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**ETHNOCONSUMERISM IN
TOURISM, THE NEED FOR
ETHNOCAPABILITY**

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Abstract

A significant management challenge for the future of international tourism is satisfying visitors who have profoundly different cultural beliefs and traditions. With the emerging growth of one global market, limited vigorous research exists concerning the diverse eastern and western perspectives of quality and satisfaction. The present theories are from western paradigms and based on rational scientific approaches to truth. However, these models are not directly relevant to the eastern method of interpretation and meaning due to different consciousness expressing itself in the realism of consumer value and buying patterns.

This paper reviews the factors for consideration in the growth of the eastern market and provides a proposed paradigm for exploring relationship marketing in ethnoconsumerism.

ETHNOCONSUMERISM IN TOURISM, THE NEED FOR ETHNOCAPABILITY

INTRODUCTION

The concept of international tourism has traditionally focused on the western market travelling to overseas destinations. A new opportunity exists in the growth of the eastern Asian market and represents a significant multicultural niche with diverse tourism needs. This paper examines the growth of this ethnic subculture to what is perceived now as a significant major culture for some organisations in terms of target markets (Schiffman, Kanuk, Bednall and Watson, 1997, p. 412). As an example, the highest growth of inbound tourists to the United States market is that of South Korea (Chen and Hsu, 2000).

Tourism consumer behaviour is not a definitively researched area (Ward, 1999). The models which do exist are basic in nature and refer to a hierarchy of needs similar to those of Maslow's (1943) well known model (Pearce, 1988). Although other models do relate to different cultural destinations, types of tourist (i.e., allocentric versus psychocentric) (Plog, 1974), and choices of destination including demographic profiles with more sophisticated levels of motivation (McIntosh and Goeldner, 1986), these models do not examine how to service a multicultural consumer population. In order to further address this problem, a new approach is required based on the 'normal' cognitive/affective components (Assael, Reed and Patton, 1995), including the spiritual beliefs central to this culture, concerning consumers' perceptions of quality and satisfaction.

Present research in this area is often based upon observational theories and conceptually isolated paradigms with academics utilising selective perspectives to expand and link the theory to practice. The previously relevant scientific methods now frequently used to analyse social science problems in a significantly more complex world are inadequate. For the industry practitioner (Berrell and MacPherson, 1995) to apply theories successfully, an approach is required facilitating incorporation of previous research assumptions into a holistic paradigm.

This is particularly relevant to Australia as it is one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world with approximately one quarter of the population of non-English speaking background.

THEORY BUILDING MODELS AND PARADIGMS

This paper concerns the limitation of present research theory devising results to be applied in the practice of another culture. These problems include an understanding of relevant paradigms, appropriate epistemology and cross-cultural management (Berrell and MacPherson, 1995). These researchers state that: "the concept of paradigm has been used rather indiscriminately by theorists across the disciplines since the late 1970's" (p. 9). The selection of the paradigm is often that of personal appeal rather than the rational and notion of good science. This requires the use of selected paradigms to attempt to present a coherent justification of conflicting research findings in a comprehensible holistic format for the use of the industry practitioner (Berrell and MacPherson, 1995) The evolution of present academic theory has a bias for the western theories of learning, epistemology and the use of paradigms. "A positivist approach to social and educational research is generally taken to imply that the methodological procedures of natural science may be directly adapted" (Giddens, 1974, p. 3). This usually involves testing of hypotheses and concluding with a relatively objective statistical figure, concerning the application to various social cultures. This approach has received criticism mainly because of the inter relationship between the object of study and its specific meaning within the various environments (Schutz, 1962). This interpretive paradigm is more suited to qualitative research techniques but it is not in direct opposition to the positivist quantitative view.

There is a distinction between the paradigm and the research methodology employed. Thus, it is essential to establish one paradigm for the research and apply different methods (qualitative or quantitative) as

appropriate to the research requirements. This blending of methods can involve a logical positivist approach using qualitative (naturalistic, phenomenological) approaches to supplement the raw data findings especially in multi cultural situations (Vulliamy, Lewin and Stephens, 1990, p. 10). This relationship between words and deeds (Deutscher, 1996) requires indepth understanding to achieve accurate knowledge (Vulliamy et al., 1990, p. 12). Specifically this concerns the unequal power relationship between western researches and their eastern subjects (p. 14). Irrespective of the methodology applied, it is essential to utilise an appropriate paradigm.

