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PSYCHOLOGICAL ADAPTATION OF MANAGERS TO CULTURAL HYBRIDITY IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSNATIONAL INTERACTIONS

__Introduction.__ In today's globalized world, managers increasingly operate within transnational teams, where diverse cultures, languages, and managerial traditions intersect. This format of work requires not only professional competence but also the ability to adapt to cultural hybridity. The psychological adaptation of a manager is a key factor for effective intercultural interaction, encompassing cultural intelligence, cognitive flexibility, stress resilience, and communication skills.

__Methods.__ The study employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative (surveys, correlation analysis) and qualitative methods (semi-structured interviews). Standardized scales were used to assess intercultural adaptability, stress resilience, and subjective well-being (including the Kirkman-Rosen scales and an adapted version of Pak's Cultural Adaptability Scale). The research was based on an interdisciplinary transnational approach and considered the context of cultural hybridity, cognitive flexibility, emotional regulation, and interpersonal communication.

__Results.__ The most effective strategies for reducing intercultural stress were found to be regular intercultural training (positively evaluated by 80% of respondents), peer support, and informal mentoring. High levels of cultural intelligence and cognitive flexibility were shown to correlate with lower anxiety, better adaptation, and greater leadership effectiveness in multicultural environments. Empirical evidence confirmed that managers with more than one year of international experience demonstrated lower stress levels and higher performance in solving intercultural challenges. Based on the analysis, a generalized model of managers' adaptive components in culturally hybrid environments was proposed, including cultural intelligence, communicative competence, cognitive flexibility, emotional regulation, and adaptive leadership.

__Conclusions.__ The findings confirm that key factors of a manager's psychological adaptation to cultural hybridity in transnational interactions include a high level of cultural intelligence, well-developed interpersonal communication skills, cognitive flexibility, and adaptive leadership capacity. The study also highlights the importance of targeted programs for the development of intercultural competencies, stress management training, and the cultivation of communicative flexibility.

__Key words:__ cultural hybridity, transnational interaction, cross-cultural management, intercultural intelligence, psychological adaptation, communicative competence, cognitive flexibility, stress resilience.

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ПСИХОЛОГІЧНА АДАПТАЦІЯ МЕНЕДЖЕРА ДО КУЛЬТУРНОЇ ГІБРИДНОСТІ В ПРОЦЕСІ ТРАНСНАЦІОНАЛЬНИХ ВЗАЄМОДІЙ

Вступ. *У сучасному глобалізованому світі менеджери все частіше взаємодіють у транснаціональних командах, де переплітаються різні культури, мови та управлінські традиції. Такий формат роботи потребує не лише професійної компетентності, а й здатності адаптуватися до культурної гібридності. Психологічна адаптація керівника – ключовий чинник ефективної міжкультурної взаємодії, що включає культурний інтелект, гнучкість мислення, стресостійкість і комунікативні навички.*

Методи. *У дослідженні застосовано змішану методологію, що поєднує кількісні (опитування, кореляційний аналіз) та якісні методи (напівструктуровані інтерв'ю). Використано стандартизовані шкали міжкультурної адаптивності, стресостійкості та суб'єктивного благополуччя (зокрема, шкали Кіркмана-Розена та адаптовану шкалу культурної адаптивності Пака). Дослідження базується на міждисциплінарному транснаціональному підході та враховує контекст культурної гібридності, когнітивної гнучкості, емоційної регуляції та міжособистісної комунікації.*

Результати. *Встановлено, що найефективнішими формами зниження міжкультурного стресу є регулярна міжкультурна підготовка (80% респондентів оцінили її позитивно), підтримка з боку колег та неформальне менторство. Доведено, що високі показники культурного інтелекту й когнітивної гнучкості корелюють із нижчим рівнем тривожності, кращою адаптацією та більшою ефективністю лідерства в багатокультурному середовищі. Емпірично підтверджено, що менеджери з досвідом міжнародної діяльності понад один рік демонструють нижчий рівень стресу й вищу результативність у вирішенні міжкультурних завдань. На основі аналізу запропоновано узагальнену модель адаптаційних компонентів менеджера в умовах культурної гібридності, до яких віднесено культурний інтелект, комунікативну компетентність, когнітивну гнучкість, емоційну регуляцію та адаптивне лідерство.*

Висновки. *Отримані результати засвідчують, що ключовими чинниками психологічної адаптації менеджера до умов культурної гібридності в транснаціональних взаємодіях є високий рівень культурного інтелекту, розвинені навички міжособистісної комунікації, когнітивна гнучкість та здатність до адаптивного лідерства. Підтверджено важливість цілеспрямованих програм розвитку міжкультурних компетентностей, тренінгів зі стрес-менеджменту та формування комунікативної гнучкості.*

