

The relationship between cultural intelligence with the individual performance of staff (case study: ministry of social welfare and security)

Mohammad Afkaneh

PhD student in public administration, Human resource, Allameh Tabatabai University.

Abdoreza Beyginia

Assistant Professor of Public Policy-Making, Faculty of Humanity, Shahed University.

ABSTRACT: *Today's work environment needs to people that are familiar with different cultures and communicate well with other people with heterogeneous cultures. Cultural intelligence represents the ability of a person to adapt with values, costumes and traditions which are different with those previous and working in a different cultural environment. Nowadays organizations are trying to adopt methods to increase the individual performance of their staff. On the other hand the ability to adapt permanently with people with different cultures and to perform intercultural communications improves individual performance. This research studies the relationship between cultural intelligence with individual performance of the staff. Three-factor cultural intelligence is applied on Thomas's theory for the first time and Ang and Earley consider individual performance of the staff as a unified concept. This research is descriptive-survey. For testing the general and special hypotheses of this research we use Pierson correlational test that while it confirmed the correlation between cultural intelligence and subjective performance of the staff and the existence of this correlation between individual components of cultural intelligence and individual performance of the staff, it made possible the measurement of the intensity of this correlation. We used the Friedman test for leveling cultural intelligence elements that was resulted into priority of mindfulness, behavioral ability and cultural knowledge. For measuring the plausibility of variations in the corpus of two-level test or ratio test was applied that shows the plausibility of cultural intelligence, mindfulness, behavioral ability and individual performance but it didn't confirmed the plausibility of cultural knowledge.*

KEYWORDS: *Cultural intelligence, Individual performance, Mindfulness*

I. INTRODUCTION

Among the expertise needed in the current century, the continual ability to adapt with different people with different cultures and the ability to manage the intercultural communications is very important. The universal workplace needs the people which are familiar with different cultures and can communicate well with other cultures. The new world is complex, potent, and with ever-increasing knowledge. Markets, products, and universal corporations are heterogeneous and multicultural. The non-linear, non-confidential and turmoil world has changed into steady, confidential and linear. For this purpose people need cultural intelligence. The ability of person to adapt with the values, customs and different traditions and wording in a different cultural workplace represents cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence is a potential source for competitive advantage.

Expressing problem

The increase of interaction interactions and transactions and heterogeneity of labor force have attracted the attention of many entrepreneur managers to the capabilities of this potent and complex world. Among these capabilities cultural intelligence is a tool for confrontation with multicultural occasions. In today's environments the milieu of the organizations has become complex and potent. In this complex and potent milieu the organizations need to take the advantage of intercultural categories. Review of the literature indicates that culture has a great effect on behavior in many organization environments and it is deserved to become explained in organizational behavior. The first step in responding to the challenges and requirements of the culture is to apprehend it conceptually and practically.

Although the cultural intelligence in many studies has been related to the interaction with alien cultures, it has the capability to be generalized into ethnic minor cultures inside national cultures. Therefore local managers can use this factor in everyday interactions. On the other hand it is important to explain the effect of these factors on individual's performance and the way to manage them. Discussing about the

processing of mind up to individual performance for showing reaction in different cultural environments and the speed of these reactions are the elements of cultural intelligence and is considered one of the noble objectives of managers.

Function means the set of activities adopted beforehand by staff in order to gain their goals. As the performance is disposed to knowledge, expertise, ability and motivation, and considering that cultural intelligence is one of the main capabilities in many organizations, the researcher shows interest to examine the relationship between cultural intelligence and individual performance.

How is the relationship between cultural intelligence with individual performance of ministry of security and welfare staff?"

Theoretical basics

The word culture is used in a wide range of social sciences (e.g. demography, sociology and psychology) and has different meanings in various fields. Many of the writers agree that culture is a complex world and we can hardly define it. According to Lu et al (2001), culture describes language, thinking habits, social and personal relation patterns and religious ideas and it is transferred into other generations by behavioral and normative directions (3). Culture is related to coherent patterns of human behavior includes language, thoughts, relations, activities, customs, ideas and values of social groups which is transferred from generations.

Intelligence

The overall perspective of intelligence considers it as biological, motivational and behavioral traits of individuals. The biological perspective presupposes that intelligence is determined by biological and inheritance processes. Psychological point of view presupposes that intelligence is located in cognitive or motivational milieu. Motivational theories of intelligence believe in the motivation of the individual to apprehend intelligence definitions. Finally the point of view of the behavioral theorists is that intelligence is embedded in behavior or appeared in mental performances that bring about behavior (12). The cultural intelligence has been pointed out among many international human resource managers: why some people sometimes are without any social skills in their culture while they are easily adapted with new cultures and other people aren't this, although they have high interpersonal skills in their culture. Earley and Ang (2003) presented cultural intelligence as a personal multidimensional and promising trait in response to the need for understanding personal differences in cultural versatility. Cultural intelligence has many complementing concepts (6). Offerman and Phan (2002) defined cultural intelligence as an "intelligence environment" or the ability to work effectively in a different environment with non-similar customs, values and traditions. The cultural intelligence is the ability of a person to work effectively in an occasions with different culture. Also cultural intelligence provides attitudes about the capabilities of a person which are different culturally (11).

