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Narratives on the curricularization of cross cultural management and contributions to the internationalization of higher education

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Introduction: The objective of the research was to argue about the urgency of the Curricularization of Cross-Cultural Management, to provide better preparation for students in the face of social, economic and political dynamics.

Methods: The research takes a qualitative approach and uses a revisional methodology, considering articles published on the Web of Science and Scopus, with a search conducted in July 2024, with the descriptor "Cross-Cultural Management" considering the period from 2012 to 2024.

Results: The narrative literature review was used, while the reading and choice of texts for the research corpus considered attention to the CCM approach, contributing to the construction of the argument about the curricularization of cross-cultural management.

Discussion: It is concluded that research and teaching on contemporary cross cultural management need to reflect on the varied worldviews and different paradigms, with attention to (i) digital transformation and virtual education; (ii) learning, connectivism, and formative experience; (iii) knowledge management and communities of practice; and (iv) conflict management.

KEYWORDS

culture, interculturality, curricularization, cross-cultural, management

1 Introduction

The business world is becoming more challenging and innovative. Organizations are seeking dynamism, stimulating innovative organizational behavior and increasingly assuming collective work dynamics, influenced by contexts, such as the work environment, management, teams and culture (Javed et al., 2019). These changes also impact education, as well as individuals, educational institutions and organizations globally. In this sense, communicative processes and notions of time and space, which transcend borders, have changed and mobilized reflections on the homogenization and hybridization of cultures (Hoogvelt, 1997).

In particular, organizations have found themselves with an increasingly culturally diverse and geographically distant workforce. The need to synchronize multinational enterprises (MNEs) from different parts of the world, overcoming cultural differences and geographical

distances, simultaneously with the advance of virtual technology, led to the creation of global virtual teams, defined by their dependence on technology-mediated communication and team members living in different countries, considering the urgent need to maintain relationships of trust (Elron and Vigoda-Gadot, 2006).

Transnational companies, for example, are increasingly active, mobilizing educational institutions to contribute as social agents to delimit and disseminate norms related to new patterns of socialization and internationalization (Hurrell, 2009). And working virtually, for example, requires effort since the multicultural nature of teams can influence performance and political processes, as interactions are especially complex due to differences in value priorities, goal preferences and interpretative schemes held by members of different cultures, leading to misunderstandings, friction and conflicts (Elron and Vigoda-Gadot, 2006).

In addition, Lamb et al. (2020) confirm that much progress has been made since the 1960s, and many questions have been raised again with the drive toward artificial intelligence recently. These advances and their impacts add solutions from research and the creation of systems in areas such as document retrieval, text classification, fraud detection, and the creation of recommendation systems, personalized search, social network analysis, planning, diagnosis, and many of these processes have driven large companies such as Google, Netflix, Facebook, and Amazon. The authors stress, however, that it is necessary to expand efforts in defense of cross-cultural relevance, developing cultural intelligence to deal with various aspects of society in a broad process of technical-scientific change.

Along these lines, there are many that aim to understand aspects of different cultures in order to conceptually and operationally improve managerial performance, from the business area (Lamb et al., 2020), with an emphasis on: leadership and ethics (Haque and Yamoah, 2021); methodologies for managing cross-cultural virtual teams (Anderson and Ramalingam, 2021); environmental risks (Liu, 2019), with impacts on the medical field (Giannetta et al., 2020; Van Riper et al., 2021); and contributions to the field of sports (Jagielski and Zhang, 2021). These studies broaden the capacity to analyze processes because they include the topic of culture, providing a paradigmatic opening, with multi-paradigmatic contributions to original solutions and innovations needed by society (Grosskopf and Barmeyer, 2021).

According to Barmeyer et al. (2019), Cross Cultural Management (CCM) studies the behavior of people in organizations around the world and trains people to work in organizations with employees and customer populations from different cultures. It describes organizational behavior between countries and cultures to understand and improve the interaction of co-workers, customers, suppliers and partners from different countries and cultures.

Cross-cultural management studies (CCMS) investigate the interrelations between culture, management and organization, and ensuing implications. Considering the world increasingly characterized by mobility, globalization and digitalization, a more contemporary CCM studies has shifted from national cultural comparison and doing business abroad to the investigation of culturally diverse contexts, including "at home" work and study (Mahadevan and Steinmann, 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted and transformed the world. Our way of living has changed after that. Assumptions about globalization, mobility, internationalization of higher education,

interculturalism and expatriate lifestyles have undergone a profound transformation. The radical shift caused by the pandemic is one typical example of a world marked by VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity). Cross-cultural management, international business and their connected competencies will not be the same as before the 2020s (Primecz, 2024).