In the case of multicultural tourism, the search for a paradigm with a customer focus has utilised traditional western psychological theory and also used mainly western tourists in America (Loker and Perdue, 1992). This research, combined with that of Echtner and Ritchie's (1991), provided a list of attributes, motives and destination features attempting to explain the appeal of places, but this approach has considerable limitations (McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie, 1995). They state, however, that there are seven requirements for a theory of tourist motivation including: the ability to integrate existing theories relevant to practitioners, multimotive, dynamic multicultural and recognising both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Few, if any, achieve these objectives, especially considering an eastern Asian market.

McAllister and Irvine (2000) describe how Bank's (1994) study of ethnic identity utilises a six stages model which can be used to help teacher educators in understanding the progression along the construct towards global competency. The six stages are: 'ethnic psychological captivity, ethnic encapsulation, ethnic identity clarification, bi-ethnicity, multi-ethnicity and reflective nationalism, and globalism and global competency' (Banks, 1994, p. 228). This is relevant, in that, stage one describes how members of the dominant culture stereotype and internalise their beliefs and perceptions of the world. This progresses through reflection of one's own culture to the desire to function in more than one culture and eventually learning how to balance and utilise the required paradigm depending upon the context (Banks, 1994).

Following Jung's view of human nature, western consciousness is a historically conditioned, geographically limited factor that does not represent all part of humanity (Bailey, 1960). Therefore, one should not exclude other kinds of consciousness derived from ancient cultures such as those of China or Japan. Bailey (1960) further observes that although science is a method of the western mind, it is not the only way of comprehending. Eastern wisdom allows a more profound higher understanding based in practical knowledge and can be evaluated objectively on the same grounds as western methods. In short, scientific and religious approaches within eastern philosophy have had only a limited influence on western thought due to its origins. But as the synthesis of one world continues, the ways of the east will influence western paradigms and vice versa (Von Krogh And Roos, 1996; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

ETHNOCONSUMER PERSPECTIVE

Tourism markets are changing from essentially traditional, non religious, rational western theories based on scientific research with apparent rational business decisions (Mintzberg, 1973; Costello and Zalkind, 1963) to being more influenced by to eastern wisdom founded in spiritually driven guidance. For many people, their religious beliefs are always with them. These non-negotiable principles directly influence the cultural ethics of their decision making. Specifically, whether the ethics of people's actions will be judged by society or by a higher religious belief is a key concept and difference between many people's approach to business, tourism and life.

Comparison of the value orientation dimensions contrasting western with other cultures endorses the subjective uniqueness and reflective approach required for a customer focus model (Townsend and Wong, 2000). This is eastern 'realism' which is often misunderstood. Australia is one of the few countries which can undergo such a learning experience successfully and gain a real competitive advantage to promote ethnoconsumerism to the significant growth market especially during and post year 2000 Olympics.

Whilst several authors have differentiated between various forms of national cultures (Hofstede, 1994), the dimensions used do not directly involve spirituality. However, Barnwell and Pratt (1998) are the exception and state that "globalisation has created connection and conflicts in our present multicultural world. Like national culture, religion and ethnicity influence an individual and group ideology". The latter points are difficult and hard to question. These, therefore, form an area of management which is non-negotiable, but equally forms a unique opportunity for those who can harness these differences as building blocks for the organisation. These target markets are no longer minority groups as they participate increasingly in world trade and as globalisation takes place.

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Traditionally, international marketing is 'the performance of business activities that direct the flow of a company's goods and services to consumers in more than one nation at a profit' (Cateora, 1990, p. 8). This task not only concerns the traditional four P's (that is, product, place, promotion and price) but also the wider environment including culture. This necessitates cultural knowledge based on facts, but within a context. Thus, whilst Mexico is 98% Roman Catholic, this is different from being a Catholic in Spain or Italy (p. 69). Cultural sensitivity is required based on the concept of appreciating differences. Culture is borrowed, learnt and used for problem solving. This combined with sub-cultures within single countries and languages creates extra complexity.