The concept of cultural intelligence is used by two methods for organizations which are previously comparable with the word culture. As culture may implicate organizational or national culture, the concept of cultural intelligence includes familiarity with cultural differences among organizations and also knowing cultural differences on the basis of national, geographical and ethnic perspectives (8). On the basis of this, Earley and Mosakowahshi (2005) presented two kinds of cultural intelligence as following:

- A. organizational cultural intelligence for corporations
- B. ethnic and geographical cultural intelligence for knowing culture of a country

Therefore cultural intelligence includes: 1.Familiarity with different behaviors which may have concepts and themes for various cultures 2.Using appropriate cultural knowledge in time of interaction with other people 3.Ability to move between various cultures.

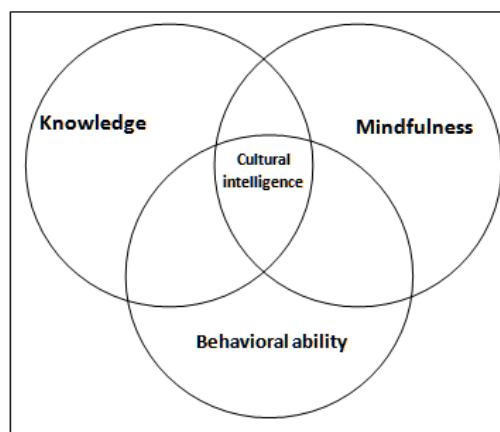
In this research cultural intelligence has been used for culture differences from ethnic, geographical and national perspective.

The elements of cultural intelligence

According to Thomas, cultural intelligence has three elements: knowledge, mindfulness and behavioral ability.

1-cultural knowledge: apprehending basic principles of cultural interactions. The first requirement of cultural intelligence is to know basic principles of intercultural reactions i.e. what's the meaning of culture, how it changes, how it affects behavior? This definition is compatible partially with explicit knowledge that Earley has brought about it in processing aspects of CQ that includes contents and process of knowledge.

Figure 1- dimensions of cultural intelligence from the point of the view of Thomas and Inkson



2- Mindfulness: this word originated from Buddhism and entered by Langer to literature and psychology, and recently it has been used in intercultural communications (13). mindfulness is the connective line between knowledge, action and the concept of cultural intelligence is a new one. mindfulness is an extended awareness and improved mind which is used practically (5).

3. Behavioral ability: it's a main element that indicates the cultural intelligence is an important idea for creating suitable behaviors is a new cultural position which is based on knowledge and mindfulness. Persons who have cultural intelligence can compete in a larger cultural arena. This ability of choosing suitable behavior includes behavior list, intercultural occasions or a behavior out of this arena.

Individual performance

There different definitions for performance and the common thing is the way to do the responsibilities. In some definitions, the human force performances have been called productivity but it should be noted that performance in simple form is the collection of occupational behaviors of people. Also we can define the performance as the set of actions performed by staff for gaining the predetermined objectives of the originations and includes different indexes like occupational satisfaction, pliability, ability, motivation, effectiveness and like that (5).

Research hypotheses

The hypotheses of this research have been arranged in one general hypothesis and three special hypotheses:

General hypothesis: there is a relationship between cultural intelligence and individual performance

Special hypotheses:

1-There is relation between cultural knowledge and individual performance of staff.

2-There is relation between mindfulness and individual performance of staff.

3--There is relation between behavioral ability individual performances of staff.

II. METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is descriptive-analytical. It's descriptive as it indicates a picture of the current position and describes it regularly and clearly. It is analytical as it collects desired data by sampling from community for discussing distribution traits. The relation between independent variation (cultural intelligence) and dependant variation (individual performance) discussed which correlation was. The case study of this research is all of the staff in social security and Welfare Corporation in city of Tehran that according to the statistics the number of them was 235 in time of research. The sample of this study was calculated using sampling formula in limited community that we got 125 participants. 150 questionnaire was distributed among

staff on the possibility that some of the staff may not fill in them that after the examination 129 questionnaire was given back, 126 ones were usable and analytical.