Since the 1990s, several transformations have taken place in society, and universities have not differed, demanding adaptations in their internationalization processes, to respond and adapt to new demands (Ferreira et al., 2016). In this context, university students are more aware of interconnectivity and crave new experiences and interaction with different cultures through their studies (Yang and Chung, 2015). Internationalization is therefore considered essential for universities and can contribute to this scenario, especially when they integrate international understanding into the curriculum (Praetzel, 1999). From this context, we can see the relevance of teaching and learning cross-cultural management in higher education institutions (HEIs). The curricularization of this subject is essential to train global citizens, students who have graduated from an educational institution in one country, but who can work, study and move around different cultures in other countries, reducing the impact that intercultural adjustment difficulties can promote. It is essential for HEIs to train professionals for contemporary demands marked by globalization and the internationalization of higher education institutions.

The aim of this research was to argue about the urgency of curricularizing cross-cultural management in higher education institutions in Brazil, considering the narrative review of the Cross-Cultural Management approach as a fundamental dimension of management courses. We included studies on cross-cultural management across various industries (e.g., business, healthcare, technology, etc.) and various countries/regions of the world, because we aimed to explore integrally the Cross-Cultural Management literature, explore it in all possible scenarios and align cross-cultural management aimed at training for the job market - sense of employability and development of skills for work.

The research presents an overview of studies on this current context to then describe essential aspects of the curricularization of cross-cultural management to better prepare students for the increasingly intense social, economic and political dynamics of the contemporary international context. To this end, the study will make a relevant contribution to people, organizations, and society, taking on a sense of urgency, partly as a result of the increasing digitization of work processes, and the call for a digital culture, as well as the call for solutions aimed at managing teams that are increasingly multiverse and geographically dispersed.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 From inter(culture)lity to transcultural management

Before tackling the topic of "cross-cultural management," it is important to introduce what culture is. To achieve this, Wildman et al. (2016) offer a good metaphor: culture is like a photographer who, when taking a particular photo, makes the right choice of lens to get a different perspective and another view of the world, which would be invisible to the naked eye. For these authors, culture can operate similarly by allowing,

interpreting and giving meaning to the world. This interpretation is also shared by people and social groups, influencing ways of understanding phenomena, events or social and organizational facts. Like the lens, some cultures focus on events that are near, while other cultures adopt the perspective of the telescopic lens, of the distant future.

Furthermore, Wildman et al. (2016) report that it is increasingly common to work and interact with people from distant cultures. Thus, understanding different interpretations should be more demanding of organizations, since making sense to the culture of a given country, for example, may not make sense to its international partner or supplier, or its multinational market, since worldviews, or lenses, differ for each type of culture, increasing the possibilities of miscommunication, misunderstandings, and missed opportunities. To this end, internationalization and interculturality are widely discussed (Craide and Silva, 2012). However, organizations, especially those that leave their national borders, are looking for professionals who can communicate with a variety of people from different cultures, demanding greater intercultural competence (Craide et al., 2009). Therefore, according to Fornet-Betancourt (2008), interculturality represents the search for an interactive quality between cultures, through communication and coexistence between them, not just the mere coexistence of these cultures in the same environment. However, for Barbosa and Veloso (2009), it is important to seek productive interaction, maintain communication and compress action, with the aim of achieving interactive processes and business efficiency. Thus, organizations need to prepare themselves to deal with cultural diversity (Barbosa and Veloso, 2007), and develop skills such as intercultural communication, which contributes to balance, to have an integrated team prepared to carry out all their activities (Ferrari, 2012; Celano and Guedes, 2014).

In 2014, the intercultural issue was debated at the first Intercultural Management Summit, organized by the Institute for Cross-Cultural Management at Florida Tech (Wildman et al., 2016). With the event, issues related to the relationship between culture and work gained greater emphasis, while the event arose from the demand for learning in various cultures, capable of providing new horizons for problems related to cultural differences.

Other researchers have also shown concern about challenges related to cultural variations, such as Mockaitis et al. (2012), who studied teams that have taken on new technologies in their work processes, noting that additional effort is needed to maintain unity and dedication to work. Along the same lines, Oertig and Buergi (2006) reported that virtual work management needs to pay attention to different cultures, as well as language variations, time zones and many other aspects that make intercultural work complex. The study by Anderson and Ramalingam (2021) reinforces that, although multiculturalism or transculturalism in the workplace is increasingly present, there are important challenges when teams from different cultures and different countries, languages and customs work together. When they carried out a global virtual team experiment in 2019 with students from India and the USA, they found problems related to technology and time zones, with implications for the virtual management of tasks. The study highlights that specific methodologies can favor the process, especially for defining roles and analyzing project difficulties, while openness to interventions before and during the process is fundamental.

