Paweł Ziemiański

Politechnika Gdańska

pzi@zie.pg.gda.pl

Katarzyna Stankiewicz

Politechnika Gdańska

kst@zie.pg.gda.pl

Attitudes towards Collaboration in Multicultural Teams in the opinion of Polish and Chinese Students

Abstract: The main goal of this paper is to present results of research that addresses the issue of attitudes towards working in both multicultural and single culture teams among Polish and Chinese students. The relationship between those attitudes and factors that includes individual experiences of research participants as well as characteristics of team tasks was analyzed. The research was conducted with students of one Polish and one Chinese technical university as participants. Research findings indicate that there are several important similarities as well as differences in preferences of two analyzed groups. The most important differences pertain to stronger preference of Polish students towards working in a single-culture team when the task requires assuming responsibility, trust and mutual understanding of team members. Additionally, the declared level of experience in single-culture and multicultural team was differently related with preferences towards these two kinds of team among Polish and Chinese participants. Obtained results may be

utilized in order to develop recommendations for effective educational efforts aimed at developing multicultural teamwork competencies of future managers and specialists from both of these countries.

Key words: Team Work, Diversity Management, Multicultural Team, Single-culture Team, Polish – Chinese Collaboration

Introduction

Relations between Poland and China have long played an important role in mutual trade and economic interconnections and recently received a considerable amount of attention as numerous initiatives aimed at fostering and increasing collaboration have been started. One of the most recent important events was both countries presidents' declaration of strategic partnership[1]. Both Poland and China can greatly benefit from bilateral cultural, educational and economic projects and programs. Those initiatives created and agreed by authorities need to be realized by people characterized by both adequate competences and attitudes towards work in multicultural teams in which cooperation takes place on daily basis. It is particularly important if economic potential of such agreements is to be realized (Szczudlik-Tatar, 2015). One of the occasions when necessary competences can be acquired takes place during higher education that is more often aimed at preparing people to work in the globalized world. However, the effectiveness of educational interventions as well as the extent to which acquired knowledge will be utilized depends on attitudes and preferences towards working in multicultural (MCT) and single-culture teams (SCT). Scientific exploration of these issues seems to currently particularly important.

The goal of the present research was to investigate preferences towards working in MCTs and SCTs among Polish and Chinese students. It was also verified how students' preferences are related with vari-

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1. http://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wizyty-zagraniczne/art,34,prezydent-otworzyl-polsko-chinskie-forum-gospodarcze-w-szanghaju.html.

ous task requirements and with declared level of previous experience in these two kinds of teams.

Authors believe that data obtained in this research may provide important insights that can be used in order to recognize barriers and lead to the improvement of the design of future managers' higher education process and collaboration of multicultural teams.

Challenges for multicultural teams

It may be asserted that the utilization of MCTs' potential requires actions that are aimed at maximizing effects of their strengths with the simultaneous reduction of possible drawbacks. As the latter are mainly related to teamwork process organization and conflict resolution, it is possible that without their attenuation, an MCT may not be able to have an opportunity to make use of its potential. It may therefore never be used and remain hidden behind interpersonal conflicts and ineffective actions. Behfar K., Kern M. and Brett J. (2006) identified several challenges that need to be overcome by MCTs if they are to achieve high performance level. Authors divided these challenges into two categories. The first one includes challenges that are not unique to MCTs and can also be encountered in SCTs. The second category is comprised of challenges unique to MCTs. These categories were identified as a result of a qualitative research which involved MBA students with previous experience in SCTs and/or MCTs. Authors used a concept mapping analysis method which involves collection and sorting statements generated by participants (Jackson and Trochim, 2002). Results of their investigation are presented in Table 1.

Table1. Challenges encountered by multicultural teams

Challenges encountered by multicultural and single-culture teams	Challenges encountered only by multicultural teams
Differences in the way in which discordant opinions are expressed – a preference towards direct versus indirect communication	Differences in approach to hierarchy and status
Differences in preferences towards fast and efficient versus slow and deliberate decision making and problem solving	Pre-existing prejudice and stereotypes held by team members
Different attitudes to time and urgency	Perception of the level of team members' participation in task accomplishment related to problems in communication
Differences in preferences towards establishing and sustaining boundaries between private and work life and differences in workplace behaviors perceived as acceptable	Communication problems related to using certain vocabulary and/or having a specific accent
	Differences in the perceived level of reached agreement and /or mutual understanding

