
Developing Cultural Intelligence in the Classroom:

A Simulation-Based Approach

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Introduction



A student enters a new environment...



They struggle to communicate and connect



They feel isolated despite being surrounded by others



The problem is not knowledge. It is a lack of **Cultural Intelligence.**



Motivation



Globalization

→ diverse environments



Need

→ intercultural skills



Study Abroad

→ limited (cost, time, inequality)



Gap

→ lack of strong evidence on classroom-based CQ development



We need scalable solutions to build
CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CLASSROOM.

Why Cultural Skills Matter



Better Academic Performance

Adapt better, learn more, achieve more.



Lower Stress

Better adjustment and psychological well-being.



Improved Teamwork & Leadership

Stronger collaboration, communication, and trust.



Core Career Competency

A key skill for success in today's global workplace.



Intercultural skills are essential for academic success, well-being, and thriving in a **global career**.

CQ Dimensions



Cultural Knowledge

Understanding different cultures, values, and worldviews.



Cross-Cultural Skills

Communicating and interacting effectively across cultures.



Metacognitive CQ

Reflecting on and regulating one's thinking about cultural differences.



Delivery Types



Didactic (lectures)

Structured learning through lectures and presentations.



Experiential (simulations)

Learning by doing through simulations and real-life tasks.



Mixed (best approach)

Combining knowledge and experience for deeper understanding and lasting impact.



What Institutions Do



Universities

Study abroad, courses



Companies

Training programs



Limitations

Access & effectiveness



Not everyone has the opportunity to participate.



Results vary across individuals and contexts.

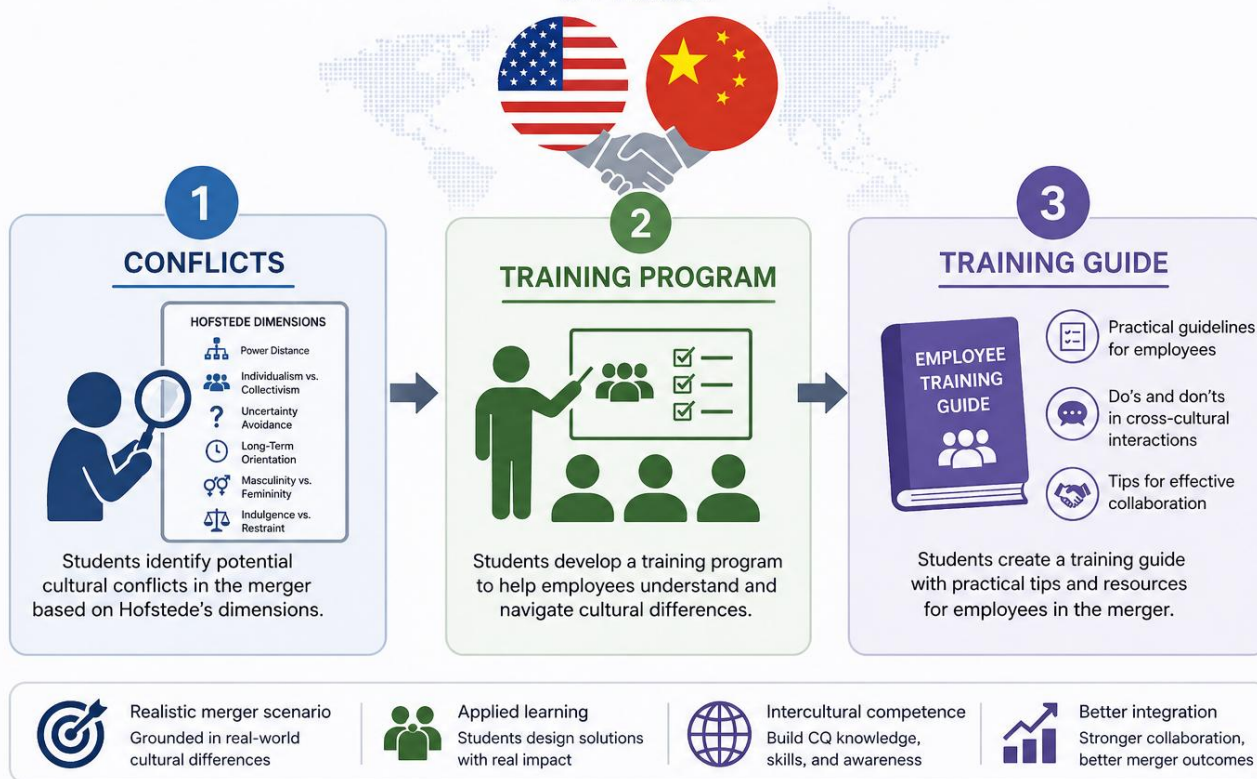


Need for more scalable, effective solutions.

