INTERCULTURALIDADE E EDUCAÇÃO PARA O EMPREENDEDORISMO: UM CICLO VIRTUOSO?
INTERCULTURALITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: A VIRTUOUS CYCLE?
INTERCULTURALIDAD Y EDUCACIÓN PARA EL EMPREENDEDORISMO: UN CÍRCULO VIRTUOSO?

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RESUMO

Introdução: As empresas multinacionais procuram graduados com um espectro alargado de competências que incluem a conhecimento de outras culturas e o domínio de mais do que um idioma (Jones, 2013). Segundo Alred, Byram e Fleming (2003), a educação deve promover "um sentido de interculturalidade, uma competência intercultural" (p. 6) através de um processo dinâmico, iterativo, transformador de atitudes, competências e conhecimento, permitindo a comunicação e interação eficaz e apropriada entre culturas (Freeman et al., 2009).

Objetivos: Foi conduzido um estudo de caso com o objetivo de compreender a relevância da metodologia de aprendizagem ativa de um programa de educação para o empreendedorismo no desenvolvimento das competências interculturais dos alunos.

Métodos: Dada a natureza exploratória do estudo, optou-se pela implementação de um estudo qualitativo, baseado em entrevistas semi-estruturada aos alunos inscritos no programa Learning To Be, com o intuito de recolher as perspetivas dos estudantes relativamente à participação no programa. Foi, ainda, implementado um questionário com o intuito de perceber quais as competências que os alunos consideravam ter sido desenvolvidas no âmbito daquela participação.

Resultados: Os resultados demonstraram que i) os alunos avaliaram de forma positiva a metodologia de aprendizagem experimental; ii) as competências de comunicação intercultural aumentaram; iii) a abertura para trabalhar em contextos multiculturais é mais elevada.

Conclusões: A análise das respostas recolhidas sugere que os estudantes reconhecem a relevância das competências interculturais para o seu futuro percurso profissional e realçaram a adequação da metodologia utilizada no programa de educação para o empreendedorismo para o seu, respetivo, desenvolvimento. Igualmente, os estudantes enfatizaram o impacto do programa nas competências de comunicação intercultural e empreendedoras que poderão contribuir para aumentar a sua empregabilidade.

Palavras-chave: competências interculturais; competências empreendedoras; educação para o empreendedorismo; empregabilidade; internacionalização.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Multinational companies are now looking for graduates with a wide range of skills that include awareness of other cultures and mastery of more than one language (Jones, 2013). According to Alred, Byram, and Fleming (2003) education should promote "a sense of interculturality, an intercultural competence" (p.6) through a process that is dynamic, interactive, and that transforms attitudes, skills and knowledge, allowing effective and appropriate communication and interaction across cultures (Freeman et al., 2009).

Objectives: A case study analysis was conducted with the objective of understanding the relevance of active learning methodology within an entrepreneurship education course in the development of students' intercultural competences.

Methods: Given the exploratory nature of the study, we opted for the implementation of a qualitative study, based on semi-structured interviews to students enrolled in the Learning To Be program, in order to gather students' perspectives regarding participation in the program. A questionnaire was also implemented in order to understand which competences students considered to have been developed within the scope of that participation.

Results: The results showed that i) students evaluate the experimental learning methodology positively; ii) student's intercultural competences have increased; iii) openness to work in multicultural context is higher.

Conclusions: The analysis of data suggests that students recognised the relevance of intercultural competences for their future professional career and have highlighted the appropriateness of the methodology used in the entrepreneurship education program for their development. Likewise, the students emphasized the impact of the program on intercultural and entrepreneurial communication skills that could contribute to increasing their employability.

Keywords: intercultural competences; entrepreneurial skills; entrepreneurship education; employability; internationalisation.

RESUMEN

Introducción: Las empresas multinacionales buscan graduados con un amplio espectro de competencias que incluyen el conocimiento de otras culturas y el dominio de más de un idioma (Jones, 2013). La educación debe promover "un sentido de interculturalidad, una competencia intercultural" (p.6) a través de un proceso dinámico, iterativo, transformador de actitudes, competencias y conocimiento, permitiendo la comunicación e interacción eficaz y apropiada entre culturas (Freeman et al., 2009).

Objetivos: Se llevó a cabo un estudio de caso con el objetivo de comprender la relevancia de la metodología de aprendizaje activo de un programa de educación para el emprendimiento en el desarrollo de las competencias interculturales de los alumnos.