Source: own elaboration based on Behfar K., Kern M. and Brett J. (2006)

All presented challenges can be encountered in MCTs. The fact that some of them are unique for this kind of teams make even high levels of experience gained in single culture teams insufficient in face of certain challenges. Behfar K., Kern M. and Brett J. (2006) concluded their investigation with the statement that challenges not unique to MCTs are most likely representing universal aspects of teamwork. The analysis of participants' answers describing results of critical incidents related to those challenges led to a conclusion that negative consequences are more severe in situations categorized as exclusive to multicultural teams. This rationale is in line with the assertion that certain risks need to be mitigated if an MCT is to use its strengths including for example an access to a greater number of diverse ideas and perspectives. These risks include aspects that are in both

columns of the Table 1. Interestingly, most of them are related with widely described cultural dimensions that create a specific catalogue of possible cultural differences. For example "Differences in approach to hierarchy and status" are related with differences in Power Distance (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2004) which is defined as the extent to which people of lower status accept inequalities. A preference towards assertive versus indirect way of expressing discordant opinions is related with seeking harmony which is a facet of different cultural dimensions in different theoretical approaches. It may be considered a facet of Masculinity/Femininity (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2004), Assertiveness (Chokkar, Brodbeck and House, 2007) or Individualism/Collectivism (Matsumoto and Juang, 2012). The more certain cultures differ on cultural dimensions, the larger the cultural distance between them and, as a consequence, the more challenging the process of establishing and sustaining effective collaboration. Cultural differences between Poland and China are discussed in the next section.

The comparison between Polish and Chinese business cultures

In order to make the comparison between different cultures possible scholars and business practitioners developed several models which include certain cultural dimensions on which different cultures differ. Among the most often applied ones are propositions of Hofstede G. and Hofstede G.J. (2004), Trompenaars F. and Hampden-Turner C. (2012), Meyer E. (2014), Gesteland R. (2005) and the GLOBE model (e.g. Chokkar, Brodbeck and House, 2007). It is important to state that all these theoretical propositions complement each other as their authors focus on different aspect and effects of culture. For example Trompenaars focuses on culture's effect on shaping and managing organizations whereas Gesteland deals to larger extent with cross-cultural business relations and negotiating

deals. A list of selected differences between Polish and Chinese cultures is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Dimensional differences between Chinese and Polish culture

Polish culture	Chinese culture
Individualism	Collectivism
High uncertainty avoidance	Low uncertainty avoidance
Inner-directed	Outer-directed
Short term orientation	Long term orientation
Masculinity	Masculinity
High power distance	High power distance

Source: own preparation.

It needs to be emphasized that presenting cultures in such way involves a certain degree of inevitable simplification (Voronov and Singer, 2002). Describing each of those differences is beyond the scope of the current article. Authors decided to focus on individualism-collectivism as it is the dimensions that is inherently connected with the attitude towards groups, including teamwork.

Individualism and collectivism is one of the most important cultural dimensions that are helpful in defining and distinguishing culture-based behavior. Additionally, it allows to explain diverse behaviors. Generally speaking it pertains to the extent to which a particular culture gives priority to individual needs, desires and strivings above needs, desires and strivings of a group (Matsumoto and Juang, 2012). Members of individualistic societies usually belong to numerous groups (e.g. social, sport, religious, voluntary or other group of people connected by common values or interests) but it is relatively easy for them to leave a group they belong to. In contrast, members of collectivistic cultures belong to a smaller number of groups but ties with these in-groups are much stronger and become important elements

of their self-concept (Matsumoto D. and Juang, 2012). What is more, rules that govern behaviors towards member of in-groups and out-groups differ significantly in individualistic and collectivistic cultures. In the latter one is obliged to display unequivocal loyalty towards members of in-groups. Members of collectivistic societies show higher in-group favorism which can have many forms ranging from an increased psychological distance to an overt discrimination. In individualistic cultures on the other hand, people treat members of in-groups and out-groups in more similar way. One of the most striking aspects of differences demonstrating the way in which loyalty towards group members affects behavior is related with the varying level of displayed conformism across cultures Brown R. (2006).

