

Global competence of employees in Hispanic Enterprises in the south of United States (Competencias globales de los empleados en las Empresas Hispanas del sur de los Estados Unidos)

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Abstract. Developing interculturally competent students who can compete successfully in the global market is one of the challenges for institutions of higher education in the United States. Some researchers think that Colleges and universities must make a deeper commitment to prepare globally competent graduates. A common assumption is that the processes by which people are educated need to be broadly consistent with the way in which organizations operate in a globalizing environment. With this in mind, we turned to managers of Hispanic enterprises to report whether they believed their employees possess the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences deemed necessary for attaining global competency. We developed a questionnaire based on one created by Hunter (2004) to measure global competencies. We sent them to managers of some Hispanic enterprises who are members of the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. In our results we found that employees of the Hispanic enterprises that were targeted do not generally have a high level of global competence according to our indicators.

Palabras clave: competencias globales, educación, empresas hispanas

Resumen. Desarrollar competencias inter-culturales en los estudiantes que tienen que competir con éxito en el mercado global es uno de los retos para las instituciones de educación superior en los Estados Unidos. Algunos investigadores señalan que las universidades deben asumir un compromiso más profundo para preparar de una manera competente a los graduados a nivel mundial. Una propuesta común es que los procesos por

los cuales las personas son educadas deben ser ampliamente consistentes con la manera en que las organizaciones operan en un entorno globalizado. Basado en estas suposiciones en este proyecto de investigación se preguntó a los gerentes de empresas hispanas si consideraban que sus empleados tenían los conocimientos, habilidades, actitudes y experiencias suficientes para considerarlos globalmente competentes. Para esto se desarrolló un cuestionario creado por Hunter (2004) para medir las competencias globales. Se enviaron a los gerentes de algunas empresas hispanas que son miembros de la Cámara de Comercio Hispana e la Cd. De Tucson, Arizona. En los resultados se encontró que los empleados de la gran parte de estas empresas no presentaban un alto nivel de competencias globales de acuerdo a los indicadores mundiales.

Introduction

Institutions of higher education in the United States face many challenges in preparing students to become interculturally competent in the global marketplace. They have the task of remaining intellectually and culturally viable in a rapidly changing world. The internationalization of higher education has become necessary, and for some institutions the goal is to graduate “cross-culturally competent students” or “global citizens.” However, the exact meaning of these phrases has been debated by experts for decades (Lambert 1996, Olson and Koeger 2001, Curran 2002, Brustein 2003, Deardorff 2004 and Hunter 2004).

What exactly is Intercultural Competency? Some definitions include empathy, flexibility, and cross-cultural awareness, while others have technical skills such as foreign language proficiency. For Chen and Starosta (1996) a person who has intercultural competence is a person who can interact effectively and appropriately with people who have multilevel cultural identities. However, there is agreement that intercultural competence specifically comprises the knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness to enable a person to interact effectively with persons from other cultures. William Hunter (2004) proposed in his study on strategies to internationalize American institutions some elements necessary to become globally competent: a knowledge of others and one’s self; the skills to interpret, interact and discover; the ability to value the beliefs, values, and behaviors of others; and the ability relativize one’s self.

The aim of our research is to determine if the employees of Hispanic enterprises in Tucson, Arizona have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and

experiences necessary for attaining global competence. Based on concepts cited, this study was guided by the main research question: *Do employees of Hispanic enterprises have the adequate knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences to be considered globally competent?* The paper will present a review of the literature, a discussion of the methodology for the examination of the research question, our findings, and some conclusions.

Literature Review

International Education

The term “international education” has had different meanings throughout the years. “Global education,” “development education,” “comparative education,” and “international studies” have been used interchangeably at times but their meanings are distinct (Hayden 2006). In this respect Alfaro (2008) confirms that international education requires a crossing of national borders: it is the process of educating people in a foreign country to see themselves as international citizens.

From a scholarly perspective, Crossley & Watson (2006) define international education as describing educational work that practitioners and scholars undertake in countries other than their own. In a different vein Clarke (2004) describes global education as integrating curricular perspectives, issues of cultural diversity, prejudice reduction and human rights. Finally, Burnell (2006) describes international education as a new educational vision able to provide global society with an education that meets current cultural and linguistic needs. It is clear from these definitions that the student is the primary actor in the effort to increase global competency, with institutions and teachers playing important roles as well.