Métodos: Dada la naturaleza exploratoria del estudio, se optó por la implementación de un estudio cualitativo, basado en entrevistas semiestructuradas a los alumnos inscritos en el programa Learning To Be, con el fin de recoger las perspectivas de los estudiantes respecto a la participación en el programa. Se implementó un cuestionario con el fin de percibir cuáles las competencias que los alumnos consideraban haber sido desarrolladas en el marco de esa participación.
Resultados: Los resultados demostraron que i) los alumnos evaluaron de forma positiva la metodología de aprendizaje experimental; ii) las competencias de comunicación intercultural han aumentado; iii) la apertura para trabajar en contextos multiculturales es más elevada.
Conclusiones: El análisis de las respuestas recogidas sugiere que los estudiantes reconocen la relevancia de las competencias interculturales para su futuro itinerario profesional y realzaron la adecuación de la metodología utilizada en el programa de educación para el espíritu emprendedor para su desarrollo, respeto, desarrollo. Asimismo, los estudiantes enfatizaron el impacto del programa en las competencias de comunicación intercultural y emprendedoras que podrían contribuir a aumentar su empleabilidad.

Palabras clave: competencias interculturales; competencias empresariales; educación para el espíritu empresarial; empleabilidad; internacionalización.

INTRODUCTION

The openness of markets, the disruption of traditional business models and the internationalisation of education, has transformed the employment landscape worldwide. These phenomena have affected the stability of employees' skills in the sense that a new set of skills is being required by current employers (Forum, 2016). In this case, a new competences bundle is highlighted in several reports regarding employment trends. On the one hand, since future working contexts are becoming more and more multicultural, intercultural competence are crucial to interact with people from other cultures adequately and effectively (Wolff & Borzikowsky, 2018). On the other hand, entrepreneurial competencies are keystones to thrive in the future workplace and develop an agile mind-set to perform accordingly (World Economic Forum, 2018).

According to Alred, Byram, and Fleming (2003, p. 6) education should promote "a sense of interculturality, an intercultural competence" through "dynamic, interactive that transforms attitudes, skills and knowledge allowing effective and appropriate communication and interaction across culture" (Freeman et al., 2009). Consequently, Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in general are implementing strategies aiming at tackling future skills mismatch (Morey, 2000). For instance, HEI are integrating international perspectives within the curricula as a strategy to prepare students to global employment demands, and to develop multicultural competences that facilitate the integration in contexts of high cultural diversity. Also, HEIs are promoting the benefits of students' mobility as a mean to strengthen knowledge and intercultural competences. According to the Eurodesk Report (2015), students engage in mobility programs, such as Erasmus programme, motivated by the desire to enhance employability, to meet new people, to improve foreign language and to develop transversal skills. The same report highlights that more than 90% of students engaged in Erasmus Program reported an improvement in their soft skills, such as knowledge of other countries, their ability to interact and work with individuals from different cultures, adaptability, foreign language proficiency and communication skills. Also, being involved in the program leverages the international mindset of those who participate, increases their knowledge about good practices and skills and enhance the research and cooperation opportunities.

In turn, entrepreneurship education has been considered of paramount importance in European arena and special attention has been given to the subject mainly because it is considered critical to spur competitiveness, economic growth and job creation. European Commission highlighted the need of developing educational programs based on active learning models, engaged with real companies, in order to foster the development of entrepreneurial skills (European Commission, 2013). Also, World Economic Forum highlight the importance of "develop curiosity, imagination, resilience and self-regulation; to respect and appreciate the ideas, perspectives and values of others; to cope with failure and rejection, and to move forward in the face of adversity" (OECD, 2018, p. 3) adding a stronger focus on interpersonal skills (Bakhshi, Downing, Osborne, & Scheiner, 2017).

The development of intercultural competence within entrepreneurship education represents a challenge and an opportunity at the same time (Özturgut, 2011). Therefore, the intersection of interculturality and entrepreneurship education has not been explored and little is known about how this relationship could benefit the development of skills and future employability of students in HEI's. Thus, the purpose of this exploratory research is to discuss the relevance of entrepreneurship education on student's intercultural competences and future employment related competences.