Defining a particular country's position on a cultural dimension is always relative as it requires comparison with other countries. In all culture classifications China is presented as a country that is very close to the collectivism pole of the Individualism/Collectivism dimension. The influence of this dimension is visible in the Chinese approach to teamwork. Examples were obtained for instance in a study aimed at comparing cognitions about project management including teamwork among Chinese and Western construction project managers (Chen and Partington, 2004). Western participants recruited from UK-based construction companies were compared to their Chinese counterparts. It was found that Chinese participants more often compared their teams and teamwork organization to a family. They perceived their duties as similar to those which are ascribed to the family's father and that extend beyond the workplace. Additionally, Chinese managers preferred to work with people whom they already knew and with whom they collaborated in the past. If it was necessary to include another person into the team, they preferred someone who was introduced by a trusted current team member. Western managers also stressed the importance of teamwork and good relationships within the project team but they perceived it as limited to work and a particular project realization. They more often declared that they perceived establishing a project team as an

opportunity to meet new people and therefore to a larger extent preferred to collaborate with people whom they did not know.

Poland can be considered a more collectivistic culture when compared to for example Anglo-Saxon countries or more individualistic if it is compared to East Asian countries. For example in a study that examined norms pertaining to nonverbal collaboration Poland (and Hungary) was classified as a more collectivistic country and Polish participants' reactions were compared to those displayed by US Americans (Matsumoto and Juang, 2012). For the purpose of the current paper Poland is however classified as an individualistic country as its position on this dimension is much closer to that pole when compared to China (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2004). What is more, some of the existing research results indicate that Polish people in fact prefer to work individually (Chwiałkowska, 2012). Poles can therefore be expected to perceive teams and teamwork as just an element of professional life and place smaller emphasis on the importance of being involved in a long team-building process and developing a team that will become an important part of their self-concept.

Cultural Differences and Teamwork

Characteristics of collectivistic approach to in-groups and out-groups can have both positive and negative effects on teamwork in organizations. Examples can be found within the Chinese cultural context where the fact that teamwork is intertwined with personal relationships can often result in cross-cultural misunderstanding. Goodall K., Li N. and Warner M. (2007) conducted a qualitative study with Western expatriate managers operating in China as research participants. Some of Western managers chose to use the term "clique" instead of "team" when they described their experience with approach to team collaboration in China. They emphasized that it is important to understand *gaunxi* which describes connections and relation-

ships between people in China in order to become aware of factors that determine the effectiveness of teamwork. Connections (*guanxi*) are formed between people who for example originate from the same town or region, graduated from the same school or university or used to work together in the past. They trust each other but may find it difficult to collaborate with people of different background, in particular if they belong to a different *guanxi* (Chen Yi-Feng N. and Tjosvold, 2013). The effect that Chinese business culture can have on teamwork is dualistic. On one hand strong feeling of obligations and a desire to develop and sustain harmony in relationships with others as well as the importance of trust may facilitate teamwork. On the other however, loyalty towards people outside of a team and the fact that a high performance level cannot be obtained before appropriate relationships are established posit challenges to teamwork. The process of developing such relationships is usually lengthy in China, in particular when a MCT is formed. Poland is also sometimes described as a relation-oriented culture (Gesteland, 2005). However, as previously mentioned, it can be perceived in that manner when compared to particular Western countries like for example those belonging to the Anglo cluster (House R. et al., 2004).

It can be observed that there are both similarities and differences between Poland and China among cultural dimensions presented in Table 2. As culture's position on these dimensions describes its representatives' attitude and preferences towards different aspects of work and business, it can be proposed that there are certain differences and similarities in preferences towards working in MCTs or SCTs. The verification of this statement was the main goal of the study described in the paper's following part.

Present Research

The aim of the conducted study was:

• to examine the preferences related to work in a multicultural team (MCT) vs. a single-culture team (SCT) among students preparing to work in the roles of managers and entrepreneurs in today's globalized labour market, and in particular:

• verify the existence of differences in preferences for working in a multicultural (MCT) vs. a single-culture team (SCT), depending on the requirements of the task that the team would be performing,

• verify the existence of differences in preferences for working in a multicultural (MCT) vs. a single-culture team (SCT), depending on the respondents' country of origin (Poland vs. China);

• verify the existence of differences in preferences for working in a multicultural (MCT) vs. a single-culture team (SCT), depending on the respondents' level of experience in teamwork in multicultural vs. single-cultural teams.

Research Participants

The survey was conducted among Polish students of International Management at the Faculty of Management and Economics of the Gdańsk University of Technology and Chinese students of International Course Program at the Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics. One of the clearly highlighted objectives of both universities is preparing students to work as managers in today's globalized labour market. The survey, which is meant to be a pilot study and was the initial stage of the planned research project, was responded to by 121 participants, including 64 Polish students (23 men and 41 women) and 57 Chinese students (22 men, 31 women and 4 persons who did not indicate their gender). The mean age of respondents

was 22.3 years (SD 2.04). The mean age of Polish students was 23.1 years (SD 0.8) and 21.4 years in case of Chinese students (SD 2.6).