Oertig and Buergi (2006) carried out a study on the perspectives of project leaders in a multinational company, with the aim of investigating their perceptions of projects. They observed the following challenges: (i) virtual communication, (ii) developing a relationship of trust, (iii) managing people with different cultures, and (iv) managing activities in a cross-cultural management model. Furthermore, they emphasized building relationships of trust as fundamental to intercultural leadership, which is more easily achieved in a face-to-face context. Thus, they suggest that, where possible, managers encourage face-to-face meetings to facilitate trusting relationships; develop communication and the necessary adaptation to the advance of technology; and make constant linguistic and cultural investments. In emerging economies, for example, Gronwald (2017) study points out that working in global or multicultural teams can be surrounded by prejudices, since different worldviews can each act as the best way to do and understand work and the organization, with the imposition of values, beliefs and behaviors to legitimize one's own culture. Gronwald (2017) also reports that intercultural sensitivity has become the greatest requirement for leading global teams, especially in times of polarization, when (in)tolerance of differences has proved challenging. Furthermore, Gronwald (2017) goes on to describe that in teams working with Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Jews, for example, considering the religious dynamics, the challenges of intercultural sensitivity are greater. He also identifies the potential for additional conflict when people from more culturally tolerant societies work in teams with people from less tolerant societies. While the less tolerant expect "integration," the more tolerant expect "tolerance." These are important issues to consider in cross-cultural management, where cultural variation is also analyzed by the dynamics of society, with reference to tolerance.

In relation to tolerance, Arora et al. (2019) also reflect on social media. They point out that so-called "global" communication is actually defined and defended by certain countries, representing a "pseudo-democratization" of the media. The countries considered "developed" are then the ones that take precedence, with the consequent denial, exclusion or depreciation of the cultures of "underdeveloped," "undeveloped" or "developing" countries. This movement then expresses itself in prejudice and disrespect for "different" cultures, influencing choices, attitudes, behaviors, opinions, values, or "universal values" with greater destructive potential, considering the wide space of social media in society (Arora et al., 2019). Socio-cultural relations are therefore essential to intercultural sensitivity, which facilitates management and also social interaction based on tolerance. According to Gronwald (2017), social contexts that are favorable to interculturality can contribute to the future adaptation of organizations, solving problems that make it difficult for teams to work, as well as the creative and problem-solving dynamics needed in everyday business. Gronwald (2017) argues that a united team, considering tolerance, understanding and mediation of different cultures, strengthens deliveries, such as services, projects and activities. To this end, communication is a fundamental aspect, nurtured by trust and collaboration.

In the same vein, Henson (2016) warns of limited beliefs related to global experience, directing his reflections at managers. For the author, many believe that managing people is not so different from one country to another, since, deep down, people are the same; many others believe that technical mastery of the best management tools, or management practices, is enough to get the job done in a multicultural context. For Henson (2016), it is essential to prepare global leaders with a global mindset, paying special attention to the challenges of different cultural contexts.

According to Barmeyer et al. (2019), cross-cultural management research comprises a young and interdisciplinary field of research, addressed by a variety of disciplines with different paradigmatic and methodological assumptions, and continues to undergo thematic changes. By analyzing 777 articles published in two major journals between 2001 and 2018, the authors concluded that corporate culture and people management are the main topics of cross-cultural management. The investigation also considers that research is moving away from a quantitative profile toward a qualitative approach, and that cross-cultural management is concerned with managing people's behavior in organizations and the role of culture.

Along these lines, the study by Haque and Yamoah (2021), from a cross-cultural perspective, contributes to understanding the role of cross-cultural management in boosting the innovation movement, as they identify that leadership, especially ethical leadership, is essential for minimizing occupational stress, which reduces the capacity for innovation in organizations. Intercultural leadership even contributes to more collaborative management processes (Hill et al., 2021).

Furthermore, organizations are also challenged to make efforts in relation to sustainable development, requiring companies to demonstrate attention to environmental and social risks in their processes, ensuring sustainable operational development in the organization (Liu, 2019). In addition, there is also the contribution of the cultural approach to corporate risk analysis, which was confirmed in an experiment with MBA students from the United States and China (Liu, 2019). Thus, in an increasingly globalized world, it is important and urgent to recognize the relevance of studies focused on cross-cultural management, to understand that being global means being willing to understand diversity, compared to your usual, and also to interact and work actively outside your usual context (Wilmot et al., 2016).