The present paper is structured as follows: first, the introduction opens the topic; second, the literature review exposes the most relevant theoretical concepts; third, the methods are described followed by results and discussion; finally, conclusions and limitations of the study are addressed.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Intercultural competence: concept and importance

According to the British Council report *The value of intercultural skills in the workplace*, employers "are under strong pressure to find employees who are not only technically proficient, but also culturally astute and able to thrive in a global work environment" (Council, 2013, p. 5). The same report mention that employers value the ability of employees to work effectively with individuals and organisations from cultural backgrounds different from their own. This perspective is aligned with a previous study from the QS Global Employer Survey Report where the majority of employers usually value an international study experience when looking for new employees (John Molony, Ben Sowter, & Davina Potts, 2011).

Despite its importance, there is no consensual definition of intercultural competence, and very often, 'intercultural communication' and 'intercultural competence' are used identically. During the last years, different research perspectives over this topic have emerged (Deardorff & Arasaraatnam-Smith, 2017). Arasaratnam (2015) conducted a thematic analysis of articles and identified eight different themes explored by researchers in intercultural communication over the past decades: Identity (articles focused on identity and factors that influence such identity definition); Acculturation and Global Migration (related to mobility and acculturation process); Communication Dynamics (communication in specific contexts); Intercultural competence; Theories, models and scales; perception, stereotypes and discrimination; Cross cultural differences and Intercultural Education and Study Abroad. From those, surprisingly, the author revealed that intercultural competence is the theme with less research outputs. As a research result, Arasaratnam (2015) mention that empathy and experience abroad are key contributors to intercultural competence. For Wolff & Borzikowsky (2018), intercultural competence (ICC) can be defined as "a complex of abilities that are needed to interact with people from other cultures adequately and effectively" (p. 488). Ramirez (2016) goes further and argues that an interculturally competent person must understand different methods and styles of communication, have the ability to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds, and have the desire to use their knowledge and abilities to promote networking. In this sense, intercultural competence is a skill that should be developed through the experiential contact with new cultures that occurs while studying abroad because students are influenced during the acculturation process. The author also argues that the development of intercultural competence that occurred when students are being exposed to a multicultural environment is influenced by its levels of openness to new experiences and wiliness to try new things. Moreover, also affective and behavioural skills such empathy, human warmth, charisma, and the ability to manage anxiety and uncertainty are connected to the development of intercultural competence (Yoshitake, 2002).

From another perspective, Busch (2009) explores the interconnection between intercultural competence and intercultural communication. For the author, intercultural communication can be training and it could benefit the development of students' intercultural competence since they will be able to understand cultural differences. Indeed, intercultural experiences promotes profound transformational changes enhancing intercultural competences of students (Jones, 2013; Ramirez, 2016). Therefore, multicultural classrooms are a valuable strategy to develop intercultural skills of students by including people with different backgrounds (Jones, 2013).

1.2 Entrepreneurship education and the development of entreprenurial competences

Entrepreneurship is considered "the enterprising human action in pursuit of the generation of value, through the creation or expansion of economic activity, by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets" (OECD, 2017, p. 14). Therefore, promoting entrepreneurial competences among graduates, future workforce, and entrepreneurs is of paramount importance. As regional development might be hampered by a lack of competent individuals to manage projects and become entrepreneurs, universities can help overcoming this bottleneck by teaching individuals to increase their motivation and ability to innovate and to become entrepreneurs (Fromhold-Eisebith & Werker, 2013). For this reason, Entrepreneurship education (EE) has been promoted during the last decades across most European countries, through both formal and non-formal programs, aiming at empowering students to fulfil personal endeavours, improve job creation and foster entrepreneurial activity, and, in the end, contributing to unlock societal problems.

As a consequence, a countless number of courses and programs on entrepreneurship have been implemented (Katz, 2008). For Pittaway & Edwards (2012) there are at least three different approaches to entrepreneurship education named: 'About', 'For' and 'Through'. Firstly, 'education 'about entrepreneurship' is more devoted to traditional and theoretical teaching practices, and more distant from real business environment. The second approach, 'education for entrepreneurship' is oriented to develop entrepreneurial skills relevant to create a start-up company. Lastly, the third approach, 'education through entrepreneurship' focuses on fostering cognitive entrepreneurial skills (Moberg, 2014). Although the lack of agreement about which stream is more effective (Fayolle, 2013; Gibb, 2002), there is a growing consensus defending active pedagogy as more effective since it is learner-centred, process-based, experiential and socially situated (Gibb, 1987; Kyrö, 2005; Mwasalwiba, 2010). Also, experimental learning methods or active learning have been highlighted as beneficial since it contributes to meet students' needs, improve students retention capacity and increase students responsibility towards their own learning process (see Allen, 1995; Draycott & Rae, 2011; Kåre Moberg, 2014; Silberman, 1996), thus it successfully promotes entrepreneurial skills in a classroom context (Daniel, 2016). The use of active learning methods comprises cooperative learning, problem-solving exercises,