Consumer behaviour is defined as 'the behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products, services and ideas which they expect will satisfy their needs' (Schiffman et al., 1997, p. 6). It is relevant to all aspects of marketing, especially categorised market segmentation such as: geographic, demographic, psychological, socio-cultural and user behaviour. Analysis of consumer behaviour is based on internal and external values and decision making. Unfortunately, these values are based on western e.g. Freudian theories of analysis. Are these relevant to the eastern consumer? Cross cultural and sub cultural analysis, comparing differences, are relevant but acculturation is necessary to avoid becoming myopic. Is this possible, with the present consumer behaviour models based on western theories, for an eastern ethnoconsumerist market?

As can be seen, these present methods of analysis are unsatisfactory (Woodside, 2000), especially relating to tourism. The latter is a difficult concept and tourism practitioners should avoid using a narrow view such as targeting a single market. Instead, to be successful, they must strive to understand their multicultural market in trying to accommodate them. The following paragraph provides a further description of consumer behaviour in tourism.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN TOURISM

Tourism is defined as 'the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourist, suppliers, governments and host countries in the process of attracting and hosting visitors' (McIntosh et al., 1995, p. 10). This is relevant because of the emphasis on image and relationship.

Consumer research in tourism has also shown that a consumer's attitude toward a product or service and subsequent purchase is influenced by a cognitive comparison of self-concept with the perception of the destination (Sirgy, 1982). Consumer behaviour in tourism has evolved from the general models, emphasising western consumer behaviour (Schiffman et al., 1997). Unfortunately, there is a lack of academic or industry credibility assigned to the general models and analysis (Woodside, 2000, p. 11). Theory building models (Ward, 1999) require a sequence of: definitions, concepts, interrelations, theories, hypothesis and testing. This has rarely occurred in tourism with little underpinning research. Examples of this are the general models of consumer behaviour where the western models correctly assume that reference groups and sub-cultures are 'those groups having certain values in common that distinguish them from society as a whole' (Assael, 1995, p. 272). This means western society and that essentially ethnic,

eastern cultures are relegated to being perceived as sub-cultures. This is reflected in the models where these multicultural values are usually placed last in priority (p. 531).

Pearce's (1988) models, based on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, are similar. Maslow's (1943) and Herzberg's (1968) works have considerable value but are based on very limited samples in a western context. Hence, this Ulysses imagery of seeking and finding has limitations. Maslow's motivation theories, when researched in non western environments, have arrived at different arrangements of the hierarchy and are thus not directly appropriate for management in these situations (Robbins, Bergman and Stagg, 2000). The scholarly analysis of the role and/or place of religion in tourism is scarce and, for many paradigms, is totally excluded. This is reinforced by recent special interest tourism research which is still categorised in essentially only western value segments (Morgan, Ogilvy and Mather, 1997).

Previous research in tourism has tended to focus on 'what' but not 'why' tourists purchase what they do (Sirgy and Su, 2000). However, this present literature emphasises the relevance of self-image congruence on travel behaviour. These stereotypic images of destination have originally been European. Examples are alpine skiing resorts, Mediterranean beaches and theme parks among others. In the new millennium, destination image management needs to include the multicultural aspect of the eastern traveller. The use of ethnoconsumerism as a customer focus paradigm, therefore, offers a relevant possibility to synthesise the eastern and western theories.

THE NEW PARADIGM OF ETHNOCONSUMERISM

Cross-cultural marketing research has emerged as an extension of logical positivism. Within this framework, the term sub-culture has been used in discussing ethnic groups and the research is 'methodologically flawed with a parochial or ethnocentric view (Costa and Bamosy, 1995, p. 19). At this stage, 'cognitive maps' are still applied to rationally explain non rational concepts (Stanfield, cited in Costa and Bamosy, 1995, p. 128).