2.2 A multi-paradigmatic view of cross-cultural management

Each individual has their own unique way of understanding and interacting with the world, and this is sometimes underestimated when, for example, we want to apply a universal truth based on our own experiences. It is understood that there are various parallel worldviews, commonly known as paradigms or models. Thus, the topic of "paradigm," when interacting with the cross-cultural issue, should be rediscussed in the light of the idea of multi-paradigm (Grosskopf and Barmeyer, 2021).

Grosskopf and Barmeyer (2021) advocate openness to other paradigms based on multi-paradigmatic research, which makes an important contribution to recognizing and accepting different perspectives on phenomena (different views). They also understand that research and teaching on cross-cultural management need to reflect on the various worldviews and paradigms, with openness and empathy, which increases the chances of making original and innovative advances and discoveries, appropriate to the needs and demands of society. On the other hand, the authors emphasize the need for more studies that are sensitive to intercultural issues and based on paradigmatic openness. If cross-cultural management is urgent in the face of emerging social, political and economic issues, management education that is attentive to cultural issues is essential

for the development of organizations in the face of current contextual aspects.

Kwok and Jacob (2024) utilized a mixed-method approach in their study about the asylum seekers and refugees (AS&R) to assess the current state of AS&R curricula worldwide, identify shortcomings in the United Kingdom (UK's) medical undergraduate curriculum and determine the specific needs of AS&R, considering the context of the Ukraine and Russia war and the migration of Ukrainian to UK's. The scoping review of literature revealed an absence of comprehensive AS&R health curricula, with many programs focusing on broader global health issues.

The social issue considers the transformations that cross-cultural management can make in the life of students, workers or individuals who go abroad with the aim to study, work or live and develop other competences, experience different cultures, costumes, environment. The economic issue is related to the development of the countries with these global mobilities. Some countries, mainly European nations are more targeted by foreign people. And the political issue includes the national and international politics of country to deal with the immigration and global mobilities. These three issues impact and are impacted by the cross-cultural management.

Lamb et al. (2020) reflect on this training process, including the discussion on contextualization, considering experiences of importing educational models from Western to non-Western scenarios, for example, reflecting the needs and expectations of students for pedagogical responses appropriate to their context, based on transcultural relevance. Thus, the benefits of contextualization for teaching and learning center on the proposition that students will be better able to assign personalized meaning to the content, which can have a positive impact on intrinsic motivation and interest and generate a more profound understanding of the content (Lamb et al., 2020).

More examples of research lead to problematizing the cultural dynamics of West and East, demonstrating the need for a field of study of an interdisciplinary nature, which is derived from the research of Van Riper et al. (2021) in the field of health, and Jagielski and Zhang (2021) in the sports context. In addition, the study by Ma and Kang (2020) considers that modern society has become a global society, where people from different regions and countries, with different ways of life and cultures, live collectively. Corporate culture, therefore, is related to the social culture of the context that houses the organization, while each country has various types of culture that directly and indirectly affect organizations. Thus, managing different cultures institutions is a challenge that requires strategic approaches to incorporate and implement techniques that consider the diversity of cultures presented.

It is vital that differences are incorporated so that the world can be harmonious and allow people from different parts of the world to interact freely and share common beliefs and values. The research carried out by Ma and Kang (2020) in the People's Republic of China reflects these discussions, revealing that local culture affects corporate culture. To this end, Celano and Guedes (2014) recognize that these are environments that bring together diverse cultures that coexist, act and react, sharing objectives and work activities, contributing to the development of bonds and partnerships. It is therefore essential to understand existing cultural differences, strengthen relationships and build efficient communication to help develop trust in interactions (Craide et al.,

2009). A study by Yang and Chung (2015) on two foreign music universities, one American and the other Korean, conducted an analysis of three critical factors for developing a cross-cultural program: organizational commitment, teamwork and pedagogical content: (i) in relation to organizational commitment, it involves leadership and the common objectives to conduct an international business and cultural experience project; (ii) teamwork, considering the soft skills of leadership, as well as understanding the general framework of the organization; and also, (iii) regarding pedagogical content, it is considered to integrate experiences from folkloric aspects to broaden knowledge and awareness of other cultures.

Thus, as universities face an increasingly global environment, internationalization is considered a critical aspect of education. This is a fact with significant academic and economic implications for higher education institutions around the world that need to be up-to-date with cultural education to adapt to any changes toward internationalization (Yang and Chung, 2015).