writing tasks, speaking activities, class discussion, case-study method, simulations, role-playing, peer teaching, fieldwork, independent study, library assignments, computer-aided instruction and homework (Bonwell & Eison, 1991), as a way to "involves students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing" (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p. 2).

Moreover, this goes in line with Timmons and Stevenson (1985) that suggest that the best way to foster entrepreneurial learning is to combine experience with formal educational activities since entrepreneurship is an ongoing lifelong learning experience. In order to accomplish such results, EE should be taught in a personal, practical and experiential way in order that such experiences with real projects and companies could contribute to develop entrepreneurial competences and knowledge through role modelling (Testa and Frascheri, 2015).

In fact, some EE programmes that follows active learning methods are based on learning by doing and challenge-based projects (Daniel, 2016; Daniel & Castro, 2017), allowing students to experience real business and market environments, increase interactivity and performance of groups learning process (O'Mahony et al., 2012). Still, the teaching methods must be adapted to the business world (Coghlan, 2015; Fayolle, 2013) in order to ensure better results and outcomes. Considering EE programs as an effective tool to stimulate entrepreneurial mind-set among students and foster an entrepreneurial culture among the population, they are being expanded into all disciplines so that entrepreneurship is blended with specific fields of study. Such movement is contributing to establish new learning environments, strong interdisciplinary education across domains, and it is expected to underpin competences like adaptability, creativity, curiosity and open-mindedness (OECD, 2018).

Entrepreneurship Education seems to be the perfect setting, on the one hand, to develop multicultural classrooms and, on the other hand, to foster the interdisciplinary profile of students, since it allows intercultural encounters and experiential learning opportunities.

1.3 Developing interculturality skills through entrepreneurship education: learning to be program

Following this trend and EC recommendations, it was designed and implemented at University of Aveiro a new entrepreneurship education program called 'Learning To Be' that aims at fostering entrepreneurial learning of students enrolled in a multicultural and multidisciplinary environment, through an experimental learning methodology inspired in the Design Thinking process (Daniel, 2016). Departing from real challenges proposed by companies, students from different scientific areas and nationalities are invited to work in multidisciplinary and multicultural teams, and they are challenged to develop viable and valuable solutions. The syllabus combines both theory exposition, and hands-on projects where students put theory into practice through engaging in meaningful, real-world business challenges, and following a three-phase methodology: i) problem understanding; ii) value creation; iii) strategy exploitation.

The first phase aims to enhance students' business empathy or, in other words, the ability to understand latent customer needs. Students are encouraged to undertake field research and to speak directly with customers through interviews and site visits. They look for insights from customers (and other relevant stakeholders in some cases), and use ethnographic-style tools to gather relevant information. In the second phase of Value Create, students use tools of ideation, brainstorming, and other methods that leverage creativity. They also look for relevant competitive analysis data, and from substitute products/services. In this phase, activities that involve learning from others are considered very important. As this stage leads into designing prototypes and presenting mock-ups, the main objective is to generate multiple ideas, and to get feedback from peers to help sort out which ideas to take forward and materialize for testing. Students also bounce ideas off the company employees as they develop second iterations – prior to trying to validate these ideas with the company. The Strategy Test phase is when the students attempt to validate their proposed solutions with real customers. They can return to the field, and try and assess whether customers would be interested or willing to pay for the product, and what needs to be improved. In this case, students evaluate what should be changed, develop new features that are considered needed – then another round of iteration can begin.

Students are organized in multicultural and multidisciplinary teams and work together for an entire semester. The program finishes with a final pitching session where projects are presented to the companies. Students are assessed on the basis of the work in the class (commitment with the project and team, group work and interaction), the project development (regarding the integration of the contents exposed previously) and the pitch performance (communication and selling arguments).