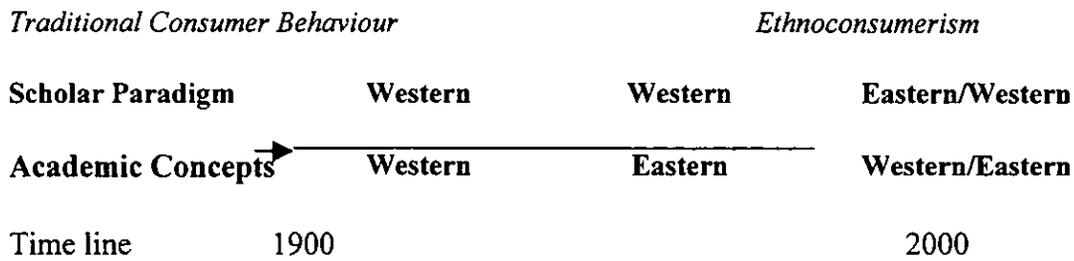
Ethnoconsumerism is thus a 'new paradigm to study cultural and cross-cultural behaviour' (Venkatesh, 1995, p. 26). This new paradigm for the study of cross cultural behaviour (Venkatesh, 1995) involves the work of Geertz (1983) concerning the natives point of view. This is not new, but has assumed certain epistemological significance in the post modern and post structuralist era .

Ethnoconsumerism studies consumption within a given social group or culture and its theoretical framework. This includes the study of connections between cultural categories and requires an understanding of the underpinning of events and actions (Costa and Bamosy, 1995, p. 28). This therefore reflects the concept that research is conducted on sample populations and may not be cross-culturally transferable in terms of place and time. Of particular relevance is that these western sample populations include Christian principles and values, not those of today's multicultural population (Wrathall and Townsend, 1997, p. 2).

The relevance to cultural manners and the fact that total assimilation has not occurred and thus the need for the inclusion of spiritual beliefs in the analysis of relationship marketing is important to ensure long term organisation success based on customers' assessment of satisfaction and loyalty (Czinkota, cited in Costa and Bamosy, 1995, p. 120). In addition, there is a tendency for global organisations to assimilate rather than acculturate with an underlying ethnocentric philosophy.

Ethnoconsumerism is a conceptual framework to study consumer behaviour using theoretical categories *originating from a given culture (i.e. from an emic perspective)*. This denies the use of positivist social science theories with modification to adapt from one culture to another. Ethnoconsumerism is the study from the point of view of a culture group which is the subject of study. From an eastern perspective, this includes religion. The study of multicultures and cultural sensitivity, therefore, progresses along a continuum from a totally western ethnocentric view through to the inclusion of eastern concepts by western

scholars (Hofstede, 1994) to eastern scholars studying western concepts in the east (Zhu and Dowling, 2000). This is further represented in the diagram below.



Source: Townsend, 2000

Cross-cultural consumer behaviour tends to be biased towards the end user and therefore categories such as 'Americans/Japanese' are used. Similarly understanding has been hampered by academic specialisation such as psychology resulting in departmentalisation only found in University structures, not reality. Thus, life is not so simple and defining ethnicity as with religion or nationality is difficult. Consumer behaviour to be credible has to be examined using qualitative approaches, not the typical positivist research model. Ethnicity is simply not 'another variable' and the debates concerning the subjectivist, interpretivist versus positivist approaches are becoming more complex and less relevant (Hofstede, 1994).

As a discipline in its own right, cross-cultural psychology test the generality of psychological laws (Berry, 1995 and Hofstead, 1994). This is applied to cross cultural consumer behaviour where mono cultural concepts are tested in multicultural settings. This is not a well-researched area except as comparisons e.g. USA/Japan. As such, this does not include the 'collective consciousness' of Durkheim (1898) in a multi-layered form including the culture, social structures and the individual. Such a western perspective is inappropriate to use to analyse eastern cultures (Weber, 1947). The use of personal constructs (Rychlak, 1990) and cross-cultural capability would be more relevant.

Therefore, positivism in the social sciences can be about scientific generalisation, lawlike regulations across cultures, viewing the world as an organised system, with different functional capabilities but with common systemic goals. Alternatively, subjectivist tradition as different from a positivist perspective emphasises differences between cultures, making comparisons, rather than generalisation possible. Comparative approaches relate to Durkheim (1898) and can be within one culture as opposed to cross-cultural research requiring two or more (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991). As examples, Eskimos have over thirty words to describe snow and the cast system in Bali is different from India although both are Hindu based.

