„Cross-border Education and Development Co-operation“

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

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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] [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 criteria' 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*)

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

- EXTREME PROFILES OF TWO CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

* v. Queis, D.: Neues Handbuch Hochschullehre, 2005
KORA: Culture dimensions (1)

**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 DIFFERENCES 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-context, We-culture</th>
<th>Low-context, I-culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradition/Custom</td>
<td>Innovation/Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony/consensus</td>
<td>Confrontation/dissent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitting into</td>
<td>Forming of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culture/society</td>
<td>individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain reputation, status</td>
<td>Market value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure: Loss of face</td>
<td>Failure: Minor mishap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students expect contents</td>
<td>Learning how to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma for reputation</td>
<td>Diploma: low symbolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge for wisdom</td>
<td>Knowledge is truth and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>power</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
KORA: 2. TEACHING AND LEARNING SITUATIONS

High-context, We-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

Low-context, I-culture

- 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**
- Argument/criticism of lecturers
- Respect of lect. outside
- Communication: initiative from lecturer
- Respect to old lecturers
- Students express passively
- Students reserved/modest
- Harmony: lect. + students
- Admiration of lecturers
- Lecturer: guru, individual wisdom

**Low-context, I-culture**
- Students argue/criticise lecturers
- Lect. dealt with equally
- Lect. respect independence of students
- Young lecturers popular
- Students express actively
- Self-assured, stand out
- Criticism/argument fruitful
- Kindness, social dealings
- 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 INTERNATIONAL, COMPETITIVE MARKET

KEEP ABREAST OF GLOBALISATION

THANK YOU