3 Methodology

The research takes a qualitative approach and uses a review methodology, considering articles published on Web of Science and Scopus, with a search carried out in July 2024, with the descriptor "Cross-Cultural Management" (CCM) considering the period from 2012 to 2024. A narrative literature review was used, as it provides a more comprehensive overview of the topic (Hakala et al., 2020). While the reading and choice of texts for the research corpus considered attention to the CCM approach contributing to the construction of arguments about the curricularization of cross-cultural management.

The inclusion of studies on intercultural management in various sectors (e.g., business, health, technology, etc.) and several countries/regions of the world occurred due to the direct impact that the lack of training, in the area of cross-cultural management, of professionals in general can impact not only the Education area, but companies as a whole, and that includes business, health, engineering, technology, for example, hence the breadth of professional areas and geographic regions.

Narrative literature reviews, or metanarratives, are constituted from in-depth scientific readings that, in general, present a synthesis of ideas gathered on a given topic (Frost, 2009). Narratives are commonly used to provide information about an experiment; however, in business, this practice is new, although it has become more widespread recently (Borghini et al., 2010; Hakala et al., 2020). And narrative reviews help researchers to describe what is known on a topic while conducting a subjective analysis and critique of an entire body of literature (Sukhera, 2022).

Narrative reviews do not aim to be systematic syntheses that answer a specific, highly focused question; instead, they offer carefully thought out and rigorous interpretations of a body of knowledge. They have been commonly framed as an umbrella term that includes several different subtypes of reviews: state-of-the-art, meta-ethnographic, critical, and theory integration reviews (Sukhera, 2022). This study is classified as state-of-the-art research which attempts to summarize the research concerning a specific topic (Curricularization of Cross-Cultural Management) along a timeline (2012–2022) of significant changes in understanding or research orientations.

The reading of the texts follows the methodology presented by Hakala et al. (2020), in relation to in-depth readings, considering

binders and reviews of the texts, in an attempt to extract the maximum richness from the literature from the perspective of the business world. Thus, in addition to the texts in the corpus of the study, articles recognized as relevant by the authors read were also included, broadening the base of studies on the subject. These criteria aim to develop a narrative capable of driving further development on the subject, and, to this end, the subjectivity of how researchers integrate content into the narrative is an essential factor. According to Green et al. (2006), narratives can spark a new idea or even question something that had not been thought of or discussed before. For this reason, it requires comprehensive, qualitative and in-depth reading and writing of the texts gathered, helping to encourage thought, reflection and discussion among the actors in the academic community. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves surveying a set of data, the sources of which can be interviews, focus groups or textual content, with the aim of finding repeated patterns of meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2006). From Minayo (2010, p. 316) perspective, thematic analysis aims to "discover the nuclei of meaning that make up a communication which presence or frequency means something to the analytical objective pursued," with the attribution of meaning based on the context of analysis and also on the research objective.

Greenhalgh et al. (2005) present method of meta-narrative review composed of six phases: (1) planning, (2) search, (3) mapping, (4) appraisal, (5) synthesis and (6) recommendations phase. While Baethge et al. (2019) explain that systematic reviews are more indicated in answering specific questions and narrative reviews are better suited to addressing a topic in wider ways. So, the authors developed SANRA, which is the acronym for Scale for the Assessment of Narrative Review Articles, where they present a brief critical appraisal tool for the assessment of non-systematic articles which is composed of 6 items: (1) justification of the article's importance for the readership, (2) statement of concrete/specific aims or formulation of questions, (3) description of the literature search, (4) referencing, (5) scientific reasoning and (6) appropriate presentation of data.

Thus, this study utilized a mixed-method approach, with the adaptation of the models presented by Atkins et al. (2008), Minayo (2010), and Greenhalgh et al. (2005). Atkins et al. (2008) discuss the challenges of applying a meta ethnographic approach to synthesizing qualitative research on tuberculosis medication adherence. The authors present 7 stages to describe the meta-ethnography: (1) Getting started, (2) Deciding what is relevant to the initial interest, (3) Reading the studies, (4) Determining how the studies are related, (5) Translating studies into one another, (6) Synthesizing translations, (7) Expressing the synthesis.