Religions such as Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism have rules and laws which govern the day to day living of its followers and hence when catering for these groups, their habits and beliefs need to be taken into account (Barnwell and Pratt, 1998). The areas of agreement, however, are those of similar lifestyles, no cultural or language barriers and a positive perception of the destination (Chen and Hsu, 2000). In order to operate successfully when servicing the eastern Asian market, western tourist attractions have to be able to acquire the ability to think and act like their customers. For example, accounting for the knowledge that some Asians are greatly influenced by the teaching of Feng Shui and the power of negative thinking, that is, the application of Chinese metaphysics and the five basic elements (those of water, wood, metal, earth and fire and how they come alive in their interaction) (Lo, 1996).

Feng Shui, hence, might affect the destination in terms of architecture and the way things and objects are placed. Some Asians will not go back to a hotel or destination place if they feel that it had inappropriate Feng Shui. That means that both in terms of architecture and the management of tourism attractions, industry operators would be well advised to consult the Feng Shui in terms of multicultural behaviour. More

examples of insensitivity towards differences would be providing beef to Hindus, ham to Muslims, cheeseburgers to Jews, alcohol to Arabs or offending by inappropriate clothing, body language or eye contact to specific groups will create a decline in the service delivery process from an ethnoconsumer perspective. On the other hand, taking an ethnoconsumerism approach to those diverse groups can be very innovative and successful. For example, in India, Big Mac is made out of lamb as no cows are allowed. In Sydney's south-west, the opening of two halal KFC outlets to serve Muslims was a complete success and innovations of religious nature are now being explored in more depth (Toomey, 2000).

In management, the use of the union of material and spiritual world to your advantage is a great opportunity to succeed in achieving your goals. That is, going through 'the great unlearning' and find the 'Dharma' which means acting in accordance with one's own destiny (Chu, 1992). This is part of the concept of 'thick face, black heart' which requires the removal of self doubt in taking hard decisions (Chu, 1992). Fiji and Indonesia are no longer viewed as being able to service this multicultural market. Therefore, 'the opportunity for victory is provided by the enemy' (Chen, 1994, p. 100) if competitive attractions do not address multicultural market. With the coming of the Olympics and with the world coming to the Australian door, such opportunities should not be missed.

NEW PARADIGM OF ETHNOCAPABILITY

A new approach is required beyond the traditional to include destination congruence image management, relationship marketing and with the core of spiritual belief as part of the management or consumer behaviour decision process, central to all other factors at all levels. Essentially, whilst being related to rational democratic processes, it is the essence of the non-rational environment of the core decisions about travel and tourism. These multicultural and different non-negotiable beliefs create a potential for conflict if analysed using western hierarchical models based on a place in time and geography. In isolation these are therefore no longer relevant. A new paradigm is required. One that recognising the difference of the inclusion of religious principles as central to decision making processes. This management of diversity is a metamorphosis of global transformation combining the western rational analysis and eastern harmony using values to transcend the 'east-west' divide (Lessem, 1998, p. 45).

These new management key competences have been an area of concern for the future of Australia. Researches, including Karpin (1995), have identified global competencies and an international training policy (DEET, 1995). The Mayer committee (DEET, 1995) defined and advocated seven key competencies for Australians, including: analysing information, communicating ideas, working with others, problem solving among others and mentioned a possible eighth one as "cultural understanding". The commonly identified necessary skills of the transnational manager include: global perspective, local responsiveness, synergistic learning and cross-cultural interaction (McNally and Parry, 2000). These are similar to those of Adler and Bartholomew (1992) which include: broad based sociability, cultural flexibility, cosmopolitan orientation and collaborative approach.

Taking this managerial technical competence into new domains is the essence of capability. Capability, in its simplest form, is a construct which applies to individuals and has been defined by Stephenson (1993) as having justified confidence in your ability to take appropriate and effective action, to communicate effectively, to collaborate with others and learn from experiences in changing and unfamiliar circumstances. In the case of global capability, this means that managers educated within the bases of western paradigms and theories would be able to transfer the outcomes of this education in the form of management competences to the unfamiliar eastern culture. This can also include Asian managers, educated in the east by western universities but operating within an eastern market.