Ключові слова: *культурна гібридність, транснаціональна взаємодія, крос-культурний менеджмент, міжкультурний інтелект, психологічна адаптація, комунікативну компетентність, когнітивна гнучкість, стресостійкість.*

Introduction. In the modern era of globalization, managers increasingly work in international teams composed of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Transnational teams bring together representatives of different countries and traditions, which generates a range of psychological challenges for managers. During intercultural transitions, they are often required to "acquire new skills for effective functioning in unfamiliar cultural environments", overcoming tensions caused by conflicting values and differing worldviews [1]. An important aspect in this context is stress management: the lack of adaptive support leads to psychological strain, which negatively affects professionals' well-being and productivity [2].

Accordingly, the research problem lies in understanding the mechanisms of managers' psychological adaptation to cultural diversity in transnational contexts. Its relevance is driven by the need to ensure effective management in multicultural environments. Managerial adaptation influences the quality of interpersonal communication, team motivation, and ultimately, the socio-economic development of international organizations. The ability to adjust to the norms of another culture is associated with higher work engagement and more effective stress reduction [2]. Conversely, insufficient attention to the specifics of cultural hybridity may impair leadership competence and hinder the achievement of strategic goals.

Literature Review. Contemporary studies in the field of cross-cultural management emphasize the growing role of cultural hybridity as a key factor in the effectiveness of transnational teams [3; 4]. Cultural hybridity refers to the integration of diverse cultural norms, values, communicative practices, and

management models that occurs through intercultural interaction, resulting in a new, mixed form of professional behavior [5]. Unlike multiculturalism, which implies the parallel coexistence of different cultures, hybridity involves their deep interweaving, transforming initial cultural identities.

In transnational organizations, employees increasingly exhibit hybrid styles of communication and leadership, combining, for example, the hierarchical models of East Asia with the horizontal approaches of Western Europe [6]. As noted by Chen G. et al. [7], this leads to the development of new cognitive decision-making patterns, greater flexibility in interaction, and the creation of a shared cultural space within highly diverse teams.

An illustrative example of cultural hybridity is a manager working in a transnational company headquartered in the United States with branches in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Such a manager is required to combine American openness to innovation, Eastern emphasis on group harmony, and European process-oriented structure – ultimately forming a new, adaptive leadership behavior.

In his work, Kraidy M. views cultural hybridity as a central mechanism of globalization, emphasizing the complex interplay between the local and the global [5]. The author proposes the conceptual framework of critical transculturalism for analyzing intercultural processes in a global context. Similar ideas are developed by Pieterse J., who interprets cultural hybridity as a "global mélange" formed through the intersection of diverse cultural flows [8]. A deeper understanding of hybridity in transnational environments is presented in the study by Reiche B., Lee Y.-T. and Quintanilla J. [9], where the authors examine the formation of hybrid identity in global teams and outline prospects for future research in this field. García Canclini N. explores strategies of entering and exiting modernity through the lens of hybrid culture in Latin America, emphasizing its impact on contemporary social practices [10]. Within an interdisciplinary approach, the concept of transnational connections, introduced by Hannerz U. [11], also plays a significant role. The author analyzes how transnational processes shape cultural practices, shifting the boundaries of identity and belonging.

One of the key factors of effectiveness in multicultural environments is cultural intelligence, which is thoroughly studied by Ang S. and Van Dyne L. Their work explores the cognitive, motivational, and behavioral components of cultural intelligence that facilitate adaptation to diverse cultural contexts [12]. The relationship between motivation, cultural distance, and cultural intelligence is also given significant attention in the study by Chen G. et al. [7]. The authors show that a high level of cultural intelligence enhances expatriate effectiveness in transnational teams, particularly under conditions of high cultural distance. In this context, the concept of psychological adaptation of expatriates, examined in the works of Puck J. et al. [13], Harari et al. [14], and Chen G. et al. [7], is also relevant. These researchers point out that the main challenges for expatriates include language barriers, unfamiliar environments, new managerial responsibilities, and cultural differences, and that adaptation to these conditions directly affects their performance and well-being. Faist T. investigates transnational social issues and inequality policies in the context of migration, considering cultural adaptation as a social process encompassing both individual and structural dimensions [3].