The device of measuring variations in this study is questionnaire. The structure of the questionnaire includes three parts part one is related to demography, the first 20 questions are related to cultural intelligence and the second 20 questions are related to individual performance of the staff. Distribution of questions is based on research variations have been presented in table 1.

Table1. Distribution of the questions based on the variations

Total number of questions	Number of questions	Discussed components	Indexes and questions Variations of the research
9	1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9	Cultural knowledge	Independent variable ((Cultural Intelligence))
6	10.11.12.13.14.15	mindfulness	
5	16.17.18.19.20	Behavioral capability	
20	21-40	individual performance	Dependent variation (individual performance)

Method of analyzing data

For analyzing data and research tests we used parametric test. Also descriptive data were collected that their summery has presented I table 2. In this section we infer and analyze data with SPSS software and the results of the test, component leveling, normality measuring and desirability were presented. Also the results of the research were compared with other researches.

Table2 the results of general descriptive statistics for the components of the research

Score output	Score average	average	max	min	number	component item
20 x 1 = 20 20 x 5 = 100	3/26	65/38	98	37	122	Cultural intelligence
9 x 1 = 9 9 x 5 = 45	3/07	27/66	43	1	124	Cultural knowledge
6 x 1 = 6 6 x 5 = 30	3/66	22/01	30	8	125	mindfulness
5 x 1 = 5 5 x 5 = 25	3/08	15/41	25	5	124	Behavioral ability
20 x 1 = 20 20 x 5 = 100	3/47	69/57	100	30	126	Personal performance

Discussing the results of Kolmogorov - Smirnov test

On the basis of the results of this test, all of the research variations are normal and we used average test of a statistic population for discussing research variation position. These results are similar to research of Kazemi (1387) as in that all of the variations have reported.

Discussing the results of Pearson correlation test

According to the results of this test, there is relation between cultural intelligence and individual performance and also between the dimensions of cultural intelligence and individual performance of the staff in the social security and welfare corporation. As in the present paper the there-factor model of Thomas has been used for the first time, therefore we cannot easily compare the cultural intelligence elements with similar researches. Therefore in Kazemi's research (1387) there was a relation between cultural intelligence and social staff performance and also between the dimensions of cultural intelligence and individual performance of the staff in the Alalamieh Corporation. In the research of Tie, Tampler and Chan Darsker (2006) the relation between motivate cultural intelligence and three kinds of adaptivity has been noted. In another research by Moody the relation between cultural intelligence factors and five traits of test was noted and approved. The research of Ang et al the relation between cultural intelligence, its measurement and effect on cultural decision making, cultural adaptability, and occupational performance was approved and it was observed that cognitive cultural intelligence has a positive and meaningful relation with occupational performance. In the present paper also it was noted that there is meaningful and positive relation between cultural intelligence and its components with individual performance of the staff.

cultural intelligence	.515	Individual performance of the staff
cultural knowledge	.23	
mindfulness	.477	
behavioral ability	.537	

Figure2. The conceptual and correlation model

Discussing the results of ratio or two-dimensional test (the average of a statistical sample)

This test has been used for examining the position of the research variations and the following results have been obtained: cultural intelligence, mindfulness, behavioral ability and individual performance of the staff of security and welfare ministry are in desirable conditions but they aren't so from the cultural knowledge perspective. About the relation between cultural knowledge and individual performance two main variations of the research there is harmony between the results of the present paper and Kazemi's research (1387).

Discussing the results of Friedman test

The Friedman test was used for leveling of cultural intelligence dimensions. The results of this test show that the priority of the cultural intelligence is as following: mindfulness, behavioral ability, cultural knowledge. In Kazemi's research (1387) this leveling is as following: motivate cultural intelligence, transcognitive cultural intelligence, behavioral cultural intelligence, cognitive cultural intelligence. Having less amount of information about cultures has brought the cultural intelligence to the lowest levels we can improve these factors by training.

Table 3 the results of Friedman test leveling

Priority	Average score	Cultural intelligence elements
1	2/46	mindfulness
2	2/23	Behavioral ability
3	1/31	Cultural intelligence

The results of the ANOVA and T test for variance analysis

In this test some additional data have been collected using descriptive data statistics. There weren't such tests in the prior researches. The Cultural intelligence of men and women was considered by variance analysis test. The results indicated that there weren't any difference between Cultural intelligence of men and women. Also there weren't any difference between men and women from individual performance perspective. The Cultural intelligence variation was same among people with different educations and it was expected that their cultural knowledge improves by increasing their cultural knowledge. But the test showed that there was no difference from Cultural intelligence perspective among different levels of education. The researcher expected that by increasing education level, the individual performance should be different but the results showed that the average individual performance wasn't different.