2. METHODS

Given the exploratory nature of the research, we opted to carry out two different approaches: (a) qualitative; and (b) quantitative analysis. The study encompassed (a1) in-depth individual, semi structured interviews, and (b1) a questionnaire to assess students' perceptions of the competencies they considered to have been developed through the Learning to Be Program. The interview script was designed based on the work developed by Ahn & Ettner (2013), Deardorff & Arasaraatnam-Smith (2017), Johnson & Buko (2014), and Ramirez (2016) and contained 23 questions organized in the following 6 groups: (1) characterization questions; (2) motivation for "intercultural experiences"; (3) openness to "intercultural experiences"; (4)

barriers to "intercultural experiences"; (5) benefits of "intercultural experiences" under EE program; and (6) impact of EE program in "intercultural competences and future employability".

To gather students perceptions about the competences developed after the participation in the 'Learning To Be Program', it was implemented a survey based on the ranking of global competences developed by OECD (2018), using a binary system (yes/no). The ranking considers 14 key competences for future employability: (1) ability to work collaboratively with teams of people from a range of backgrounds and countries; (2) excellent communication skills (both speaking and listening); (3) degree of drive and resilience; (4) ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking; (5) capacity to develop new skills and behaviours according to role requirements; (6) degree of self-awareness; (7) ability to negotiate and influence clients from different cultures; (8) ability for form professional, global networks; (9) openness to and respect of a range of perspectives from around the world; (10) multi-cultural learning agility (able to learn in any culture or environment); (11) multilingualism; (12) knowledge of foreign economies and own industry and overseas; (13) understanding of one's position and role within a global context or economy; and (14) willingness to play an active role in society at a local, national and international, level.

During the second semester of 2017/2018, were enrolled in 'Learning To Be Program' 55 students, 38% females and 62% males, from the first and second cycles of study and from different scientific areas. Considering the total number of students, 10% were foreign students from China, Germany and Poland. Departing from here, the interviews were conducted with 6 students, 3 national students (Student 1-3) and 3 foreign students (one from each country) (student 4-6). The inclusion criteria for participants were (a) nationality, and (b) be a member of a multicultural team during ´Learning To Be Program´. The participants were selected considering a voluntary based-process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through the analysis of interviews, it was possible to understand students' perceptions on the relevance of multiculturality and entrepreneurial competences in future employability. Data was clustered into three main clusters: (1) motivations; (2) barriers; and (3) impact of 'Learning To Be Program' (Table 1).

Concerning the motivations, students mentioned that they choose to be enrolled in 'Learning To be Program' to learn about different cultures and improve their language skills, therefore taking benefit from classes multicultural environment. Nevertheless, students highlight that language differences were the main barrier in the development of classroom projects, along with some cultural differences (for example, it terms of punctuality). Also, students' felt unconfident in expressing themselves in a foreign language.

Table 1 - Impact of Learning To Be Program.

Dimensions	Statements from students
Motivation	"to meet different people, cultures and to learn new things" (P01)*
	"to improve the language" (P02)
	"to see how is it to study in foreign countries" (F01)**
Barriers	"some activities are more complex to manage in multicultural teams" (P03)
	"some cultural aspects act as inhibitors of communication. But maybe this could be related to a specific culture" (F02)
	"the main barrier is the language" (P02)
	"Afraid of speaking another language and saying nonsenses" (F03)
Impact	"learning new ways of thinking and seeing things, different perspectives and how to work with others" (F03)
	"improvements on language skills" (P02)
	"improvements on communication skills" (P01)
	"learning to adjust some behaviours to meet the differences among the team members" (F01)
	"learn different tools, cases, and contents that are used in other countries" (F02)
	"I feel now more knowledgeable" (P01)

* P = Portuguese student
** F = Foreign student

According to Arasaratnam (2015), experiences abroad are contributors to the development of intercultural competence. The results obtained suggest that intercultural interactions (e.g. through working with teams) is also beneficial for promoting a positive attitude toward diversity since intercultural sensitivity is an incremental process that is dependent of each individual (Klak & Martin, 2003). This goes in line with the results, particularly related to barriers perception, since some cultures are more linked to traditional values than others (e.g. Chinese culture). Also, the study demonstrates that the impact arousing from the

immersion in an intercultural context goes beyond language improvements, and it may foster the development of new ways of thinking and acting.

Also, most studies are focused on assessing intercultural competence on international students but the results suggested that also "home students" are able to develop such competences. Therefore, more studies should be implemented in order to explore the impact of multicultural environment on "home students" since the literature is scarce in this research stream (Wang & Kulich, 2015).