The lack of global competency in the educational system in the United States became evident in the 1950's. The National Defense Education Act noted in 1958 that only 15% of all college students were studying a foreign language at that time. They acknowledged America's need to confront serious deficiencies in many fields, including the inability to communicate with foreign audiences. To rectify this problem, the Educational Act provide for the establishment of foreign language learning centers at universities around the country. Despite this effort, other signs of a lack of global competence

appeared such as a very low rate of participation in student exchange and study abroad programs, estimated at 3% by Godbey and Turlington(2002). The problems extended into secondary and primary education where American school children ranked in the bottom third in the subject of world geography (National Geographic Society, 1998).

Another trend that is important to note is that though English is currently the dominant language of the Internet and of international business, and yet the percentage of the world's population that speaks English as a primary language is decreasing. Only 7.6% of the world's population speaks English as its native tongue, and only 20% speak any of the Western languages as a native language (Huntington, 1996). It is possible that this percentage will continue to decrease because populations in developing countries will continue to increase. By 2030, the population ratio of people living in industrialized or developed nations compared to those living in developing nations will double from the 1995 level of one to two, to one in four (Lutz, 1994).

The importance of global education is further supported by Cendant Mobility, a global relocation management firm. A 2002 survey that polled 180 human resources managers on six continents who collectively managed 200,000 people found that global competence is critical to the success of cross-border workers (Cendant Mobility, 2002). Green (2000) reports that before becoming globally competent, students must be globally literate and possesses a high degree of international understanding and intercultural competence. Similarly, Broad (1998) observed that mid-level managers, chief executive officers, and human resource professionals consistently state a need for college graduates who are "knowledgeable about the global environment in which they must function and be facile in the cultural diversity it entails." For this reason, colleges and universities must make a deeper commitment to prepare global-ready graduates.

Teacher education programs

To achieve international education, the American system needs to expand the level of globalization in teacher education programs in order to prepare globally-minded teachers. Few college and universities have organized international field experiences that truly meet intercultural

competencies, international collaboration and global awareness to teach from a global perspective. Merryfield's research (1995) demonstrates that many employers are discontented with American colleges and universities because they don't prepare their graduates to become part of the global workforce. Maxwell (2004) concurred in saying, "The U.S. higher education system is doing a terrible job of preparing globally competent students".

Heyl and McCarthy (2003) propose a way of minimizing and eliminating the gap with regards to international knowledge. They suggest that higher education institutions must graduate future teachers who think globally, have international experience, demonstrate foreign language competence, and are able to incorporate a global dimension into their teaching. Other solutions could follow the prescription of Crosslet and Watson (2006). They argue international education needs to: 1) gain a better understanding of one's own educational systems; 2) satisfy intellectual and theoretical curiosity about other cultures and their education systems; 3) foster a better understanding of the relationship between education and the wider society; 4) promote an improved international understanding and cooperation through increased sensibility to different world views and cultures.

In order to offer international student teaching opportunities, Alfaro (2008) proposes that universities base their international student teaching programs in schools of education that have developed international partnerships with specific elementary or secondary schools, or universities abroad. They could use a certification by state and national accreditation agencies such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCTE).

International Consortiums

One way to advance global education is to increase collaboration across institutions, is essential to internationalize and globalize educational programs. Educational institutions have to make efforts in this area. Cushner and Mahon (2002) explain the work of the Consortium of Overseas Student Teaching (COST) that supports teacher candidates with international experience on various continents. The opportunity to teach in different socio-cultural contexts with culturally heterogeneous student populations propels

teacher candidates to experience cultural, linguistic, pedagogical, and ideological dissonances, which should help to increase global competences.

Some academic consortia have existed for decades, with multiple areas of collaboration; other are recent and may be focused on international collaboration for the long-term; still others may be responding to a particular short-term problem or opportunity. A focus on joint curricular projects or increasing opportunities for students to study abroad is common. They may include universities from two or three countries working together. Many are initiated by government agencies, while others are funded primarily or entirely by the collaborating institutions.

The U.S. government supports three international collaborative programs:

- *The Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education*: Requires two universities or colleges in Canada, the United States, and Mexico to work together on developing curricula and encouraging student mobility.
- *The EU-US Cooperation in Higher Education and Vocational Training*: Establishes multi-lateral partnerships between institutions in the E.U. and the U.S. for the purpose of setting up joint study programs, increasing student mobility, and promoting dialogue on the recognition of qualifications and accreditations
- *The US-Brazil Higher Education Consortia*: Fosters the exchange of students and faculty within the context of bilateral curricular development between two universities each from the U.S. and Brazil

Another collaborative program is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development that funds collaborative projects between U.S. institutions of higher education and those in developing countries.