Table 4: The results of the ANOVA AND T test for variance analysis

Test result	sig	F	Hypothesis
Hypothesis approved	0/963	0/002	The average of cultural intelligence is the same among men and women.
Hypothesis approved	0/938	0/006	The average of individual performance is the same among men and women.
Hypothesis approved	0/646	0/624	The average of cultural intelligence is the same among different educational levels
Hypothesis approved	0/661	0/603	The average of cultural intelligence is the same among different work experiences
Hypothesis approved	0/059	2/342	The average of individual performance is the same among different educational levels
Hypothesis approved	0/281	1/281	The average of individual performance is the same among different educational levels.

III. CONCLUSION

The cultural intelligence as new concept in the field of management has come to fore in the recent decade and has attracted the attention of corporation managers. The complexity of occupational environments for organizations with respect to the multi-cultural milieus has been risky whether in internal field (mini cultures) and external fields that requires organization builders' strategy. Study and planning in the intercultural environments seems essential today. On the other hand because of the necessity and importance of the sources in the twentieth century, it is inevitable for the organizations to tend to more productivity. Managers try to design newer methods for increasing organization performance. Therefore it is necessary to consider intercultural elements in planning for increasing performance. Four factorial theories of Ang and earley in psychology were applied in this research as it is more practical for researchers. The relation between cultural intelligence and individual performance of the staff, with the approval the relation, intensity measurement of this relation, leveling the cultural intelligence elements and measuring the desirability of these elements in organizations were studied. The meaningful and positive relationship between cultural intelligence and individual performance of staff was approved. In leveling the elements of the cultural intelligence we got this order: mindfulness, behavioral ability and cultural knowledge. The cultural intelligence, mindfulness, behavioral ability and individual performance were in desirable position but there were research suggestions:

The suggestions based on three hypothesis

As there is meaningful and positive relation between cultural intelligence and individual performance of the staff and cultural knowledge isn't in a desirable position, we should present strategies for its improvement. As knowledge is acquisitive, we can improve the knowledge of the staff by short-term or long-term training periods. In short term periods the skills of special culture are considered and in long term trainings we can focus on general skills in order that they can overcome intercultural problems. Theses trainings can be studies of other cultures, language learning, counseling, case studies, reviewing cultural scenarios and offer suitable strategies.

Coalescence of cultural knowledge with organizational trends with learning clubs enables people to interact with people from other cultures some od these strategies are:

- [1] Holding self-knowing tests and measuring rate of culture with respect to your own country
- [2] Presenting classes and self-knowing spans and knowing native country and other mini cultures
- [3] Participating staff in conferences and country and international seminars.
- [4] Making available Medias such as internet etc.
- [5] Holding tours for staff in order to become familiar with other mini cultures and bringing about interactive environment.
- [6] Creating a space for interacting experience of people from cultural interactions.
- [7] Preparing intra corporation publications on the basis of the required data of staff.

On the basis of the Pierson test, there is meaningful relation between mindfulness and individual performance. Mindfulness has the highest score among the elements of Friedman test. However we can improve this element to increase cultural intelligence by designing managerial games effecting on mind. For example we let a person in a room and let him leave the room after minutes and then we change the decoration a little and then ask him to detect the change. We can play this game with rewards.

There is meaningful and positive relation between behavioral ability and individual performance of the staff and the intensity of this relation is. /537 according to Pierson coefficient that indicates the highest correlational relation among other components. We can use simulated occasions for increasing behavioral cultural intelligence of people so they encounter with different opportunities and show suitable behaviors. We can motivate them by presenting external factors (like competition and encouragement). If they believe that these behaviors with be to their advantage in the future, they will be motived and try them. So designers should focus on advantages of learning from different cultures.

Suggestions for the results of main hypothesis

As there is meaningful and positive relation between cultural intelligence and individual performance with amount of /537 Pierson coefficients, we can present strategies for improving staff cultural intelligence and raising their individual performance:

- [1] Continuous interaction in country and international level for becoming familiar with other cultures and mini cultures
- [2] Activities in occupational tasks and teamwork

- [3] Teaching professionals for training staff about new and daily matters
- [4] Including the cultural intelligence score in assessing staff performance an important variation

Presenting suggestions for future research

- [1] It is suggested other researches study "the relation of cultural intelligence with other variations like staff personality and customer satisfaction
- [2] It is suggested that other researches are performed about the relation of cultural intelligence with performance in organizations performing in international level.
- [3] Performing similar researches in international multicultural corporations
- [4] Examining the effective factors on creating and improving cultural intelligence.
- [5] It is suggested that other researches are performed about the relation of cultural intelligence with gender, educational level, occupational experience d other apparent traits comparatively in other corporations.
- [6] It is suggested that researches are performed about study of level of cultural intelligence among different occupational nations with different nationalities.

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