Our Procedure

U.S.–China Merger Simulation

3 Phases



Sample



Undergraduate
business students



2nd–3rd year
students



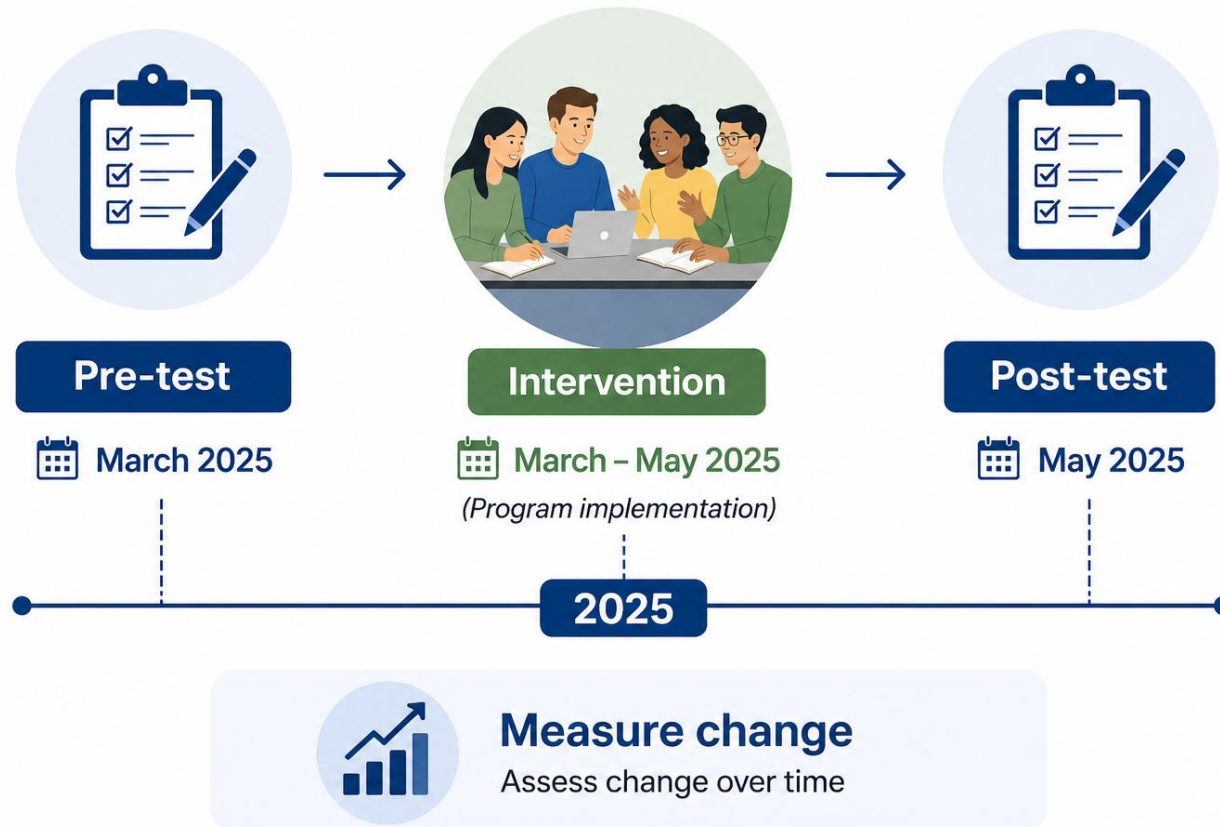
Mean age:
23.21 years



Gender:
52.6% male,
45.1% female



Survey Design



Measures

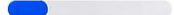
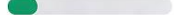
DIMENSION (SCALE)	ITEMS (SURVEY STATEMENTS)	RELIABILITY (CRONBACH'S α)
 Cultural Knowledge (2 items)	1. I know how cultures differ. 2. I can give examples of cultural differences.	$\alpha = .76$
 Cross-Cultural Skills (5 items)	1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures. 2. I can adapt my behavior to different cultural situations. 3. I try to understand others' perspectives. 4. I can be flexible when interacting with people from different cultures. 5. I can adjust my behavior based on cultural differences.	$\alpha = .80$
 Metacognitive CQ (3 items)	1. I am aware of the cultural knowledge I use. 2. I plan how to act in intercultural situations. 3. I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge when interacting with others.	$\alpha = .72$



All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

Results

Pre-Post Mean Comparison

Dimension	Pre Mean (March 2025) Mean (SD)	Post Mean (May 2025) Mean (SD)	Improvement (Post – Pre)	p-value	Effect Size (η^3)
 Cultural Knowledge	3.09 (SD = 0.71)	3.35 (SD = 0.65)	 +0.26	< .001	0.04 
 Cross-Cultural Skills	3.62 (SD = 0.64)	3.87 (SD = 0.58)	 +0.25	< .001	0.03 
 Metacognitive CQ	3.47 (SD = 0.72)	3.85 (SD = 0.63)	 +0.38	< .001	0.06 

Recommendations

Use Mixed Teaching



We combined didactic instruction with experiential learning activities to build knowledge and apply skills in authentic ways.

