

# *The Overview of Studies on the International Ability of MBA*

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**Abstract**—In recent years, master of business administration (MBA), aiming at cultivating students' international ability for a long time, becomes the research hotspot of the management of higher education again. Based on the related documents, this article concludes the research on the international ability structure of MBA from the concept of international talents and the international ability structure. Thereby it summarizes the definition of the international talents, besides, it offers some cultivation suggestions to build model of international ability structure of MBA from the practical perspectives.

**Keywords**—MBA; international talents; international perspectives; international ability.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Faced with challenges from global economy and multi-national businesses entering domestic markets and the trend that China enterprises go out, the education of MBA is developing prosperously in China. However, domestic education of MBA still exists many cruxes in international development. Scholars focus on the research about international ability of MBA for a long time. In addition, the cultivation of international talents, as one of the MBA education core problems, is a research hotspot in the academic fields[2]. Currently, there exist the following shortages in the study of cultivating internationalization MBA: Firstly, Scholars at home and abroad haven't arrived at a consensus about the definition of international talents under the background of MBA education. Secondly, Scholars at home are limited in research about building international ability structure model under the background of MBA education. So, based on the induction and reorganization of the previous documents, this article does a research on international ability of MBA from two aspects: the definition of international talents and international ability structure.

## II. THE CONCEPT OF INTERNATIONAL TALENTS

The demands for international talents in all works of life have reached a consensus. So does it at home and abroad. But, a slight difference is that "international talents" often are called "global citizens" at abroad. Although, the concept of "global citizens" can't be fully equated with the concept of "international talents" researched in this paper, they are rather similar from global perspectives transcending national boundaries.

From those scholars at home and abroad ever did research on international talents, scholars of different disciplines make a conclusion that they have different attitudes to the definition of international talents and haven't made out an unified standard

about the definition. Therefore, this article sets about analyzing present relevant literatures from those different points.

### A. Put Emphasis on International Perspectives

When speaking to international talents, Zhu Yi and Zhuang Huaying, scholars of representatives, mainly emphasize that international talents must have a sense of international perspective[6]. In addition, Tsinghua University, Beijing University and other higher education institutions also define international talents as the persons who have a sense of international perspective. Yao Fusheng(2008) clearly pointed out that international perspective referred to people can learn about the histories of the world and current societies from the height of world. International perspective is a kind of comprehensive performance embodied in knowledge, quality and capacity during the process of cultivating a person into an international talent. Therefore, this article looks international perspective as a kind of cognitive abilities and skills, which are cultivated by widely reading and familiarizing the histories, cultures, politics and economics of various countries in the world, to look forwards for future, analyze and solve questions from a height of the world.

### B. Put Emphasis on Overseas Working Experiences

Because of the rapid integration process of the whole world and the international trades exchanging increasingly frequently, many scholars think that one who wants to be an international talent should have overseas working experience. Yu Yueming (1988), the Chief Human Resource Officer of TCL Groups, thought that an international talent should be the one who can speak foreign languages and have overseas working experience. As one of the four great international CPA firms, PricewaterhouseCoopers Consulting also stresses that overseas working experience is one of the three great features that an international talent must possess. In a way, oversea working experience means that one can skillfully communicate with other people in a foreign language, thoroughly understand international practices and rules and accept foreign cultures and values. So that, those scholars define international talents from practical perspectives and seize the nuclear connotation of international talents.

### C. Put Emphasis on Professional Knowledge

Currently, various majors in higher education institutions including business administration will advance kinds of measures to promote the process of cultivating internationalization, among which, the most important is to

impart students professional knowledge closely related to application. Li Qiusheng(2006) thought that an international talent should be first embodied in his quality. He pointed that an international talent generally has firmly advanced knowledge and innovation ability. Zhang Huaying(2003), and Chen Junbin, Quzhan, Sun Yanbo(2009), who represented scholars, also supported that as an international talent one should have international consciousness and mind as well as the first-class knowledge structure, and be good at seizing opportunities in global competitions.

#### D. Put Emphasis on International Recognition

Moreover, some scholars especially value the international recognition of talents. They think that the title of “international talents” can’t be given by people themselves, and an international talent should hold a piece of standard professional qualification certificate with international reorganization, such as CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member), PMP (Project Management Professional) and WBSA (World Business Strategist Association). When analyzing how to embody “international” for international talents, Li Qiusheng(2006) pointed out China is lacking of international talents at present. So, international talents must get the international recognition.

From above descriptions about international talents, no definition can be reached at home and abroad. Basically, all people mentally analyze it in a way of enumeration. Although lacking of logical explanation, people can still draw conclusions that are: one, the same defining factors are as the following: international perspectives, across-culture communication and cooperation ability, innovation ability, solid and professional international knowledge, be familiar with international rules and practices; two, there exist many divergence points about defining: the ability to speak foreign language, international experience, local talents internationalization and the ability to life-long learning.