Regarding the impact of ´Learning To Be Program´, students highlighted as most relevant benefit the improvement on language skills, communication capacity and team working abilities. Also, some students mentioned that this experience allowed them to develop their resilience, since they need to be more flexible to understand others and build common goals. This goes in line with Acquah & Commins (2018) perspective, who considers multicultural classes "as the perfect context for challenging students' values, beliefs, and assumptions allowing them to develop a deeper understanding about themselves and the others" (p. 201).

As a general comment about the program, students mentioned that learning by doing approach was relevant to improve their experience and to build new knowledge. This reinforces previous studies (Testa & Frascheri, 2015; Timmons & Stevenson, 1985) that argues about the need of adding experimentation to the learning process. Similarly, it was mentioned that when compared to traditional teaching approaches, this programme enabled students to easily learn theoretical contents and its application in practice as mentioned by Daniel, Costa, Pita, and Costa (2017). Moreover, the participation of companies is considered as an advantage since it allows students to be engaged in real problems and to develop competences that suits future employment demands (Daniel, Vitória, & Pita, 2018).

As a result, from quantitative approach, it was possible to inspect which competences students felt were improved through the participation in the ´Learning to Be Program´ (Table 2).

Table 2 - Ranking of Global Competences (M=mean; SD=Standard Derivation)

Variables	M	SD
(1) ability to work collaboratively with teams of people from a range of backgrounds and countries	1,00	0,00
(2) excellent communication skills (both speaking and listening)	0,83	0,41
(3) degree of drive and resilience	0,50	0,55
(4) ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking	0,81	0,41
(5) capacity to develop new skills and behaviours according to role requirements	0,67	0,52
(6) degree of self-awareness	0,33	0,52
(7) ability to negotiate and influence clients across the globe from different cultures	0,17	0,41
(8) ability for form professional, global networks	0,67	0,52
(9) openness to and respect of a range of perspectives from around the world	0,67	0,52
(10) multi-cultural learning agility (able to learn in any culture or environment)	0,67	0,52
(11) multilingualism	1,00	0,00
(12) knowledge of foreign economies and own industry and overseas	0,50	0,55
(13) understanding of one's position and role within a global context or economy	0,33	0,52
(14) willingness to play an active role in society at a local, national and international, level	0,50	0,55

The feedback from the questionnaire shows that students recognized the 'ability to work collaboratively with teams of people from a range of backgrounds and countries' and 'multilingualism' as those that were more developed during the program. Also, the following competences: 'excellent communication skills' and 'ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking´ were also improved. These results are consistent with Klak & Martin (2003) findings on the recognition about the importance of cultural engagement, in one hand, but on the students attitude towards cultural differences, on the other, since it is an on-going and incremental learning process.

Nevertheless, the competence 'ability to negotiate and influence clients across the globe from different cultures' was the less relevant since students were not exposed, during the program, to such situations.
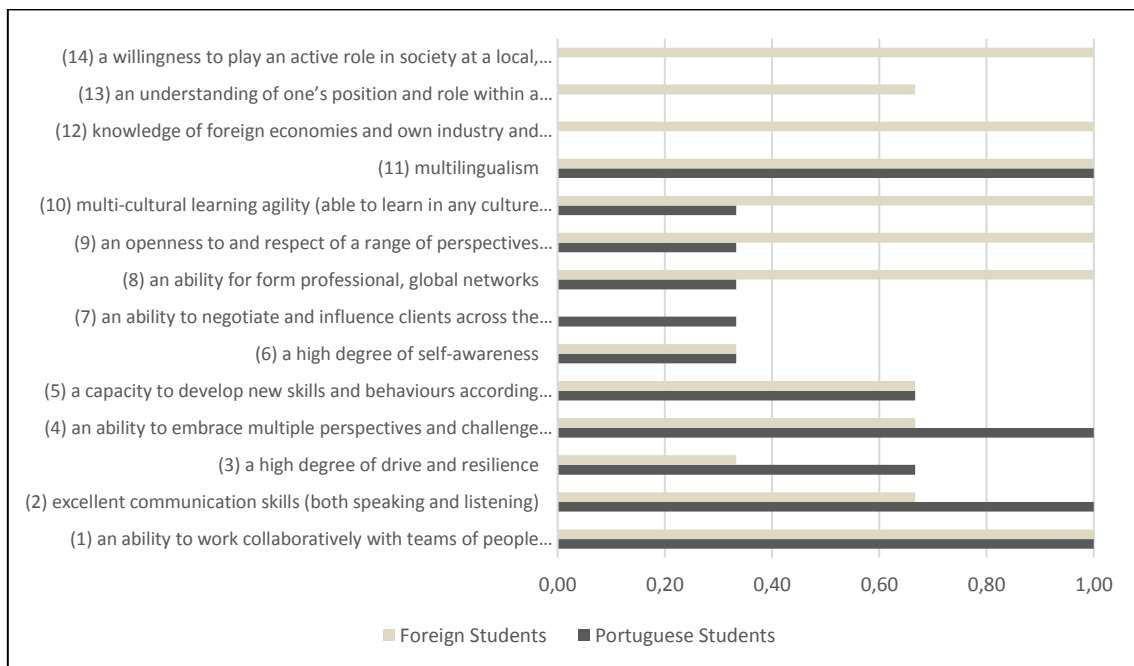
Figure 1 – Questionnaire results (means).