Embed Simulations



Students participated in realistic, scenario-based simulations that exposed them to diverse cultural perspectives and challenges.

Focus on Reflection & Teamwork



Structured reflection and teamwork activities encouraged students to learn from experience, understand others, and grow together.

Takeaway



CQ is Learnable

Significant improvement in all three dimensions shows that cultural intelligence can be developed.



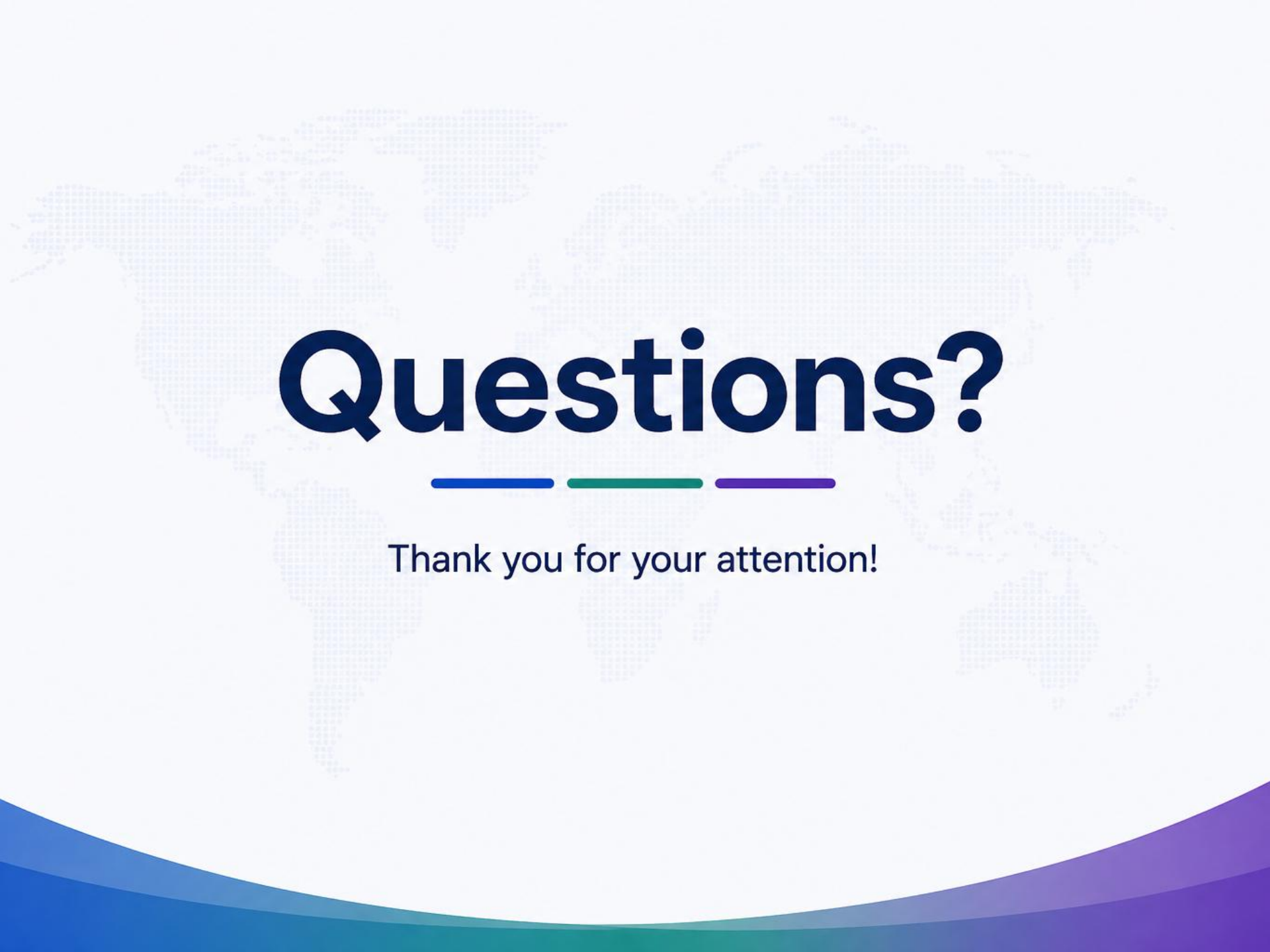
Classroom Methods Work

Mixed teaching with simulations, reflection, and teamwork leads to meaningful and measurable gains in CQ.



Scalable Solution

This approach is practical, adaptable, and scalable across disciplines and educational contexts globally.

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Questions?



Thank you for your attention!

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