Thereby, Minayo (2010) explain that the meta-synthesis stages begin with the (1) "pre-analysis" of the studies with the "exploration of the material," then (2) the reading of the studies, followed by (3) coding and cutting out the selected material, (4) the empirical categorization and treatment of the data, accompanied by the (5) interpretation and determination of the results, ending with (6) the "classification and consolidation of the data." The difference between the stages of meta-analysis presented by Atkins et al. (2008) and Minayo (2010) is noticed by the stage 1 of Minayo (2010) corresponding to the stages 1 and 2 of Atkins et al. (2008), and the "translation" of the studies presented by Atkins et al. (2008) is according to the stage of interpretation and determination of the results explained by Minayo (2010). In the Figure 1 is presented the methods of meta-narrative review and its application in this study.

The inclusion criteria of the studies on cross-cultural management, considered various industries (e.g., business, healthcare, technology, etc.) and various countries/regions of the world, to promote a broad and interdisciplinary view of cross-cultural management, to explore the literature completely and promote a more detailed analysis of cross cultural management, including different views around the world and in different industries.

3.1 Training themes

These reflections based on the studies analysed in the thematic analysis show that the various social, cultural, economic and political contexts demand knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for the development of training that will support current and future challenges for contemporary cross-cultural management. Thus, four (4) aspects must be recognized: (i) digital transformation and virtual education; (ii) learning, connectivism and formative experience; (iii) knowledge management and communities of practice; and (iv) conflict management.

These four aspects emerged as a result of the thematic analysis. The world has been changing and the complexity of the challenges has impacted the cross-cultural management and the internationalization of higher education. The digital transformation has promoted virtualization of education, including in home interchange, classes and other international activities can be experienced now in the home country, but including interaction with the multicultural environment. The connectivism and

Models of Meta-synthesis stages			Meta-narrative review stages **in this study**
Atkins et al. (2008)	**Minayo (2007)**	**Greenhalgh et al. (2005)**	
(1) Getting started	(1) Exploration of the material	(1) Planning	It was planned to make a search in the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature and quality web sources.
(2) Deciding what is relevant to the initial interest	(2) Reading of the studies	(2) Search	The search was carried out in February 2022, with the descriptor 'Cross-Cultural Management' (CCM) considering the period from 2012 to 2022, in Scopus and Web of Science.
(3) Reading the studies	(3) Coding and cutting out the selected material	(3) Mapping	All the articles found in the search were included in the analysis. The reviews and books found were not included.
(4) Determining how the studies are related	(4) Empirical categorization and treatment of the data	(4) Appraisal	The treatment of the data occurred based on the similarities and dissimilarities found in the studies.
(5) Translating studies into one another	(5) Interpretation and determination of the results	(5) Synthesis	The insights obtained in the reading of the papers were developed in the Results section.
(6) Synthesizing translations	(6) Classification and consolidation of the data	(6) Recommendations phase	The synthesis and recommendations were the explored in the Results and Conclusion sections.
(7) Expressing the synthesis	-	-	=

FIGURE 1
Methods of meta-narrative review and its application in this study. Source: Adapted from Atkins et al. (2008), Minayo (2010), and Greenhalgh et al. (2005).

formative experience also have been improved by digital transformation.

The facilities promoted by the advancement of technologies have accelerated the pace of student access to various countries and cultures. In this way, new challenges emerge due to the conflict management arising from cultural distance, knowledge management and communities of practice.

3.2 Digital transformation and virtual education

Cerdá Suárez et al. (2021) have acknowledged that it is essential to understand how cultural and social issues play a role in the transition from face-to-face to virtual education, while the digital transformation can be analyzed from various aspects, with cultural, social and economic issues being fundamental to understanding the challenges and possibilities of the changes underway (Cerdá Suárez et al., 2021). The authors also recognize that higher education institutions (HEIs) need to promote a system that ensures adherence to change, with continuous encouragement for the academic community, to sustain curricular changes that focus on intercultural experiences. In relation to the business environment, global teams, multinational or multicultural teams, globally distributed teams, cross-culturally distributed teams, geographically dispersed teams, and most commonly, virtual teams, take on cultural diversities and are increasingly present in the business world to manage complex organizational environments (Gluesing and Gibson, 2004). For Zander et al. (2012), global teams can have characteristics such as national, cultural and linguistic heterogeneity, working in a globally dispersed virtual environment. According to Bartel-Radic et al. (2015), to manage these teams well, the necessary skills must be learned, such as specific consideration of work environments, internal connections (relationships between members) and the interdependence of the workflow. In this context, virtual communication emerges as an essential issue, since, when it is not used properly, it can lead to difficulties in this flow, or a lack of information needed to understand the messages, avoiding problems related to misunderstandings.