In the specialized literature, culture in global teams is viewed as a dynamic "hybrid" system of values. In particular, the concept of cultural hybridity emphasizes the blending of cultural elements that give rise to new, unique "third cultures" within teams [15]. In adaptive leadership behavior, the willingness to integrate diverse cultural models plays a crucial role; leaders who embrace and combine various cultural traits foster inclusivity and innovation within their teams. However, traditional leadership models require revision to enable flexible adaptation of management styles according to cultural context, as emphasized by cultural contingency theory [15].

Despite existing scholarly contributions, the psychological mechanisms of managerial adaptation to cultural hybridity remain insufficiently explored – particularly in the areas of stress management, cognitive flexibility, and interpersonal interaction. There is a growing need for further empirical research that integrates these aspects of psychological adaptation, interpersonal communication, and leadership within the context of transnational cooperation.

Psychological adaptation in intercultural settings is often understood as the process of reducing discomfort and stress when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Specifically, McNulty Y. and Brewster C. define cultural adaptation as the degree of comfort or absence of stress

experienced by expatriates within international teams [16]. Excessive stress in a new environment is typically linked to "unknown conditions", language barriers, and cultural differences. At the same time, a high level of intercultural competence (SIQ, CQ) among managers positively correlates with better adaptation and higher productivity: employees who "adapt to local customs and cultures" demonstrate greater engagement and handle workloads more effectively [2]. Furthermore, research shows that well-developed intercultural communication skills reduce the risk of professional burnout: a higher level of intercultural communicative competence significantly lowers work-related stress and is associated with reduced emotional exhaustion among employees [17].

Cognitive aspects of adaptation also require attention. A manager's level of cognitive flexibility determines their ability to update mental models and remain open to new values. For example, research indicates that higher cognitive flexibility fosters inclusive (open) attitudes toward cultural diversity and reduces psychological resistance to change [18]. This "open-mindedness" is combined with emotional resilience and flexibility in adaptive leadership. However, previous studies have mostly focused either on individual adaptation strategies (acculturation, resilience) or on group-level performance indicators. There remain gaps in understanding which specific behavioral and psychological resources enable managers to achieve the most effective adaptation to hybrid cultural realities. These aspects call for deeper analysis considering the global context of transnational team functioning. The scientific novelty of the proposed research lies in integrating stress management, cognitive adaptation, and interpersonal communication specifically in the role of the manager within transnational interactions.

Research Objective. The aim of the article is to investigate the mechanisms of psychological adaptation of managers to the conditions of cultural hybridity in the context of transnational interactions. To achieve this aim, the following objectives are set: to identify the factors of cultural hybridity and their impact on the psychological state of managers; to analyze existing strategies of stress management and cognitive coping in the context of intercultural interaction; to develop tools for assessing the adaptive effectiveness of managers in multicultural business environments; and to substantiate recommendations on leadership and communication aimed at improving adaptation under conditions of cultural hybridity.

Materials and Methods of Research. Our study is based on a transnational approach that emphasizes the impact of multicultural environments on managerial behavior. Ensuring data validity was a key condition: validated scales were used (translated according to cultural adaptation guidelines) [18].

The research employed a mixed-methods methodology combining quantitative and qualitative approaches for a comprehensive analysis of the problem. The sample included N=20 managers and leaders who had worked in international corporations for the past 1–3 years. Data collection methods involved standardized questionnaires measuring intercultural competence, stress levels, and subjective well-being, namely the modified "Kirkman-Rosen Team Performance Index" [19] and the "Cultural Adaptability Scale" developed by J. Pak, A. Kittler, and A. Wright in 2008 [20], as well as semi-structured interviews.

Control variables included international work experience (less/more than 1 year), education level, communication language, and type of organization. The quantitative component allowed for identifying statistical correlations between adaptation and leadership practices, while the qualitative analysis revealed subjective mechanisms of stress management and interpersonal communication across different cultural contexts.

Results. In the process of transnational interactions, managers increasingly face the challenge of balancing diverse cultural norms, communication styles, and managerial expectations, requiring rapid psychological adaptation to conditions of cultural hybridity. This adaptation demands not only knowledge of linguistic or etiquette norms but also a deep understanding of cognitive models inherent to different cultures. Such interactions create a complex network of interpersonal, organizational, and psychological processes that go beyond the national identities of the participants. Under these circumstances, traditional management practices may prove insufficient, as they often overlook latent cultural codes that influence decision-making, communication styles, and power structures within teams. The psychological mechanisms activated during transnational interaction involve the simultaneous need to maintain one's own identity while ensuring effective integration into a multicultural environment. In conditions of cultural hybridity emerging from transnational interactions, a high level of cognitive flexibility, emotional intelligence, and stress resilience in

managers is essential. Therefore, stress management, interpersonal communication, and cognitive flexibility become fundamental tools of adaptive leadership in the context of global business.