An important international collaboration is the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC), which facilitates collaborative projects among higher education institutes and universities in Canada, Mexico and the United States. CONAHEC has developed a listserv and a database to help institutions find suitable partners.

Some collaborative efforts among institutions may not qualify as international consortia, but clearly enhance international opportunities for students and may develop into more formal structures. A number of partnerships have been formed to develop joint programs or to offer courses on-line. For example, Western Illinois University has formed a consortium to

offer a joint master's degree in business administration with the University of Ottawa and the Autonomous University of Queretaro. Students will complete a semester at each institution and a research or internship project in one of the three countries.

Another way of providing global education is to write an international commitment into the college's master plan. This was recently accomplished by Diana Van Der Ploeg, president of Butte College in California, and she has hired the staff necessary to support the master plan. According to Van Der Ploeg, the curriculum committee of Butte College will not approve any new course if it lacks an international component (Mcmurtrie 2008).

These different collaborative models in international education require a large amount of time and effort to conceptualize and carry out, and all have their own set of strengths and weaknesses.

Definitions of Global Competence

One difficulty that frequently crops up in the literature is how to define Globalization and Global Competence. Globalization has been defined by Malcom (1995) as a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and people become increasingly aware that they are receding. It is a phenomenon that represents the emerging world wide interdependence of individuals and countries, which is characterized by various economic, political, cultural and social realities. Most authors see globalization as a highly dynamic process of growing interdependence among nation states, with the implication that issues are becoming global rather than national, and that they demand attention (Omoregie, 2007).

For Godbey and Turlington (2002), globalization is arguably the central social, cultural, political and economic phenomenon of our times. Work, in both the non-profit and for-profit sectors, is increasingly geographically distributed, technologically mediated, team-based, problem-focused, collaborative, multicultural, and international. College and universities must plan their futures in the context of a globalizing world, where not only economic production, but leisure, social, and welfare policies are now subject to external influences, commercial and otherwise.

To some authors the term “globalization tends to be synonymous with “Americanization” (Hunter, 2004), suggesting that America currently leads the globalization effort. Purdy (2003) argues that “at the same time that we disclaim imperial aspirations, we Americans suspect that we are the world universal nation.” In contrast, Srinivasan (2004) has declared that the American century has come to a close, caused by “self-inflicted wounds” based on its design of “a military-industrial media complex.... and its vested interest in periodic war.” Similarly, Mead (2004) concurs that “U.S. military force and cultural appeal have kept the United States at the top of the global order. At the same time there is a plethora of domestic commentary, spanning decades of research and writing, arguing that while American ingenuity and capability have less to worldwide economic and military dominance, U.S. college graduates, on the whole, remain unprepared to join the global workforce.”]

Considerable effort has been made to define global competence. Olson and Koeger (2001) surveyed staff and faculty at New Jersey City University to assess the relationship between international experiences, intercultural sensitivity and global competence. Their results led them to define a globally competent person as “one who has enough substantial knowledge, perceptual understanding and intercultural communication and skills to interact effectively in our globally interdependent world.”

Lambert (1996) has also published works on the topic of global competence. He identifies a globally competent a person as someone who has knowledge of current affairs, empathizes with others, maintains a positive attitude, has an unspecified level of foreign language competence, and values differences between people and cultures. Curran (2002) considers global competence as a developed appreciation of other cultures and the ability to interact with people from foreign lands.

In the private sector, the Swiss Consulting Group, a transnational management firm, identifies in its Global Competency Report 2002, five essential global skills: intercultural facility, effective two-way communication, diverse leadership, systematic best practice sharing, and a truly global design process strategy.

William Brustein (2003), Director of the University Center for International Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, defines global competence as “the ability to communicate effectively across cultural and

linguistic boundaries and to focus on issues that transcend cultures and continents.”

For Brustein, the different aspects of global competence include: the ability to work effectively in different international settings; an awareness of the major currents of global change and the issues arising from such changes; knowledge of global organizations and business activities; the capacity for effective communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries; and a personal adaptability to diverse cultures. In 2004, The Association of International Educators (NAFSA) lists enhancing global competence as one of its priorities and suggests that one can become globally competent studying abroad, but does not define the term global competence (Association of International Educators, 2004).