Regarding virtual teams, intercultural competencies are also necessary to achieve efficient intercultural communication (Bartel-Radic et al., 2015). Authors such as Hunter et al. (2006) define intercultural competence as the cognitive disposition to new ideas, and other perspectives, in the quest to understand the cultural norms and expectations of others. For Jirwe et al. (2009), intercultural competence can also be characterized as a set of behaviors, knowledge and attitudes that enable effective work in cross-cultural environments, and Sjoberg and Shabalina (2010) define it as the ability to interact effectively with other cultures.

3.3 Learning, connectivism and the formative experience

Another important issue involves understanding the learning process itself, and research suggests changes in the way people learn when technology is involved. Thus, learning in a web context, mediated by connection, is also essential to supporting cross-cultural management within HEIs.

For Perrin et al. (2005), for example, there are three theories of learning: behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism, all of which were defined and theorized before the advance of the use of technologies in teaching and learning processes. As a result, learning is presented in a different context, in which the "instant" is the driving force, which relativizes time, displacements and the search for knowledge, since a "click" can be the key to immediate and constant access to an incessant volume of content.

The idea of "connectivism" then gives room to problematize "how" people learn in the context of digital transformation and through virtual education. Shrivastava (2018), for example, presents a conception of learning defined as "connectivist" or "connectivist learning paradigm," using the idea that learning involves experiential, and absorption processes facilitated by technology. Although Shrivastava's (2018) idea is similar to the benefits of technology for learning, the defense of his paradigm still presents important challenges, especially in relation to assessment processes. In any case, it is essential to recognize that the very definition of learning to support teaching projects is discussed when it comes to virtual education. Even if indirectly, this debate is essential to cross-cultural management in two ways: (i) the training of the manager with the competence to do so, and also (ii) the cross-cultural training experience. With regard to the training experience, Wilmot et al. (2016) emphasize that institutions should start helping students develop cross-cultural management and intercultural communication early on, so that their experiences are meaningful and increase their ability to deal with contextual challenges. In research carried out in the UK and Brazil, students reported difficulties in cross-cultural management and communication related to language, shyness in the face of "difference," and the need to have a "mediator," such as a tutor, who would facilitate communication (Wilmot et al., 2016). It was also perceived that the experience broadened the vision for other work possibilities and the need to broaden intercultural experiences. Another training experience can be seen in the study by Bechter and Swierczek (2017), on a teaching program called "international management," based on an intercultural negotiation project, with online and offline activities, and the experience of the flipped classroom, which has been used for more than 20 years in MBA programs in Europe. The program, which lasts 2–3 years, welcomes students with professional experience, in classes of 50–70 students, with a representation of around 20 nationalities. Through their research, Bechter and Swierczek (2017) conclude that the experience was successful in all aspects, contributing to the subsequent professional performance of the student executives.

3.4 Knowledge management and community of practice

Kimble and Hilldreth (2005) investigated the relationship between knowledge management (KM) and communities of practice (CoPs) in general and virtual CoPs in particular. The research aimed to present some practical guidelines on how virtual CoPs can be facilitated and maintained. The relationship between KM and CoPs is explored using theoretical constructs and key aspects of virtual

work, and it also considers the resulting duality of participation-reification and soft-hard duality.

Kimble and Hilldreth (2005) conceptualize CoPs as groups of people united by a common purpose and internal motivation. And the central characteristic of CoPs is the relationships that develop between their members. Until recently, CoPs were mainly considered a feature of co-located environments. However, the pressures of globalization and the shift toward a more distributed workforce have led to greater interest in how CoPs can function in a distributed and technologically mediated international environment.

Kimble and Hilldreth's (2005) research results in three aspects that deserve more attention: (i) regular interaction, (ii) focus on the task, and (iii) shared motivation. Each has a role to play in the maintenance and growth of the CoP and, in the right balance, all three will form a virtuous circle. As relationships develop, motivation and interaction can increase. As the frequency of interactions increases, the amount of participation in the community's practice grows. As participation grows, the group begins to generate new ideas and develop new relationships, and, finally, the circle begins again.

4 Conflict management

Interpersonal conflict can be explained as a situation in which at least two individuals are in opposition due to different objectives, goals and expectations (Ristic et al., 2020). Culture shapes people's interests and values, which are at the heart of all conflict, and in doing so, adapts the style of dealing with conflict (Ristic et al., 2020). In a multicultural environment, complex problems and tensions do not usually create conflict on their own, but conflict can arise from differences in coping styles (Ristic et al., 2020).

