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Additional cross-cultural validity testing of the Intercultural Development Inventory[☆]

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ABSTRACT

Intercultural competence/sensitivity is increasingly recognized across the global spectrum of educational institutions, corporations, government agencies and non-government organizations as a central capability for the 21st century. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is an assessment tool that measures the level of intercultural competence/sensitivity across a developmental continuum for individuals, groups, and organizations and represents a theoretically grounded measure of this capability for perceiving cultural differences and commonalities and modifying behavior to cultural context. This study represents additional cross-cultural validity testing of the IDI, building on the previous work of Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova, and DeJaeghere (2003) and Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003). The 50 items from IDI v2 were administered to 4763 individuals from 11 distinct, cross-cultural samples. Confirmatory factor analysis confirms the following basic orientations toward cultural difference originally explicated by Bennett (1986, 1993) in the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS): Denial, Defense, Reversal, Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation. In addition, it also identifies Cultural Disengagement as an additional scale within the IDI; but one that is not located along the developmental continuum. Second, the inter-scale correlations support the theoretically proposed, developmental formulation from Denial through Adaptation. Third, the current analysis offers strong support for an overall Developmental Orientation (DO) scale and an overall Perceived Orientation (PO) scale. Fourth, Minimization is found to be a transitional orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities, between the more monocultural (ethnocentric) orientations of Denial and Polarization (Defense, Reversal) and the more intercultural mindsets of Acceptance and Adaptation. Fifth, readability analysis indicates the IDI is appropriate for high (secondary) school students (age 15 or above) or individuals with a 10th grade reading level. Finally, criterion validity of the IDI was assessed. The results indicate that the IDI has strong predictive validity toward bottom-line goals within organizations; namely, the achievement of diversity and inclusion goals in the recruitment and staffing function. These findings complement previous results that demonstrated that the IDI also possesses strong content and construct validity across culture groups.

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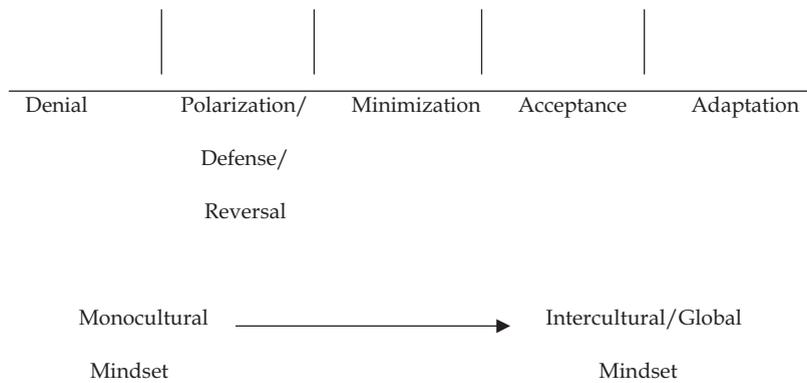


Fig. 1. Intercultural development continuum.

1. Introduction

The educational sector—from K-12 through universities as well corporations, government agencies and non-government organizations are increasingly recognizing the need for building intercultural competence in order to better prepare individuals to function more effectively in our global community (Hammer, 1989, 1999, 2009; Moodian, 2009). Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) posit that “people must be interested in other cultures, be sensitive enough to notice cultural differences, and then also be willing to modify their behavior as an indication of respect for the people of other cultures” in order to effectively bridge across cultural differences and commonalities (p. 416). The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is an assessment tool that measures the level of intercultural competence/sensitivity across a developmental continuum for individuals, groups, and organizations and represents a theoretically grounded measure of this capability toward observing cultural differences and commonalities and modifying behavior to cultural context. The IDI is grounded in the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) originally proposed by Bennett (1986, 1993, 2004). The purpose of this study is to further test the cross-cultural validity of the IDI.

The IDI v1 was developed in 1998; IDI v2, based on continued research, was introduced in 2003; and IDI v3 is available for use in 2010 as a result of the research reported in this article. In its current version, the IDI v3 is a 50-item paper-and-pencil (and online) questionnaire, with selected demographic items. It has been back translated into multiple languages (Brislin, 1970, 1976, 1980) with selected demographics. The IDI can be completed in about 15–20 min. Accompanying the IDI are five open-ended “contexting” questions individual respondents may complete. These open-ended questions help further capture the experiences around cultural differences of the respondent. Once the IDI is completed, the IDI analytic structure generates an individual (or group) graphic profile of the respondent’s overall position on the intercultural development continuum (also produced is an Administrator’s IDI profile report that presents the statistical information for the various IDI scales). The intercultural competence/sensitivity developmental continuum is presented in Fig. 1, and ranges from more monocultural orientations to more intercultural/global orientations.

Table 1 presents a summary of each of these orientations toward cultural commonalities and differences (see Bennett, 2004; Hammer, 2009 for more information on these intercultural competence/sensitivity orientations).

This continuum represents a movement toward greater intercultural competence/sensitivity, from a less complex set of perceptions and behaviors around cultural commonalities and differences (monocultural mindset orientations) to a more complex set of perceptions and behaviors (intercultural/global mindset) (Bennett, 2004; Hammer, 2009). Perceiving cultural

Table 1
Summary of IDI developmental continuum orientations.

Denial	An orientation that likely recognizes more observable cultural differences (e.g., food) but, may not notice deeper cultural differences (e.g., conflict resolution styles), and may avoid or withdraw from cultural differences.
Polarization Defense	A judgmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of “us” and “them”. This can take the form of: An uncritical view toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices.
Reversal	An overly critical orientation toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an uncritical view toward other cultural values and practices.
Minimization	An orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences.
Acceptance	An orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one’s own and other cultures.
Adaptation	An orientation that is capable of shifting cultural perspective and changing behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.
Cultural Disengagement	A sense of disconnection or detachment from a primary cultural group.

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