William Hunter (2004) establishes in his thesis work a definition of the term “Global Competence.” Using the Delphi Technique (Group Techniques for Program Planning) he asked a panel composed of 17 experts who were either international educators or human resources managers/directors for transnational corporations to define the term “global competence.” . The panel defined global competence as *“Having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one’s environment.”* Based on his research, Hunter proposed a “global competency checklist” using an instrument of 22 questions to measures the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences necessary to become globally competent. He defines these concepts as follows:

- **Knowledge:** Understanding cultural norms and expectations, globalization terms and supranational entities, knowledge of world events and world history.
- **Skills:** Ability to speak English and at least one other language, be linguistically and culturally competent, have the ability to live outside one’s own country, collaborate across cultures, participate in projects with people from other cultures and traditions.
- **Attitudes:** Recognition of other cultures, a non-judgmental attitude, openness to new experiences, ability to cope with different cultures.
- **Experiences:** Foreign trips of a long or short duration, experience of culture shock, regular interaction with people of other cultures, experience speaking another language, earning a bachelor’s degree.

Hunter sent his instrument to 133 international educators at higher educational institutions from universities that self-nominated for inclusion in the “Profiles of Success at College and Universities Internationalizing the Campus 2003,” and to 42 human resource directors representing transnational corporations. The findings of this study show that in order to become globally competent, students need to participate in a semester-long study abroad program and become competent in a second language (Hunter 2004).

Methodology

A survey was conducted to know if the employees in Hispanic enterprises have the knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences necessary to become globally competent. This survey instrument was sent to 67 employees who are members of the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The objective was to determine if the employees of the Hispanic enterprises who are affiliated with the Chamber have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences that human resource managers believe are necessary for attaining global competence.

This survey instrument was based on Hunter’s (2004) consensus definition of the term “global competence,” as devised by the Delphi panel and review of the relevant literature. The findings of this part of the study permitted the creation of a 22 question survey.. Using Hunter’s instrument as a base, we selected 15 questions to measure the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences necessary to become globally competent, and we also included two more questions to assess whether universities in the U.S. provide global education to their students.

The methodology for this research uses the Likert scale choices (1=Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5=Strongly agree). The instrument was pilot-tested to ensure that respondents understood the questions, the terms used in the survey, and the potential uses for the data collected. There were some changes. We decided to alter some of Hunter’s questions, to make them more comprehensible, and eliminate others that were not useful for our purposes.

Our questionnaire is divided into three sections. The first section is designed to extract general information about the characteristics of the Hispanic enterprises located in Tucson, Arizona; the second section measures the global competence of the employees; and the third section defines the management style in the employee's organization in order to characterize the degree of employee participation found in the workplace. In this paper we analyze only the second section of the questionnaire to measure the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences of the employees.

Our research hypothesis is that the employees have a good level of global competence (knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences) if the population mean for each Likert statement is ≥ 3.5 , since that is the neutral/agree frontier at the Likert Scale (3=neutral, 4=agree). Based on this working research hypothesis the corresponding statistical hypothesis are the following:

Hypothesis: $H_0: \mu = 3.5$ (neutral/agree frontier), $H_1: \mu > 3.5$

Population

The Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has 643 members including both Hispanic and non-Hispanic enterprises. In 1989, the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (THCC) was incorporated in the State of Arizona. The purpose of the Chamber is to provide, promote, and advance, on a nonprofit basis, the general welfare and prosperity of the Tucson area. We selected more than 67 Hispanic enterprises from a current listing of Hispanic-only enterprises.

The questionnaire and cover letter were sent electronically to representatives of the 67 Hispanic enterprises. The e-mail invitation to complete the questionnaire assured the anonymity of the respondents, who were sent to a website accessible to the authors via hyperlink. Additional information was gathered in direct interviews with managers of the Hispanic Chamber enterprises. We have the support of **Sam Williams Chair of the Business Education Committee of the Chamber**. He invited us to membership luncheons twice to apply the survey personally to targeted members of the Chamber.