Research methods and results

The study was conducted using a survey questionnaire in English, which was the language of instruction for all participants.

In order to obtain answers to the research questions, the respondents were first given the following introduction: "Imagine a situation in which you can choose to work either in a single culture team or in a multicultural team. Which of those (single culture or multicultural team) would provide greater possibility of success in face of each of the task requirements stated in the table below?" The rest of the question consisted of a list of 20 requirements associated with tasks. The list was based on previous literature review conducted by the authors. Task requirements were related e.g. to cognitive and informational diversification, flexibility, cooperation and involvement in teamwork, as well as trust and atmosphere within the team. Respondents provided their answers using a five-point Likert scale where 1 meant "I strongly agree that a single culture team would provide higher chances of success", 2 "I agree that a single culture team would provide higher chances of success", 3 "Neither a single nor a multicultural team would provide higher chances of success", 4 "I agree that a multicultural team would provide higher chances of success", 5 "I strongly agree that a multicultural team would provide higher chances of success". Statistical analysis of obtained data was conducted.

In the first stage of the analysis, the t-Student for one group test was used in order to verify the absence vs. presence of responses indicative of the existence of preference for work in an SCT or an MCT according to the requirements of the task among all participants. Obtaining the mean of 3 for a given task requirement means no preferences for working in either sin-

gle-culture or multicultural teams. Obtaining the mean significantly higher than 3 indicates a preference for working in MCT, whereas the mean significantly lower than 3 indicates a preference for working in an SCT. The results obtained for the individual task requirements are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Means and t-Student test results showing the differences between the statements of all the subjects and the tested value of 3 as a measure of their preference to work in SCT or MCT depending on the requirements of the task

	The mean of responses	t-Student	Significance-level	Preferences to work in a team
Creativity	4.40	19.24	0.0001	MCT
Out of the box thinking	4.27	12.74	0.0001	MCT
Resourcefulness	3.92	8.92	0.0001	MCT
Risktaking	3.43	3.70	0.001	MCT
Ability to anticipate the future course of actions	3.21	2.15	0.05	MCT
Appropriate team climate	3.20	1.85	Irrelevant	Lack
Cooperation	3.17	1.63	Irrelevant	Lack
Flexibility	3.13	1.23	Irrelevant	Lack
Coping with stress	3.12	1.16	Irrelevant	Lack
Commitment	3.11	1.37	Irrelevant	Lack
Assertiveness	3.06	0.61	Irrelevant	Lack
Persistence	3.01	0.18	Irrelevant	Lack
Efficiency	2.96	-0.30	Irrelevant	Lack
Assuming responsibility by team members	2.92	-0.73	Irrelevant	Lack
Self-reliance	2.91	-0.83	Irrelevant	Lack
Self-confidence	2.85	-1.49	Irrelevant	Lack
Trust	2.26	-7.13	0.0001	SCT
Quickdecisionmaking	2.22	-8.06	0.0001	SCT
Like-mindedness	2.19	-7.84	0.0001	SCT
Mutual understanding among team members	2.15	-7.33	0.0001	SCT

Source: own work.

    The analysis of the results revealed that in the studied group the strong-est preference to work in an MCT occurs when a task requires creativity (4.45), out of the box thinking (4.34) and resourcefulness (3.81) and, al-though in that case the preference is weaker, an ability to anticipate the fu-ture course of action (3.21). It means that working in an MCT is preferred by respondents in situations when teamwork can benefit from the cognitive and informational differentiation of team members. An interesting result is the preference for working in an MCT when the requirements of the task are associated with risk taking (3.43). On the other hand, the preference to work in an SCT is strongest when tasks require mutual understanding among team members (2.15), like-mindedness (2.19), quick decision making (2.22) and trust (2.26). The obtained results seem to be logical and intuitively un-derstandable. Multicultural teams enable the use of the greater potential of cognitive variety. On the other hand in situations requiring unanimity, which facilitates the ability to make decisions quickly and increases the sense of confidence, single-culture teams may be seen by the respondents as more effective. In addition, it is worth noting that the presented results related to the preference to work in SCT and MCT are confirmed by the conclusions of the studies presented in the literature (e.g. Stankiewicz and Ziemiański, 2015). Across other requirements of the tasks, no statistically significant preference to work in an SCT or a MCT was observed. It may mean that in the respondents' opinion tasks with such requirements can just as effec-tively be performed by either type of teams.