Regarding the differences among Portuguese and foreign students, it was recognized, by both groups, the variables 'the ability to work collaboratively with teams of people from a range of backgrounds and countries' and 'multilingualism' as the most relevant, as in the previous analysis. The major differences among Portuguese and foreign students are related to 'communication skills' and 'ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking', since they were higher on Portuguese students. In turn, 'ability for form professional, global networks' and 'openness to and respect of a range of perspectives from around the world' along with 'multi-cultural learning agility (able to learn in any culture or environment)' were higher on Foreign students. This result suggests that being engaged in multicultural environments is beneficial for both, for 'home students' and foreign students, to improve their ability to work with people from different backgrounds and nationalities. Also, it is relevant to develop languages and communications skills.

Regarding the impact of the program on students´ future employment perspectives the majority agreed that attending the program was relevant for their future employment career since they were more knowledgeable about multicultural differences, more proficient on languages, and more aware of real business contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

After the implementation of Bologna Process, HEI's focused their activities in developing a compatible and coherent education system to allow comparable degrees and remove obstacles to students and staff mobility (Cole & Tibby, 2013). As the market turned global for HEIS, the importance of interculturality in education is being recognized as a key issue because, in the one hand, universities are being asked to promote students' global profiles and, on the other hand, universities need to be prepare students to address cultural diversity. Therefore, HEI's are adapting their *modus operandi* in order to make students more aware of cultural diversity. Consequently, the ability to handle intercultural encounters is becoming valuable to support the creation of intercultural learning environments (Fitzsimons, Finn, & Grummell, 2017). For students, cultural diversity is also demanding since they are now exposed and engaged more frequently in international environments during their studies, even for those who do not experience being abroad. The interactions between local and foreign students within universities are multiple, from the classroom to social activities, which implies a broader understanding about the context and cultural diversity (Acquah & Commins, 2018). Based on such perspectives, this study aimed at understand the relevance of entrepreneurship education course in the development of students' intercultural competences and future employability.

The results obtained highlighted the fact that active teaching and learning methodologies, such as those applied in the 'Learning To Be Program', that encompasses students from different countries, are more effective in developing intercultural skills. Therefore, it is suggested that the interaction between students from different cultural and diverse backgrounds could increase intercultural sensitivity. Thus, 'Learning To Be Program' enabled the creation of a classroom context where students could develop their entrepreneurial skills, together with intercultural competences. Additionally, despite the protective atmosphere of the classroom, students had also opportunity to expand their scope of learning and action in real business environments. In this

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line, the participation of companies is seen as a key element of the program through the proposal of real-case problems. The involvement of companies in high education curricula development is of paramount importance to build the skills of future labour force. Moreover, the program contributed to create a clearer understanding about future prospects and employment in existing companies. This was a relevant outcome because 'Learning To Be Program' is focused on developing entrepreneurial competences and intrapreneurship, and not in the creation of new business ventures as other EE programs.

Although the results obtained, this study has several limitations. First, the study was based on a small sample which limits generalization. Secondly, there may be bias due to self-reported measures. In addition, the survey was filled on voluntary bases, nevertheless, students may have answered items not honestly in order to avoid socially undesirable traits or statements. Therefore, future research is needed to fully understand the role of entrepreneurship education in developing intercultural competences and future employability.

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