The number of total responses was 40. We sent 67 questionnaires by e-mail and had 13 returned (a 19% response rate). From personal interviews of members of the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 27 more were collected (67% response rate). According to the research of Iacobucci and Duhachek (2003) for confidence and reliability measurement of instruments, the minimum sample size is 30. The sample size for our research was 40 respondents.

Instrument Reliability

In order to test the internal consistency of our instrument, we calculated Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for each competency indicator group and contrasted our values with the following values required by standard convention. An alpha value of 0.60 is acceptable for exploratory research; it should be at least 0.70 to be considered adequate; and a minimum criteria of 0.80 is required to be considered a good instrument.

According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), an alpha reliability value of 0.70 could be considered satisfactory for exploratory research, but for other scenarios these researchers state that a value of 0.80 or even 0.90 should be required. The reliability of our instrument (Table 1) is good considering these minimum levels.

Table 1. Instrument Reliability

| | Cronbach’s Alpha | Confidence interval | |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Knowledge | 0.862 | 0.774 | 0.921 |
| Skills | 0.870 | 0.788 | 0.926 |
| Attitudes | 0.849 | 0.742 | 0.849 |
| Experience | 0.673 | 0.417 | 0.827 |
| Education | 0.800 | 0.655 | 0.890 |

With an alpha value of 0.80 as the cutoff point for adequate consistency, we found adequate Cronbach alpha levels for four groups: knowledge (0.862), skills (0.870), attitudes (0.849) and education (0.800). The remaining group, experience (0.673), did not reach an adequate level, but it could be considered acceptable for exploratory research.

Results

In table 2, we see the results for the Hypothesis: $H_0: \mu = 3.5$ (Neutral/agree frontier), $H_1: \mu > 3.5$. we thought that an adequate level for an global competent employee starts at 3.5, and we tested hypothesis for each indicator. Our null hypothesis for each indicator was: $H_0: \mu = 3.5$ and our alternate hypothesis was that $\mu > 3.5$ at a 0.01 significance level. We tested that the population mean for each Likert statement is level 3.5 vs the alternate hypothesis that the population mean is greater than 3.5 (Since Agree=4, Strongly agree=5)

The critical value for a 0.01 significance level, where the sample size equals 40 is $t_{\alpha=0.01, n-1=40} = 2.43$. The decision rule was: Accept H_0 if $t = 2.43$, reject if $t > 2.43$. In table 2, most of the null hypothesis related to intercultural global competencies were accepted, i. e. they do not reach the agreement level of 4.0 There is only one hypothesis statement that was accepted, which refers to the following: "Most employees have an understanding of cultural norms and expectations of his or her own culture" (Var 9).

It is interesting to analyze the results of each global competency: In knowledge, it is curious to see that the employees have knowledge of their own cultures but not of other cultures, and that their knowledge of current world events is low This is evidenced by the lack of understanding of the concept of globalization. In skills, even though employees have the ability to work with people from other cultures, they have less successful participation in projects together, most of them do not speak a second language, and they have problems living outside their own culture.

The respondents showed a good international attitude reflected in risk-taking in pursuit of cross-cultural learning development. They recognize their own world view is not universal, but some had a judgmental reaction to cultural differences between their own and other cultures and traditions. With regard to international experiences, though all respondents reported having taken multiple short-term trips, only a few engaged in cross-cultural business interactions, and not all of them spoke a foreign language at work. Finally, even though half of the respondents held a Bachelor's degree, they needed additional international competencies to work effectively at the Hispanic enterprises where they were employed

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing for Global competence in Hispanic Enterprises