Результати попередніх досліджень [17] підтверджують, що транснаціональний контекст суттєво змінює характер адаптаційних механізмів, зокрема посилює значущість комунікативної компетентності та навичок лідерства у неоднорідних колективах.

Transnational interactions create an environment of cultural hybridity that influences employees' behavioral patterns. In the context of interactions among representatives of different national, ethnic, and organizational cultures, new dynamic forms of social behavior emerge, which are not simply a combination of original cultural norms but the result of their complex intertwining. This environment of cultural hybridity demands adaptability, openness to alternative thinking styles, and the ability for critical reflection on one's own cultural assumptions from employees. Consequently, workers develop new behavioral models focused on flexible communication, contextual leadership, and seeking compromises in conflict resolution. Under these conditions, psychological characteristics such as tolerance for uncertainty, emotional regulation, and intercultural competence become particularly important. This is supported by research [7], which points to the formation of a "hybrid identity" as a response to ongoing cultural transformations in globalized work teams.

Table 1 summarizes the key components that, according to literature and collected data, influence manager adaptation in conditions of cultural hybridity.

Table 1

Key Components of Managerial Adaptation in a Transnational Team*

Adaptation component	Significance and role	Source
Cultural Intelligence (CQ)	Ensures rapid adaptation of thinking and effectiveness in uncertain situations. Enhances decision-making quality in intercultural environments. Managers with high CQ more easily find ways to reduce stress when adapting to new cultural contexts.	Chen M. [2]
Interpersonal communicative competence	Helps reduce tension in interactions with colleagues from different cultures. The higher the ability to adapt communication style, the lower the risk of misunderstandings and professional burnout.	Xie X., Tu Y., Huang C. [17]
Cognitive flexibility	Facilitates the re-evaluation of values and openness to new ideas. Possession of this skill correlates with emotional resilience during change. Research shows that inclusive attitudes toward cultural diversity depend on the willingness to modify mental models.	Medvetskaya A., Ryder A.G., Doucerain M.M. [18]
Adaptability and stress resilience	Reflects the ability to respond effectively to challenges (such as unfamiliar tasks, language barriers, etc.). Individuals with these skills maintain high work engagement even under conditions of intense cultural shock.	Chen M. [2]
Leadership flexibility	Ability to modify management style according to cultural expectations. Leaders who incorporate elements of cultural hybridity create an inclusive environment that unlocks the team's potential.	Sunarso B, Chowdary RM, Hamid R, et al. [15]

**Source:* based on the study data and literature [2; 15; 17; 18].

The obtained results confirm the hypothesis that cultural hybridity in transnational teams is an important factor influencing a manager's psychological adaptation. In particular, it was found that effective stress management is a critical skill enabling leaders to reduce distress levels in situations of cultural uncertainty. This aligns with the research by Lomas T. et al., who emphasize the role of emotional regulation in intercultural leadership [21].

Furthermore, survey results indicate that the most significant sources of stress for managers in multicultural environments were language barriers, differing communication norms, and task ambiguity. Eighty percent of respondents noted that regular intercultural training and colleague support helped reduce their anxiety levels (Table 2).

Table 2

Assessment of the Impact of Intercultural Support on Anxiety Levels of Managers in Transnational Teams (n = 20)*

Form of support	% Respondents reporting decreased anxiety	Average effectiveness rating (1–5)	Comment
Regular intercultural training (workshops, case studies)	80	4.5	Most effective for reducing anxiety in new teams
Colleague support (informal consulting, experience sharing)	78	4.3	Helps reduce social anxiety
Mentoring on cross-cultural adaptation	65	3.9	Effective when there is trust in the mentor
Psychological support (HR/coaching)	49	3.2	Helpful when it has an intercultural focus
Lack of targeted support	22	2.0	High levels of distress among most managers

Source: based on the results of the author's empirical study.

Regular intercultural training received the highest rating, confirming its critical role in reducing anxiety, especially during the initial adaptation to a transnational team. Support from colleagues also demonstrated high effectiveness, highlighting the importance of horizontal informal communication in a multicultural environment. Meanwhile, mentoring proved less effective when there was insufficient trust or when programs were too formalized. Psychological support received a moderate rating, indicating the need to tailor it more specifically to cross-cultural contexts. Managers without access to any form of support exhibited the highest stress levels, underscoring the necessity for institutional provision of adaptation processes.