Thus, in the author’s eyes, the essence of international talents is a show of quality and ability, that is to say, the international quality and international ability. International talents should possess international perspectives and the spirit of innovation, master the international first-class professional knowledge, familiarize with the languages and cultural backgrounds of related countries, and be the modern management talents who have the cross-cultural communication and cooperation ability.

### III. INTERNATIONALIZATION COMPETENCE STRUCTURE

There are two main arguments on existing competence structure about people: in 1904, Spearman, a psychologist in England, first put forward two-factor theory. He thought human intelligence consisted of the general factor and special factor. The general factor represents personal basic ability, and the special factor represents personal special ability related to few special activities. In the middle of 20th century, some scholars advanced multi-factor structure theory, and thought there were three levels of humans’ intelligence: general ability, special ability and creative ability. In 1988, in accordance with the features of domestic vocational training, Ministry of Labor and Social Security first divided humans’ ability into

professional ability, general ability for vocation and core competence in a monographic study[5].

Ability cultivation is important for cultivating international talents. Now, many domestic scholars pay attention to the abilities of the international talents. For instance, Qian Jiaoyi(1966), Lv Hongfen(2013) and other people thought that as international talents, who must possess the ability to innovate and to handle information. Peng Jianfeng(2005) and Fan Wei, Wu Fuyou(2009) highlighted the importance of cross-cultural communication ability for international talents. Cao Deming(2011), Xiao Su(2014) pointed out the foreign language ability was the first factor. From the perspective of practice, Yu Guoting, Zhang Jianhua, Xie Xiaobo(2004) confirmed six aspects to inspect MBA, and the six aspects are as the following: the ability to judge and make decisions, social skills, communication ability, and leadership, ability to plan and execute and innovation ability.

Thus, the author of this article thinks that international ability is made up by various abilities, and it is a multi-sequence, multi-factor and multi-level dynamic multi-synthesis. Combining the characteristics of MBA, multi-level structure and the cultivation object of MBA education, this article generalize three dimensions seven kinds of abilities about international abilities of MBA from the application practice perspectives, and the three dimensions are basis, execution, and strategy. The following is the building model, as shown in Figure 1.

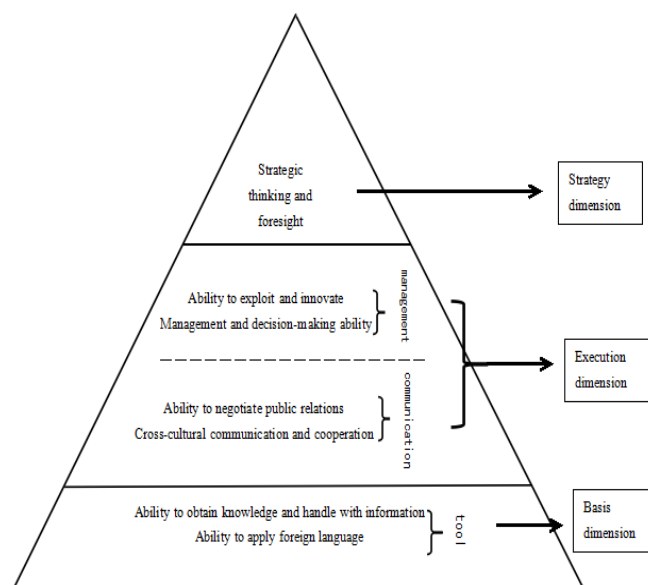


Fig. 1. International Ability of MBA Structure Model

#### A. Basis Level

##### 1) The ability to use foreign languages

It is necessary to master a kind of foreign language with China's opening up expanding. So do international talents. Having the ability to use foreign language is the precondition for MBA who work on international affairs to exploit international markets successfully [4]. Mastering a kind of language not only means that one can skillfully communicate in oral language and express in written foreign language but also can right

express meanings by gestures languages. For this language, it doesn't need to meet the requirements of high quality as diplomats do but satisfy the demands in the fields of business administration major.

#### *2) The ability to obtain knowledge and handle information*

It is an information time in the 21st century. Information will be the strategic resource for economic development in every country. Under the background of globalization, a new revolution, namely, the information revolution in a Big Data time is challenging us. One who goes ahead of information wins the initiative of development.

In the jobs of management practice, it is basic ability to obtain knowledge and handle information. MBA should skillfully use global networks, various media and kinds of friend sourcing to obtain and handle information efficiently, and discover opportunities, analyze problems and address needs.