| Hypothesis: $H_0: \mu = 3.5$, $H_1: \mu > 3.5$ | | $t_{\alpha=0.01, n-1=40} = 2.43$ | | | Decision | p |
|---|--|----------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------|--------------|
| | | Mean | St.Dev. | t value | | |
| KGlob06 | Most employees have an understanding of the concept of "globalization" | 3.15 | 1.09 | -1.98 | Accepted | 0.027 |
| Kworl07 | Most employees have knowledge of current world events | 3.41 | 0.99 | -0.56 | Accepted | 0.288 |
| KOCul08 | Most employees have an understanding of cultural norms and expectations of people from other cultures. | 3.31 | 0.95 | -1.26 | Accepted | 0.107 |
| OwCul09 | Most employees have an understanding of cultural norms and expectations of his or her own culture. | 4.05 | 0.69 | 5.02 | Rejected | 0.000 |
| SpLang10 | Most employees speak at least one other language in addition to English | 3.26 | 1.14 | -1.33 | Accepted | 0.095 |
| OthCu11 | Most employees have successfully participated in project with people from other cultures and traditions. | 3.46 | 1.07 | -0.22 | Accepted | 0.412 |
| LivOth12 | Most employees have the ability to live outside his or her culture. | 3.31 | 1.13 | -1.07 | Accepted | 0.147 |
| WKoth13 | Most employees have the ability working with people from other cultures and traditions. | 3.69 | 0.98 | 1.23 | Accepted | 0.113 |
| NoUniv14 | Most employees recognize that his or her own world view is not universal | 3.45 | 1.06 | -0.31 | Accepted | 0.380 |
| NotJud15 | Most employees have a non-judgmental reaction to cultures differences of other cultures and traditions. | 3.36 | 1.11 | -0.79 | Accepted | 0.217 |
| CrCul 16 | Most employees are willing to take risk in pursuit of cross-cultural learning and personal development | 3.41 | 0.99 | -0.56 | Accepted | 0.288 |
| InAct17 | Most employees interact regularly with at least one foreign business culture | 3.41 | 1.04 | -0.54 | Accepted | 0.297 |
| SpWk18 | Most employees speak another language more than 25% of the time at work | 3.13 | 1.24 | -1.87 | Accepted | 0.034 |
| KTrip19 | Most employees have knowledge and experience gained from multiple short-term trips. | 3.27 | 0.80 | -1.63 | Accepted | 0.057 |
| Bach20 | Most employees hold a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent | 2.97 | 1.14 | -2.81 | Accepted | 0.004 |
| EmpGE21 | Your employees have received formal education in "global competences" | 2.51 | 1.04 | -5.75 | Accepted | 0.000 |
| UNGIEd22 | Colleges and universities in the U.S. currently provide "global education" to their students | 2.97 | 0.93 | -3.46 | Accepted | 0.001 |

Likert scale : 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Conclusion

Our main research question is: *Do employees of Hispanic enterprises have the adequate levels of knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences to be considered globally competent?* Our first concern was to identify what was meant, in terms of education and workplace skills, by global competence. From our literature review we have found that although there is a consensus on the need of a global competence education there is not a consensus on what global competence is. From this review we concluded that a good definition of global competence has been given by Hunter (2004) derived from his Delphi Panel Research of 17 educational and 42 human resources managers. Having global competence, as defined by this panel is “having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one’s environment.”

In addition to defining global competence, Hunter formulated a 22 question instrument to measure four main elements of global competence: knowledge, skills, experiences and attitudes. Based on Hunter’s instrument, we designed our questionnaire as Likert-type statements and categorized them by the following groups: knowledge, skills, attitudes, experience and education.

Supported by the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, we collected 40 questionnaires filled out by THCC members about their employees global competence levels. We calculated Cronbach alphas for each competency indicator group. With an alpha value of 0.80 as our cutoff point, we found adequate Cronbach alpha levels for four groups: knowledge (0.862), skills (0.870), attitudes (0.849) and education (0.800). The remaining group, experience (0.673), did not reach an adequate level. Based on the Likert type levels: 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly agree, we thought that an adequate level for a globally competent employee starts at 4, and we tested our hypothesis for each indicator.

Our null hypothesis for each indicator was: $H_0: \mu = 3.5$ and our alternate hypothesis was that $\mu > 4$ at a 0.01 significance level. According to our statistical evaluation only two of our 17 global competency hypothesis were supported or accepted. Only two were accepted: “Most employees have an understanding of cultural norms and expectations of his or her own culture”

and “Most employees have the ability working with people from other cultures and traditions.” The hypotheses for all other indicators were not supported.

Our conclusion is that there is not enough evidence that Hispanic enterprises employees have the adequate levels of knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences to be considered globally competent. Even though some of them have international experiences and attitude; they need to increase their international competency in the area of knowledge, and especially international skills. If the employees that we interviewed seem like the most likely individuals to be globally competent since they work for Hispanic enterprises in an Anglo country and since they almost necessarily have to speak Spanish and English and also another lesson would be that even living on/near the border with a foot in two different worlds does not guarantee global competence. This aspect could be seen as adding an important insight into the nature of global competence and it would strengthen the idea that universities need to add a global education component in order to bolster the knowledge and international skills (the two areas not lacking in the employees interviewed of their graduates).

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