CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND MANAGERS ACHIEVEMENT IN IRANIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

Cultural intelligence is the capability to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures. It can be learned by almost anyone. Cultural intelligence offers leaders an overall repertoire and perspective that can be applied to a myriad of cultural situations. The main purpose of this study is surveying the role of cultural intelligence in achievement of Iranian Cultural Institutions managers. The nature of the study is co-relational. The statistical population is Ardabil province Cultural Institutions manager and sample is 42 of these managers. The data for this study is primary and primary data was gathered through two questionnaires. The stability of this questionnaire in the current study has been computed by Crobnach alpha Method equal to 91% for cultural intelligence and 87% for achievement. The results show that cultural intelligence and their dimensions are all significantly and highly related with achievement.

Keywords: Cultural intelligence, Achievement, Managers, Cultural Institutions

1 INTRODUCTION

Among the twenty-first century skills that are frequently talked about are the ability to adapt constantly to different people from diverse cultures and the ability to manage the interconnectedness of today’s world. Cultural intelligence, cultural quotient or CQ, is a theory within management and organizational psychology, positing that understanding the impact of an individual’s cultural background on their behavior is essential for effective business, and measuring an individual’s ability to engage successfully in any environment or social setting [1].

Cultural intelligence is in relation to emotional or social intelligence. Emotional intelligence presumes that people are familiar with their own culture and that they (often unconsciously) use familiar situations as a way to interact with others. Cultural intelligence picks up where emotional intelligence leaves off—it involves dealing with people and situations in unfamiliar surroundings. Cultural intelligence determines a person’s ability to adjust to new cultures. Thus cultural intelligence can be defined as a person’s ability to successfully adapt to new cultural settings, that is, to unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context.

Cultural intelligence has three key parts: thinking and solving problems in particular ways (cultural strategic thinking), being energized and persistent in one’s actions (motivational), and acting in certain ways (behavioral). Strategic thinking is “thinking about thinking.” It is being conscious of people thinking processes, such as how people have gathered and organized the information and experience in their memory (old information), and then how people reorganize it (new information) to fit a new situation. People have to connect the new information to what they already know in order to help make sense of what actions to take. Cultural strategic thinking refers partly to the general thinking skills that an individual use to create an understanding of how and why people in a culture new to that individual act as they do [3]. This understanding captures not just what the people believe or value but also the procedures and routines that they are supposed to use as they work and act. The ideas that we have about what people in a new culture believe or value are called declarative knowledge, or knowledge about the state of things. For example, if I know that in Bali children are named according to their birth order, this is declarative knowledge (knowledge of facts). However, if I know that in China one empties one’s glass after a toast (gan bei), this is knowledge of procedures, or procedural knowledge. Thus cultural knowledge encompasses both the facts that we hold about another culture and our knowledge of
how things operate. In addition to cultural knowledge, cultural strategic thinking involves cultural thinking and learning, that is, the process through which we gain our cultural knowledge. This kind of cultural thinking and learning, called meta-cognition by psychologists, has also been referred to as thinking about thinking or learning to learn.

These two elements work together; cultural strategic thinking guides the strategies that people use to acquire knowledge about country-specific information. Clearly, cultural thinking and learning and acquiring cultural knowledge are both critical to success. Creating a way to make sense of new and radically different situations is an important task in developing cultural intelligence. Culturally intelligent managers aren’t just learning the ways that people act and behave in a new place. They are also creating a new mental framework for understanding what they experience and see. That is why cultural strategic thinking is also what psychologists call higher-order thinking; it refers to how we learn, not just what we learn.

In contrast, in applying approaches such as emotional or social intelligence, people use their existing knowledge of how things function in their culture to decide how and when to act in any particular situation [4].

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Cultural Intelligence

Cultural intelligence is the “capability to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures.” It can be learned by almost anyone. Cultural intelligence offers leaders an overall repertoire and perspective that can be applied to a myriad of cultural situations. It is a capability that includes four different dimensions enabling us to meet the fast-paced demands of leadership [5].

Cultural intelligence is composed of four parts (1) meta-cognition, (2) cognition, (3) motivation, and (4) behavior. High CQ individuals use all four in unison [6], [7]. Meta-cognition is defined as ones knowledge or control over cognitions that leads to deep information processing [8]. It is concentrated on the ability to process information and the knowledge of processing it [16], as well as the individual’s motives, goals, emotions and external stimuli [9]. It is not simply sufficient to know one self to obtain high CQ; individuals must be able to be flexible in their self-concept and ability to integrate new components into it [10].

Those with high meta-cognitive CQ are consciously aware of others’ cultural preferences before and during interactions. They also question cultural assumptions and adjust their mental models during and after interactions [11], [12].

Cognitive reflects knowledge of the norms, practices and conventions in different cultures acquired from education and personal experiences. This includes knowledge of the economic, legal and social systems of different cultures and subcultures and knowledge of basic frameworks of cultural values [13]. Those with high cognitive CQ understand similarities and differences across cultures [11]. It is information gained from experience and education, which involves specific norms, practices, and conventions, including universal facets of culture as well as culture-specific differences [8].

Motivational aspect of CQ involves ones interest in learning and functioning in cross-cultural situations [6]. Kanfer and Heggestad (1997) argued that such motivational capacities ‘provide agented control of affect, cognition and behavior that facilitate goal accomplishment.’ According to the expectancy value theory of motivation [14], the direction and magnitude of energy channeled toward a particular task involves two elements – expectations of success and value of success. This component directs and motivates one adaptation to a new cultural setting, and it can be broken down into enhancement, efficacy, and consistency [15].