Otherness in contemporary CCM studies often are related to the migration and refugee movements, with ensuing integration challenges. In this context, the differences between cultures are seen as being more problematic than enriching, and this makes it difficult to contribute to integration via a Positive Organizational Scholarship (Mahadevan, 2024). The notion of difference, as objectively definable and/or as experienced in interaction, is thus central to CCM studies. Increasingly so, difference is not considered an obstacle to be overcome, but as an opportunity for learning and growth (Mahadevan and Primecz, 2024).

Ristic et al. (2020) conducted a study aimed at explaining conflict management styles with the participation of 205 German and Serbian managers in German multinationals in Serbia. The results reveal that German and Serbian managers use different conflict management styles, and that the status of the conflict partner and gender affect managers' conflict management styles. According to Ristic et al. (2020), conflict with someone from one's own culture consumes a lot of energy, but the amount is magnified when the conflict involves people from different cultures.

Ristic et al. (2020) also point out that the motivation for the study was that Serbia is a developing southeastern European country in the process of transition and is one of many countries in the Balkan region that have attracted multinational companies seeking investment opportunities. Most multinational companies that open subsidiaries in Serbia usually place foreign managers in leadership positions in these companies. The presence of foreign companies in the country increases the cultural diversity in Serbian companies, which was not very common 20 years ago. Therefore, managers of Serbia, in addition to dealing with the challenges of the transitioning economy and turbulent changes, are also faced with a diverse workforce.

5 Final considerations

The aim of the research was to highlight the urgency of curricularizing cross-cultural management in higher education institutions in Brazil, considering the narrative review of the Cross-Cultural Management approach as a fundamental dimension of management courses. The research presents an overview of studies on this current context to then describe essential aspects of the curricularization of cross-cultural management to better prepare students for the increasingly intense social, economic and political dynamics of the contemporary international context.

Initially, internationalization is considered a critical aspect of education in the contemporary global context, as it has significant academic and economic implications for higher education institutions around the world, which need to deal effectively with cultural education to adapt to the changes arising from this context. The thematic analysis showed that research and teaching on cross-cultural management need to reflect on the different worldviews and paradigms, with openness and empathy. Although multiculturalism in the workplace is increasingly present, there are significant challenges in managing multicultural teams. This also applies to managing virtual work. There are specific challenges in emerging economies when it comes to working in global teams, which can be surrounded by prejudices, as well as the imposition of values, beliefs and behaviors to legitimize one's own culture. Intercultural sensitivity is therefore essential for leading global teams, especially in times of polarization, when intolerance of differences has proven challenging. As for the role of higher education in training for cross-cultural management, there are four aspects that need to be recognized: (i) digital transformation and virtual education; (ii) learning, connectivism and formative experience; (iii) knowledge management and communities of practice; and (iv) conflict management.

Expanding people's development, supported by the training process, therefore deserves important attention when it comes to cross-cultural management, especially regarding the benefits of contextualized approaches to teaching and learning. In this way, students will be able to attribute a meaning based on their context to the content they have assimilated, which can have a positive impact on intrinsic motivation and interest and generate an understanding geared toward the challenges and demands of their surroundings, favoring processes that are closer to the realities under investigation and intervention.

In this sense, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) must promote a system that promotes adherence to changes from face-to-face to virtual education, with continuous encouragement for the academic community, to sustain curricular changes that emphasize intercultural experiences. Three factors were considered when developing a cross-cultural program: organizational commitment, teamwork and pedagogical content.

Thus, the practical implications and recommendations for how higher education institutions could approach the curricularization process refer to see the higher education in the contemporary international context, considering the social, economic and political dynamics. In the social dynamics, the students will be able to deal with

the challenges of multicultural classrooms and later in the job market, with multicultural teams and organizational cultures of domestic and multinational companies. In relation to economic dynamics, the curricularization of CCM in HEIs can prepare the students for taking better decisions that imply in economic results for the multinational companies and the countries involved in these international operations. About the political dynamics, politics is one of the variables of institutional distance of the countries. If the students have an education including Cross Cultural Management, they will be better prepared to understand the influences of the political scenario in the organizations.

Potential counterarguments, limitations or challenges associated with the implementation of such curricula refer to the need to find teachers prepared to teach these multidisciplinary contents that involve a social, economic and political vision, as well as the adaptation of the undergraduate and postgraduate course curriculum. Graduation and adequacy of the course load.

Future studies could include theoretical and empirical studies on the stages of curricularization of cross-cultural management in HEIs in different countries, with comparative research by continent, by economic bloc and between countries with cooperation agreements on the internationalization of education.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Author contributions

FA: Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. MM: Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. FB: Writing – original draft. IC: Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. GS: Writing – original draft.

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The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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