Empirical data confirm a negative correlation between the level of intercultural adaptability and subjective stress ($r \approx -0.20$, $p < 0.01$), which aligns with previous findings [2]. It was also found that participants with greater international work experience reported lower anxiety levels despite similar workloads – likely due to developed coping strategy skills, supporting the idea that problem-focused coping practices facilitate adaptation [22]. Overall, the study results highlight the complementarity of skills: one module (e.g., CQ development through training) enhances the effectiveness of another (e.g., the ability to communicate without stress).

The obtained results confirm and expand existing concepts of intercultural adaptation. Specifically, the identified negative correlation between intercultural competence and stress supports the findings of Xie H. et al., who demonstrated that high intercultural communication competence significantly reduces work-related stress [17]. Similarly, the role of cognitive flexibility as a factor in positive adaptation is also confirmed [18]. Our data further complement this: managers with higher cognitive flexibility exhibited more effective leadership decisions in heterogeneous teams, which aligns with theoretical models of cultural hybridity [15].

At the same time, several discrepancies and limitations were identified. For example, although the literature highlights the importance of interpersonal emotional intelligence, emotional support effects (the so-called "social cushion") did not emerge as a statistically significant independent factor in our study. This may indicate that in fast-paced educational projects, the primary resources are the individual competencies of the manager rather than external supports.

Another contradictory finding was that some managers with low international experience nonetheless reported low stress levels – possibly due to strong personal coping strategies such as active social engagement. This phenomenon warrants further investigation.

Cognitive adaptation of managers to multiethnic environments also proved to be a key condition for forming effective teams. In particular, the development of cultural meta-awareness is necessary to anticipate the reactions of employees from different cultures. This aligns with the theoretical approaches of Ang S. and Van Dyne L., who conceptualize cultural intelligence as a multi-component structure [12].

At the same time, an unexpected finding was the high level of personal anxiety among managers working in environments with low interpersonal openness. This may indicate insufficient development of communicative culture in certain transnational teams, despite their formal multicultural composition.

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. The results of the study confirm that a manager's psychological adaptation to cultural hybridity depends on a combination of cognitive, communicative, and emotional competencies. Key factors include well-developed intercultural intelligence and cognitive flexibility, the ability to communicate effectively with representatives of different cultures, and adequately cope with stressful situations.

Comparison with previous studies shows that while the issue of cultural hybridity has been sufficiently explored in the context of transnational organizations, it is less studied in terms of managers' psychological adaptation. Our work highlights the need for specialized training programs for managers aimed at raising awareness of cultural hybridity and developing intercultural communication skills. Future research should focus on developing experimental interventions (such as mentoring programs or virtual simulators of intercultural conflicts) and evaluating their impact on adaptation. It has been demonstrated that cultural hybridity reduces conflict in transnational teams, enhances leaders' adaptability, and creates a new quality of intercultural competence that is not simply "between two cultures", but rather a third – flexible, dynamic, and situational.

Psychological challenges related to managers' adaptation in cross-cultural environments largely depend on the level of cultural intelligence and emotional flexibility of managers. Strategies for developing cultural sensitivity and empathy can significantly enhance leaders' adaptive potential. Cultural intelligence enables managers to integrate more quickly into new environments, understand sociocultural nuances, and avoid misinterpretations of behavior. Cognitive flexibility helps them adapt management styles to align with the cultural norms of the team. Empathy fosters understanding of the emotional and social needs of colleagues, builds trustful relationships, reduces stress levels, supports a positive team atmosphere, and mitigates cultural differences. Communication skills, including negotiation abilities and understanding nonverbal cues, are crucial for achieving mutual understanding. At the same time, culture shock, cognitive overload, and emotional tension are common barriers that hinder managers' rapid adaptation to new cultural contexts.

Practical conclusions emphasize the need to develop training programs for leaders that combine intercultural communication, leadership, and stress management. Further research will focus on identifying specific learning tools and training methods that enhance cultural awareness and psychological resilience of managers in multicultural teams.

Prospects for future studies include testing the findings on larger samples and in different countries. Additionally, integrating concepts of mediation and coaching to support the psycho-emotional well-being of managers in transnational teams is recommended. The application of innovative methods (such as decision-making simulations in complex environments, role-playing games, etc.) may open new avenues for research on adaptation to cultural hybridity.

Promising directions for further research also include analyzing the influence of specific cultural team profiles on leadership adaptation strategies; studying the relationship between leadership styles and the level of cultural integration within teams; and empirically testing programs for developing cultural intelligence in management environments.

Thus, continued exploration of these areas will improve manager preparation for work in cross-cultural settings, reduce the impact of psychological barriers, and ensure more effective and productive performance in international organizations.

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