Behavioral CQ reflects the capability to exhibit appropriate verbal and nonverbal actions when interacting with people from different cultures. As Hall (1959) emphasized, mental capabilities for cultural understanding and motivation must be complemented with the ability to exhibit appropriate verbal and nonverbal actions, based on cultural values of specific settings.

This includes having a wide and flexible repertoire of behaviors. Those with high behavioral CQ exhibit situational appropriate behaviors based on their broad range of verbal and nonverbal capabilities, such as exhibiting culturally appropriate words, tone, gestures and facial expressions [16].

Each of these aspects of CQ would be essential to individuals who are working with individuals from other cultures. It is crucial, therefore, for managers to understand what the antecedents are to CQ, because this will aid in the selection and training of global managers and expatriates. Since the construct is so new it is unclear what leads to increasing cultural intelligence and what contributes to higher levels of each facet of CQ.
2.2 Achievement motivation

Organizational achievement is a yardstick to measure the success of an organization in managing change. There are three tools used in achieving such success. They are strategic planning, organizational development, and organizational learning. Strategic planning is imperative in proactively managing change. Organizational development focuses on participative management in carrying out day-to-day operations. Organizational learning is emphasizing on past mistakes and focus on not repeating the same mistakes in future. A knowledge management framework enables effective operationalization of learning culture in the organization. A strong management is yet another important aspect towards achieving organizational achievement [17].

McClelland, Koestner, and Weinberger (1989) drew an important description about modes of motivational functioning. According to these theorists, motives refer to enduring preferences or needs (e.g., the need to achieve) for the attainment of certain classes of desired goal states (e.g., doing something better). These motives are triggered automatically by incentives (e.g., mastering a challenging task) intrinsic to performing an activity and influence a person behavior (e.g., how much effort a person puts into a given task) without a great deal of deliberative thought.

![Achievement Need Model](image-url)

The studies achievement shows that the dependent variable motivation is often equated with the expenditure of mental effort and is accordingly measured with performance indices reflecting speed on a task [18]. As McClelland (1980, 1985) stated, effortful performance qualifies as an indicator of ‘operant’ or spontaneous achievement behavior, provided that the amount of energy a person invests in a given task is left to his or her own initiative. Accordingly, implicit needs to achieve have been suggested and found to predict energetic persistence in effort-sensitive tasks [19]. In keeping with this view, in our present study we considered participants_ processing speed in the mental concentration test as a measure reflecting the intensity of spontaneous (or self-initiated) effort. Yet, because individuals may differ greatly with respect to their general response speed [20], we controlled in our statistical analyses of this criterion measure (test performance) individual differences in baseline latencies.

Moreover, after they had completed the experimental tasks, participants were asked to indicate on a number of self-report items how much they had enjoyed performing these tasks. In this way, we obtained one further dependent variable (task enjoyment) reflecting participants_ conscious appraisals of how much they had liked (or disliked) working on the test tasks. According to McClelland (1980, 1985), such judgments qualify as indicators of ‘respondent’ or deliberate achievement behavior and should therefore be predicted by measures of self-attributed achievement motivation [21].

3 METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study is surveying the role of cultural intelligence in achievement of Iranian Cultural Institution managers. The nature of the study is co-relational. The statistical population is Ardabil province Cultural Institutions manager. The statistical sample is 42 of these managers which have been selected through the simple random sampling method. Each manager had at least five subordinates working and 5 years experience in him or her job. The data for this study is primary and primary data was gathered through two questionnaires. The cultural intelligence by completing the Ang et al’s (2004) Cultural Quotient Scale (CQS) with 20 items with using a seven-point scale for each item(ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree) and the achievement by completing the Greenwald et al (1998) 16-items questionnaire with using the 5-
point response scale. The stability of this questionnaire in the current study has been computed by Crobnakh alpha Method equal to 91% for cultural intelligence and 87% for achievement.

4 ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table1 shows responders degree. According to table1, 12 percent of the responders have M.A degree, 67 percent have BA degree, and 21 percent have DA degree.

Table1- Responders degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responders degree</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table2 shows Managing background of the responders. According to table2, from the precedence point of view about 33.34 percent of responders have 5-10 years, 50 percent 11-15 years, 11.99 percent 16-20 years and finally 4.76 percent have more than 21 years of managing experience.

Table 2- Managing background of the responders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Managing background of the responders</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33.34</td>
<td>33.34</td>
<td>33.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>83.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.99</td>
<td>11.99</td>
<td>95.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 reports descriptive statistics including means and standard deviation for samples. In current study, the means of CQS and achievement scores are higher than previously reported in the literature and standards deviations are slightly lower (Greenwald,2002 ; Ang et al,2007).

Table 3: Means and standard deviations for variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical characteristics</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meta-cognitive</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Hypothetical Analysis

Table 4, which present the correlations and t-test of each of the eleven items. The results show that cultural intelligence and their dimensions are all significantly and highly related with achievement. Strong positive correlation was found between meta-cognitive and achievement (r=0.605, p<0.01). Also was found Strong positive relationship between all dimensions of CQ and achievement.

Table 4- Pearson’s correlation coefficients and t-test of variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>dependent Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>Level of sig.</th>
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</thead>
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<td>cognitive</td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.472</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meta-cognitive</td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivational</td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.357</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behavioral</td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total cq</td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Conclusion

This paper surveys the relationship between CQ and achievement need in Iran cultural institutions. The most finding of this paper is recognition of CQ as leadership critical success factor in multicultural environments. The results provide some evidences to support links between CQ and achievement need. Furthermore, it shows managers, who have higher CQ, probably have more achievement need than the others. It seen CQ is more determinant than other intelligences in successful leadership in divers culturally contexts and better justifies why some leaders act effective and cannot others.

Finally, we find that there is a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and achievement of Iranian Cultural Institutions managers in Ardabil province.

REFERENCES


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