adaptive Performance	0.245	0.341	0.431	0.344
Social Intelligence -> Adaptive Performance	0.069	0.199	0.331	0.196
Language Proficiency -> Adaptive Performance	-0.060	-0.012	0.038	-0.013

The path, strength and significance of the path coefficients assessed by Partial Least Squares (PLS) are shown in Figure 5.1 below.

Figure-5.1. Path, strength and significance of the path coefficients assessed by PLS (n=100)
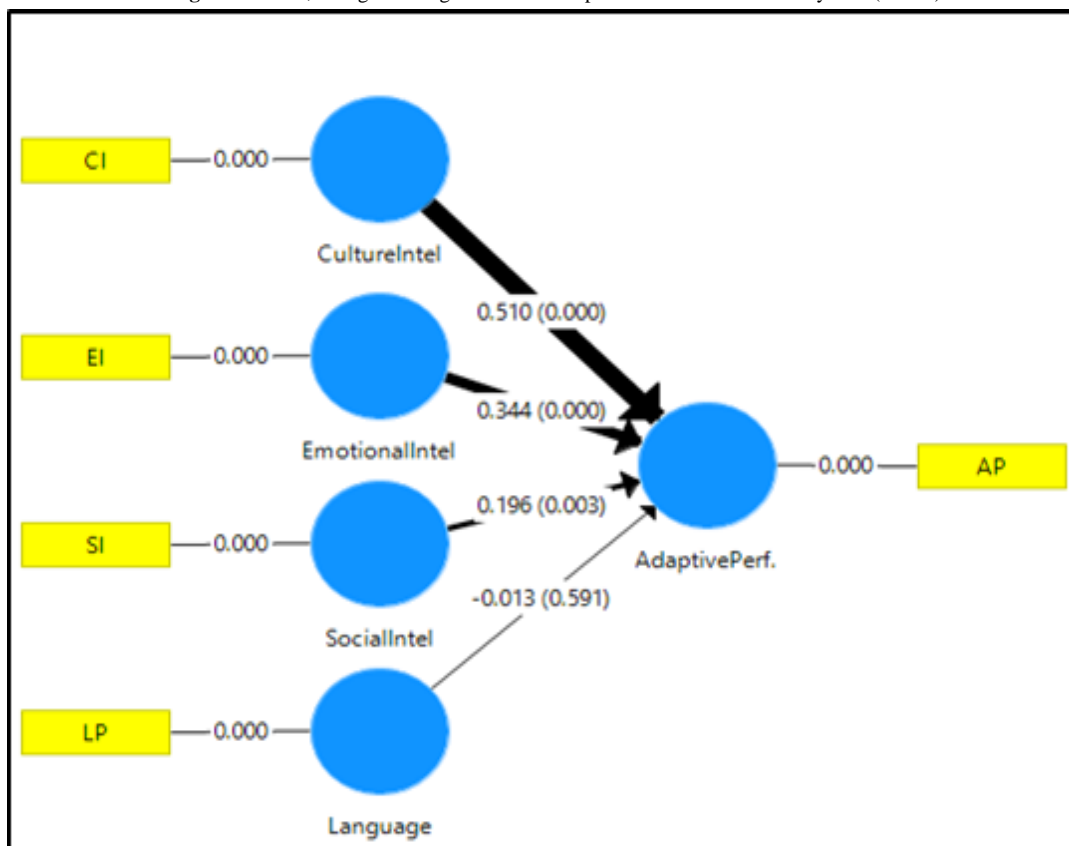
The first hypothesis, namely that Adaptive Performance (AP) is positively influenced by a peacebuilding practitioner's cultural Intelligence (CI), is confirmed significant path coefficients ($\gamma = 0.510$).

The hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between Adaptive Performance (AP) and a peacebuilding practitioner's Emotional Intelligence (EI) is confirmed by significant path coefficients ($\gamma = 0.344$).

The third hypothesis, namely that a peacebuilding practitioner's Social Intelligence positively influences his/her Adaptive Performance (AP), is also confirmed by relatively statistically significant path coefficients ($\gamma = 0.196$).

However, contrarily to the literature reviewed and the fourth hypothesis formulated, the results show that there is no significant relationship between Language Proficiency and Adaptive Performance. This means that, for peacebuilding practitioners in Guinea-Bissau, Adaptive Performance is achieved irrespective of their level of LP. The three other main components of CCC are sufficient to achieve successful AP in Guinea-Bissau.

6. Conclusion

Peacebuilding practitioners work in an extremely-charged crisis environment that concomitantly requires both instantaneous action and attentive efforts to produce change to root causes. In peacebuilding missions, the notion of Cross-Cultural Competence (CCC) is important in enhancing peacebuilding practitioners' understanding of cross-

culture, accordingly playing a pivotal role during their decisions about the relevance of culture when they interact with the locals. Hence, to easily adapt to foreign countries, this skill is indispensable. Peacebuilding practitioners frequently interact with people from diverse cultures and CCC is an important element in this regard.

The findings of this study underline the importance of CCCs for effective Adaptive Performance in peacebuilding missions. Peacebuilding practitioners should therefore ensure the development of their CI, EI, SI, and LP. Although the results show no statistically significant association between AP and LP in Guinea-Bissau, several other studies have proven their positive relationship and hence peacebuilders should strive to enrich their language abilities for enhanced adaptive performance.

For peacebuilding organizations, they may consider using staff selection methods that include testing for CCCs. They may also consider providing training support for the enhancement of CCCs in preparation of potential candidates for peacebuilding assignments.

Only United Nations peacebuilding practitioners operating in Guinea-Bissau were studied, and therefore the findings cannot be generalised to all expatriates operating in and/or outside Guinea-Bissau. Future research should cover other organizations and sectors in and/or outside Guinea-Bissau. The questionnaire developed and used in this study was shown to be reliable. However, future research should refine the measurement. Improved measures and larger samples for verification could lead to better model specification. Future research should also include personal characteristics such as marital status, spouse support, and gender as potential other determinants for peacebuilders' adaptive performance.

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