#### *B. Execution dimension*

##### *1) Across-cultural communication and cooperation ability*

In the process of global economic integration, the factor, as a cultural barrier, can't be ignored. Based on culture, the international practices, business markets and political economy bring great difficult to international affairs in the fields of industry and commerce. If every country cannot actively communicate or cooperate with each other or handle problems properly under the different culture background, it certainly will bring enterprises with irretrievable loss[1]. Therefore, MBA must understand and respect foreign cultures, and be good at mixing multi-culture together, seek common points while reserving difference of cultures and master skills of a cross-cultural communication and cooperation.

##### *2) Ability to negotiate public relations*

Under the big environment of global trade, competition and cooperation are in together, and businesses exchanges among various countries are more and more frequent. So, in such situation, it becomes especially important to master certain negotiation skills, which also is an indispensable activity. Except mastering the first-class knowledge, MBA also should improve them in daily management practice and try to find a kind of negotiation skills fitting him to handle republic relations.

##### *3) Management and decision-making ability*

In the constantly changing environment of economy and management, enterprises should do reflections to changes timely. So, MBA must possess management abilities, which includes leadership, control ability, the ability for human resource development and utilization and so on. An excellent modern enterprise management talent also needs to keep calm to make a decision, judgment and direction at a crucial time. The decision-making ability of an enterprise management talent is mainly made from three aspects, namely, open ability for refining, precise forecast ability and accurate decision-making ability. MBA should consciously cultivate and exercise their management and decision-making ability in practices and

makes preparation for entering the international market in future.

#### *4) Ability to exploit and innovate*

In today's world competition, it is more the talents competition than the creativity competition. The advent of the Internet era leads to the rapid social development and the management theory also continues to update and expand. Thus, MBA must have the courage to exploit and innovate. The innovation in this article indicates that MBA uses the present thinking mode to come up with a special idea that is different from the commons, and takes advantages of the existing knowledge and materials in a given environment to improve or create new matters to meet the demands of enterprises and society, and achieve certain benefits.

#### *C. Strategy level*

##### *1) Strategic thinking and foresight*

Strategic thinking ability regards dialectical materialism attainment as the basis of understanding and it is a plan thinking ability for the overall, long-term and fundamental key issues. The foresight means that, under such business environment filled with uncertain factors, leaders can clearly know the development direction and path of organization and have long-term planning strategies and correctly predict the future to realize organization targets. Another meaning of the foresight means one dares to break down existing mindset, conceptual system and category mode.

In an increasingly competitive business environment, if an enterprise has no strategic insight, it is hard for it to realize sustainable development. MBA without strategic thinking and foresight will fall behind in the changeable international markets. So that, MBA should pay much attention to cultivate their strategic thinking and foresight when obtain information.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, after study on the international ability of MBA, the author in this article thinks that the following three aspects can be used to cultivate MBA's abilities in the teaching practices of MBA in future.

##### *A. Innovate teaching methods and build an international platform*

The traditional teaching in China is that teachers stand on the platform to pass on knowledge to students and students sit on chairs and are passive to listen to classes and receive knowledge, which is one-to-many model[3]. Compared with MBA education which has quite distinct feature of application practice, the traditional teaching is barely satisfactory. So, higher education institutions have responsibility to innovate teaching methods, acting on international convention. Apart from the classical case teaching, there are many ways to improve teaching methods. Such as, it also can adopt student groups to carry out investigation and survey and have a discussion after classes, hold a roleplaying game, regularly conduct international visiting rostrum, and let teachers go abroad to study, even take advantage of network platform to realize international classes interaction to finish teaching.

*B. Optimize curriculum system set, internationalization combined with localization.*

Currently, the phenomena of copy and translation about curricula construction in China are serious. Contrarily, the self-designed teaching materials are extremely rare at home, even some teaching materials never update once adopted. In order to cultivate the international ability of MBA, it should avoid using obsolescent teaching materials. Except borrowing foreign classical cases, it also needs to write teaching materials with local characteristics in accordance with the actual status of China market economy. About the curriculum contents, higher education institutions can add across-culture communication skills, international culture and other humanistic knowledge, which is conducive to improving students' understanding to multi-cultures.

*C. Strengthen construction of high-quality staffs and lead students to take part in classes.*

Without international faculty team, there are no international students' sources. Accelerating the construction of MBA faculty team needs to hold the strategies of "go out" and "bring in". Firstly, it will strengthen training on the present MBA teachers and regularly dispatch teachers to go abroad to have exchanges about teaching method and engage in advanced studies or enter enterprises to communicate and study with others; secondly, it will implement the "Thousand Talents Plan" to employ foreign MBA teachers who have rich experiences or realize virtual teaching by distance education.

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