DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

„Cross-border Education and Development Co-operation"

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE EXECUTION OF A JOINT DEGREE COURSE

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veritas iustitia libertas

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

Lertrak Srikitjakarn

CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY

1ST Joint Master of Science Degree Course in Veterinary Public Health (MScVPH) for the Southeast Asian Region

Features:

- Joint Degree ("Dual Award") Programme
- „Sandwich" model
- Modular curriculum structure, ECTS
- Combined classroom and field research
- Regional teaching and research resources

Co-Financing:

ASIA LINK

EUROPEAID
CO-OPERATION OFFICE

DAAD

Government, Kingdom of Thailand

PROBLEMS MSc-PROGRAMMES

Technical: 🔴 **Screening process for students:**
English language deficiency
Various technical background

🔴 **Linkage of theory/practice**

Structural: 🔴 **Institution heads not involved:**
Teacher/student relationship
Problem solving: administration,
logistics, ..

🔴 **Personal relationships important
for success**

EXPERIENCE
40 years international postgraduate training
1992: International MSc programmes

ACCREDITATION POLICY

Accreditation:

- systematic, standardised scrutiny to ensure uniform quality
- ensure quality 'minimal critera' of training contents, teaching, transparency of training programme

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= Comparability, ‚NORMS' of contents,
processes and conduct

→ Mentality, behaviour, values: Culture
differences

INTER-CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE: by what do our cultures differ?

INTER-CULTURAL COMPETENCY TO ACT:

can we use the cultural contexts for constructive problem solving?

CULTURE-ORIENTATION-FRAMEWORK (KORA*)

- decribes particulars and characteristics of cultures, contexts, not giving value marks

- **EXTREME PROFILES OF TWO CULTURAL DIMENSIONS**

KORA: Culture dimensions (1)

COMMUNI-CATION

High-Context - **context of saying something important, talk around issues, use indirect expressions, non-verbal signs, how something is said, harmony and face-saving, establish and consolidate personal relations**

Low-Context - **context unimportant, straight to the point, direct mode of expression, what is said, controversy wanted, subject-matter oriented**

KORA: Culture dimensions (2)

We-Culture — **identity in group/family, no private life, harmonic group decides and acts on group norms, opinion depends on group affiliation, networks of dependencies, harmony, consensus, adaptation highest values**

GROUP-ORIENTATION, INDIVIDUALISM

I-Culture — **identity is settled in individuum, autonomous individual decides, action on universalistic norms, individual opinion expected, authenticity, truth, self-realisation highest values**

KORA: INTER-CULTURAL DIFFERENCERS IN STUDYING AND TEACHING

High context, We-culture

vs

Low-context, I-culture

1. Targets and natures of university studies

2. Teaching and learning situations

3. Relationships between students and lecturers, communication

KORA: 1. TARGETS AND NATURES OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES

High-context, We-culture		Low-context, I-culture
Tradition/Custom		Innovation/Reform
Harmony/consensus		Confrontation/dissent
Fitting into culture/society		Forming of individuals
Gain reputation, status		Market value
Failure: Loss of face		Failure: Minor mishap
Students expect contents		Learning how to learn
Diploma for reputation		Diploma: low symbolic value
Knowlewdge for wisdom		Knowledge is truth and power

KORA: 2. TEACHING AND LEARNING SITUATIONS

High-context, We-culture

Low-context, I-culture

Structure, targets, plans

Receptive learning

Students duties: care/accuracy

Lecturers know everything

Lecturers: criticism is disrespect

Lecturers ease the way

Teaching success: competency of lecturer

First learn, then think

Unstructured teaching

Active learning

Encouragement: new approaches, strategies

Lecturers admit deficits

Lecturers: discussion/ criticism constructive

Own solutions/approaches

Success depending on discussion

Learn by thinking

KORA: 3. RELATIONSHIPS STUDENTS-LECTURERS, COMMUNICATION

High-context, We-culture

Low-context, I-culture

Argument/criticism of lecturers

Students argue/criticise lecturers

Respect of lect. outside

Lect. dealt with equally

Communication: initiative from lecturer

Lect. respect independence of students

Respect to old lecturers

Young lecturers popular

Students express passively

Students express actively

Students reserved/modest

Self-assured, stand out

Harmony: lect. + students

Criticism/argument fruitful

Admiration of lecturers

Kindness, social dealings

Lecturer: guru, individual wisdom

Every competent lecturer: objective truth

KORA: SUMMARY

High-context, We-culture **? ?** **Low-context, I-culture**

1. No conflict situation: __both__ partners are in transition:

Public sector (education, economy, ..) ahead of (some) traditional societal values, behaviours

Educational reforms still due (structures, contents, delivery, services, ...)
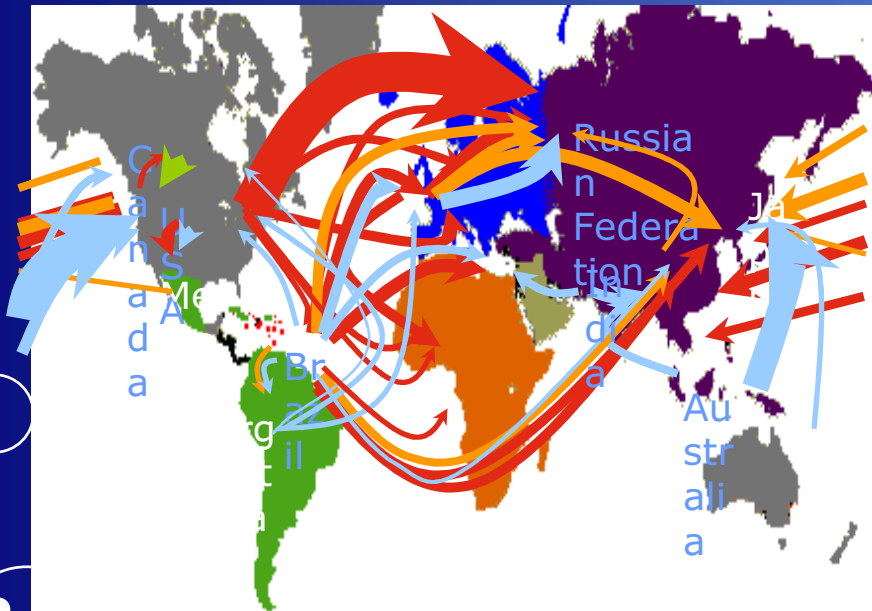
CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE ?

➡ **JOINT PROGRAMMES (COMPONENTS) IN EDUCATION REFORM AND -MANAGEMENT**

AIM: POSITION MSC COURSE IN INTER-NATIONAL, COMPETITIVE MARKET

KEEP ABREAST OF GLOBALISATION

THANK YOU