    In the second stage of analysis, the t-Student test for two independent groups was used in order to verify the absence vs. the existence of differ-ences in preferences for work in an SCT and an MCT among students from Poland and China. The results obtained for the individual task requirements for Polish and Chinese students are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Means and t-Student test results indicating differences between Chinese and Polish students preferences regarding work in a SCT or a MCT, depending on task requirements

Task requirement	The mean of Chinese students responses	The mean of Polish students responses	t -Student	The significance level of differences
Creativity	4.41	4.39	0.09	irrelevant
Out of the box thinking	4.14	4.38	-1.17	irrelevant
Resourcefulness	4.08	3.78	1.48	irrelevant
Ability to anticipate the future course of actions	3.30	3.14	0.79	irrelevant
Cooperation	3.26	3.09	0.78	irrelevant
Risktaking	3.26	3.57	-1.32	irrelevant
Appropriate team climate	3.21	3.20	0.04	irrelevant
Assuming responsibility by team members	3.15	2.71	2.20	<0.05
Coping with stress	3.14	3.11	0.13	irrelevant
Flexibility	3.10	3.15	-0.23	irrelevant
Persistence	2.98	3.04	-0.34	irrelevant
Self-reliance	2.98	2.85	0.61	irrelevant
Assertiveness	2.94	3.17	-1.03	irrelevant
Commitment	2.94	3.26	-1.91	irrelevant
Self-confidence	2.85	2.84	0.07	irrelevant
Efficiency	2.82	3.09	-1.25	irrelevant
Trust	2.54	2.00	2.68	<0.05
Mutual understanding among team members	2.44	1.90	2.39	<0.05
Like-mindedness	2.26	2.12	0.66	irrelevant
Quick decisionmaking	2.12	2.32	-1.04	irrelevant

Source: own work.

In most of the studied cases, related to the requirements of team tasks, no statistically significant differences between the responses obtained from Chinese and Polish students were observed. It can therefore be con-

cluded that in general, the preferences to work in SCT and MCT are similar in these two groups. It should also be noted, however, that three significant differences were obtained. They are related to preferences to work in SCT vs. MCT when the task requires assuming responsibility by team members, trust and mutual understanding among team members. In the indicated cases the average for responses received from Polish students was statistically significantly lower than the average for responses from Chinese students. It means that Polish students were more likely than Chinese to prefer working in SCT when tasks require understanding, trust and responsibility. Particularly noteworthy is the mean obtained in the group of Polish students in the case when the task requires mutual understanding among team members (1.9). It is the lowest mean result from all the answers provided by all the participants across each of the tasks and indicates a very strong preference to work in SCT. Attention should also be paid to answers obtained for the cases when a task requires assuming responsibility by team members. In this case, the mean scores from the responses of Polish and Chinese students indicate a preference to work in SCT in the case of Polish students and a preferences to work in an MCT in the case of Chinese students.

In order to obtain the answer to the question whether work experience in SCT or MCT is associated with a preference for selecting a particular type of team depending on the requirements of the task, the respondents were asked to indicate their answers to the following two statements using a seven-point Likert scale:

a) Indicate your level of experience in working in a single-culture team using a scale from 1 (no experience at all) to 7 (a lot of experience)

b) Indicate your level of experience in working in a multicultural team using a scale from 1 (no experience at all) to 7 (a lot of experience)

The statistically significant results of r-Pearson correlation conducted for each of the variables analysed in each group of respondents' area shown in Table 5. Due to the way the survey scale is constructed, the neg-

ative correlation coefficients indicate a preference for working in an SCT, while the positive ones for working in an MCT.