The development of aspects of globally competent managers (DeSimone and Harris, 1998; Spreitzer, McCall and Mahoney, 1997) is different from the past definitions of successful managerial competencies. This is because global competencies "requires being able to learn from experience" (p. 407). By definition, this is therefore global capability as it involves cognitive social learning (Bandura, 1977; 1997), values,

self-awareness and an active, not passive learning style. Spreitzer et al. (1997) have identified fourteen dimensions to predict international executive potential. These include eight end-state competencies with sensitivity to cultural differences and six learning-orientated dimensions including: uses feedback, is culturally adventurous, seeks opportunities to learn, is open to criticism, seeks feedback and is flexible. These future competencies (DeSimone and Harris, 1998) include: knowledge, international experience, self management skills, integrity and flexibility. This is similar to the five 'meta-abilities' of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998) which are self awareness, self regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills.

The description of much global or international facets of behaviour as "competencies" is a definitional stretch of the concept. Competence, as it is more regularly defined and theorised is basically a term which covers observable current skills based on current knowledge (Harris et al., 1995; Cairns, 1992).

'Key', 'generic' or 'global' terms modify or extend the competence concept to somehow move the idea beyond its basic roots. This is unfortunate in that they are not consistent with the theory base (behaviourism) and the clear, specific, narrow conceptualisation inherent in competence as a concept (Cairns, 1997a).

This paper is suggesting that the concept of capability is broader and more flexibility orientated and thus appears to be applicable to this case. Ethnocapability is, therefore, offered here as an appropriate descriptor for the concept being presented.

Ethnocapability is therefore the ability to transfer competence within one culture and perform effectively in a multicultural situation (Cairns, 1997a). This capability requires global knowledge, cross-cultural communication skills, flexibility, mindfulness, self-efficacy, appreciation of values and self managed learning (Cairns, 1997a; Guirdham, 1999, p. 211-214).

The comparative cross-cultural training effectiveness to achieve these skills and attributes involves both knowledge and interpersonal sensitivity training whilst in another culture. Interestingly, this need not necessarily be in another nation, if, for example a person were to live with a family from another culture. Theorists also argue that students from eastern countries are more passive learners with a higher, distant regard for teachers and, therefore, less social, action learning oriented. This may mean that they have less global capability because their passive leaning style (Kolb, 1984) is considered a relevant indicator.

This learning to learn about other cultures requires: knowledge, interaction, empathy, tolerance of ambiguity and the ability to analyse using a variety of paradigms including those from the east (Chen, 1994). This is the management metamorphosis of the future, progressing from the primal rational to the metaphysical, cultural and anthropological domains (Lessen, 1998).

The training needs identified are: experience of living and working abroad, cultural awareness and interpersonal skills, knowledge and information (Laabs, 1996). This is the basis of the theoretical framework for ethnocapability.

The methods available to achieve an understanding of ethnoconsumerism and multicultural capability in the form of ethnocapability are:

- Formal education (theory based methodologies)
- Training and development course (knowledge and skills)
- Work experience and relationships (experiential / action learning)

(Karpin, 1995, p. 265).

Hence it could be argued that the 'sojourner' experience for international students is essential to develop the cognitive, affective and behavioural skills required for ethnocapability.

CONCLUSION

Global education, as a function of management, requires enlightened vision to unify the diversity of attitudes, values and beliefs in the organisational culture relevant to achieving corporate objectives. This management of diversity requires a new paradigm. Such a paradigm requires the realisation that multicultural groups and their spiritual differences can be harnessed to create building blocks for organisational capability. There is a need to 'challenge culturally bound mindsets' and 'learn from other cultures' (Ford, 1998, p12).

There are significant socio-cultural benefits for international tourism from a consideration of this paradigm, including: cultural understanding, the improved valuation of heritage and economic growth. Problems, however, can occur in the commodification and reduction of the authentic resources. For the balanced multicultural society hosting guests from diverse origins the interaction should emphasised cultural understanding and synthesis based on trust and mutual appreciation of differences. Hence, the history of Australia is ideal for cross examining and researching this diverse cultural sensitivity and ethnoconsumer target market. In addition, Australia has the substantial benefit of a multicultural society from which it can learn about cross-cultural issues and should provide a source of motivation for globalisation, research shows this is the most effective way to learn about multicultural issues. However, the detailed, comparative, evaluation and effectiveness of these methods with their application for inter-cultural effectiveness is not clearly established (Harris and Moran, 1991).

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