Table 5. The coefficients of the statistically significant correlations between the experience of working in single-culture (SCT) and multicultural (MCT) teams of the surveyed students from Poland and China and their preference for the choice of work in a particular type of team depending on the type of task

Task requirement	SCT experience				MCT experience			
	POLAND		CHINA		POLAND		CHINA	
	r-Pearson	Preferences to work in a team	r-Pearson	Preferences to work in a team	r-Pearson	Preferences to work in a team	r-Pearson	Preferences to work in a team
Assuming responsibility by team members	-0.45***	SCT						
Trust	-0.28*	SCT			0.37**	MCT		
Cooperation	-0.28*	SCT			0.30	MCT		
Flexibility			-0.47***	SCT			0.31*	MCT
Appropriate team climate			-0.44**	SCT	0.41**	MCT		
Mutual understanding among team members			-0.30*	SCT				
Risktaking			0.40**	MCT				
Coping with stress							-0.28*	SCT
Quick decision-making							0.32&	MCT
Like-mindedness							0.40&	MCT

***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Source: own work.

The analysis of results obtained in the group of Chinese and Polish students can be carried out in MCTfaceted way and is presented below separately for the SCT and MCT experience:

- Experience of working in an SCT:

the correlations between the declared level of experience in an SCT and the preference to work in such a team in both groups of students differs across task requirements. Among Polish students greater experience of working in SCT is related with a stronger preference for working in such a team if the task requires assuming responsibility by team members, trust or cooperation. However, among Chinese students greater experience of working in SCT is related with stronger preference for working in such a team if the task requires flexibility, appropriate team climate or mutual understanding among team members. In addition, it was found that the greater the experience of working in the SCT among Chinese students, the greater their preference to choose MCT when the task requires risk taking.

- Experience of working in MCT:

the correlations between the declared experience of working in MCT and the preference for working in such team in the group of Polish students occur if the task requires appropriate team climate, trust and cooperation, whereas in the case of Chinese students the greater experience in MCT, the stronger the preference for working in such a team if the task requires like-mindedness, quick decision making and flexibility. In addition, it was found that the greater the experience of working in MCT among Chinese students, the stronger their preference to choose SCT when the task requires coping with stress.

Summary

Findings obtained in this research can be considered an important advancement in the level of current knowledge regarding preferences to-

wards working in multi versus single culture teams. Even though the World becomes more globalized and unprecedented advancement of technology facilitate cross-cultural cooperation and development of multinational organizations, cultural differences remain with their potential for becoming an asset as well as a threat to effective team work. The importance of this study is connected with the fact that research participants were recruited from the group of young people who study in educational institutions whose aim is to prepare them to become conscious members of modern organizations and their leaders. When this fact is taken into consideration, it seems optimistic that both groups of research participants perceive multiculturalism as a characteristic that may be the team's strength when a task requires cognitive diversification.

It is also important to notice that with regard to some task requirements, SCTs were declared by participants as more effective. Such result was obtained when the task was described as demanding trust, quick decision making, like-mindedness and mutual understanding. This result is also logical and not surprising. Its analysis may lead to a conclusion that when such type of task is to be performed by a multicultural team, the establishment of certain regulations in the team may be beneficial.

The comparison of results obtained in the group of Polish and Chinese students seem to be particularly noteworthy and interesting. First of all it should be noted that there were only three task requirements in which significantly important differences were found between two analyzed groups (i.e. mutual understanding, trust and assuming responsibility). Across all of them Polish students indicated a stronger preference towards working in SCT. The uncertainty avoidance is the cultural dimension that may be perceived as congruent with this result. Uncertainty avoidance is related with the level of stress and psychological discomfort experienced in face of ambiguity and its level is higher in Poland than in China (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2004). Tasks that are related with these three requirements can also be considered as ones that may be perceived by people from an uncer-

tainty avoidant culture as threatening. In result, they may indicate a stronger preference towards an SCT as cultural variability of team members may even further increase ambiguity.

It is also important to notice that there are some differences between Polish and Chinese participants in the nature and strength of the relationship between the preference for work in either SCT or MCT and the declared level of experience obtained in these types of tasks. In the majority of cases where a statistically significant correlation was obtained, a higher level of experience was positively related with the preference for work in a corresponding type of team. However, these correlations were obtained for different task requirements among Polish and Chinese students. Authors are aware of the correlational nature of this result and the fact that it does not imply causality but believe that it also leads to a conclusion regarding direction of further research and practical implications of the current study.

The study described in the present article also has its limitations characteristic for studies in which surveys are used. It would be valuable to verify actual choices made by people under controlled, experimental conditions. This is one of the possible directions for future research. Additionally, it is important to discover what aspects of experience gained in SCTs and MCTs in particular are related with the preference towards those two kinds of teams across different task requirements. Obtaining the answer to that question could help improve the educational process by developing interventions aimed at demonstrating assets of multicultural teams and increasing the preference towards them. Those interventions should be carefully planned and designed and should be culture sensitive and can be regarded an important practical implication off knowledge obtained in the current research.

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