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CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE: AN INTEGRAL PART OF CROSS CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

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ABSTRACT

With the increasing globalization it has become very important to understand the need of the organization with intercultural context. Cultural intelligence or cultural quotient is the capability to relate and work effectively across cultures. It helps to understand the ability to perform and function in an organization which has different cultural quotient. In this article we look upon the growing stream of cultural intelligence and its importance. We will review the models, the research work, importance, and the techniques used to measure the level of cultural intelligence. In the end we will conclude by discussing theoretical research work done and future research opportunities available in this context.

KEYWORDS

cultural intelligence, importance of CQ, model of CQ, cross cultures.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural intelligence (CQ) is a person’s ability to work effectively in culturally diverse contents (Van Dyne, 2008). This definition shows a person’s potential to be effective in cross cultural environment. Cultural intelligence does not show the ability to work effectively in a particular culture instead it depicts the ability to work effective across cultures and in multicultural environment. Cultural intelligence does not merely refer to intelligence in context to different cultures, instead it explains the intelligence level with the presence of knowledge of different cultures.

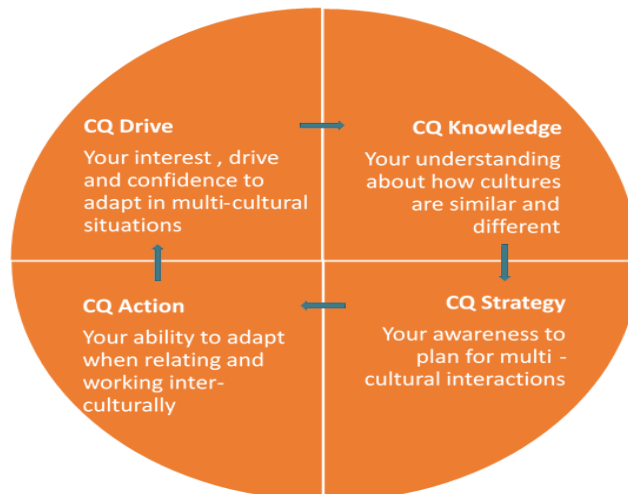
CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND OTHER FORMS OF INTELLIGENCE

Cultural intelligence is similar to social and emotional intelligence. Social intelligence is a broader form that enables to manage and understand others. Emotional intelligence is the ability to deal with emotions of self and others. Cultural intelligence shares the similarity to understand, manage and deal with emotions of others. However unlike social and emotional intelligence it deals explicitly with intercultural aspects. Cultural intelligence is also similar to some extent to general cognitive ability. General cognitive activity is the key predictor of job performance whereas cultural intelligence predicts performance in cross cultural organization. (Van Dyne, 2008).

MODELS OF CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

While conceptualizing cultural intelligence research suggest that it is multifaceted. (Earley, 2003) gave the cultural intelligence model explaining the (Sternberg, 1986) multiple loci view. It says that cultural intelligence comprises of four factors:

FIG. 1



- 1) **META COGNITIVE CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE:** it reflects individual's mental capability to acquire and understand cultural knowledge. It is also termed as CQ strategy. The awareness to plan the interaction in cross cultural environment.
- 2) **COGNITIVE CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE:** It is also known as CQ knowledge and helps us to understand the similarities and differences in different cultures. The model says that cultural intelligence shows the knowledge about the requirements to work effectively in multicultural environment.
- 3) **MOTIVATIONAL CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE:** It shows individuals capability to direct and sustain efforts towards functioning in intercultural situations. It is also known as CQ drive.
- 4) **BEHAVIORAL CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE:** it shows the capability of behavioral flexibility in cross cultural interactions. Also termed as CQ Action. It helps to study the degree of adaption when working in across cultures.

While initially cultural intelligence did not include biological aspects but recently it has been embraced with biological foundations. This research considers intelligence in terms of structural aspects (hemispheres of brain), process aspects (e.g., processes which give rise to brain activities) or the interaction between structural and process (e.g., how the regions of brain generate particular activities)

(Rockstuhl, T., Hong, Y.-Y., Ng, K. Y., Ang, S., Chiu, C.-Y., 2010) It has been found the theoretical foundations of culturally intelligent brain from sociocognitive neuroscience. He also stated that (a) neurological responses can change as individuals adapt to new cultural contexts; and (b) people with higher overall cultural intelligence show greater neurological flexibility in response to varying demands across the cultures.

SOME STUDIES RELATED TO CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

Cultural intelligence has received worldwide interest. Studies have been conducted in North America, South America, Europe, The Middle East, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Across the collected samples, scholars have studies

- (1) **Antecedents of cultural intelligence:** It has dominantly examined the personality traits and international experiences. Stating that Openness to experience refers to a person's tendency to be creative, imaginative, and adventurousness. (Costa, P.T., McCrae, 1992)
- (2) **Outcomes of cultural intelligence:** research shows that cultural intelligence relates to a wide range of cognitive, affective, behavioral outcomes of intercultural contexts. It states that meta cognitive and cognitive cultural intelligence predict cognitive outcomes stronger than motivational and behavioral cultural intelligence.
- (3) **Cultural intelligence as a mediator:** Personality and international experience are widely studied as antecedents of cultural intelligence. The research has tested the effects of cultural intelligence on outcomes such as cultural adjustment, job performance and global leadership. Hence showing that cultural intelligence mediates the effects of personality traits.
- (4) **Cultural intelligence as moderator:** the following studies have examined cultural intelligence as moderator (a) leaders with high cultural intelligence magnify the effects of leadership on innovation at organizational lever and (b) cultural intelligence moderates the effects perceived by voice instrumentality on cultural diversity.
- (5) **Boundary conditions of the effects of cultural intelligence:** Research on boundary conditions of effects of cultural intelligence has outcomes which are hypothesized and tested through both suppressors and enhancers of effects of motivational cultural intelligence.

Thus several studies have highlighted the crucial role managing subordinates and vendors from different cultures. Substantial research proves that the cultural intelligence is important for global leaders as it:

- 1) Predicts the performance of subordinates and leaders in multicultural teams.
- 2) Predicts cross border leadership effectiveness.
- 3) Measures international leadership potential.

HOW CAN CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE BE MEASURED?

Cultural intelligence being an important aspect for an individual in this cross cultural society needs to be assessed to find out the impact on the growth of the organization. Following are the methods are evolved to measure the individual differences in cultural intelligence:

- 1) **Self reports:** Self reported measures of cultural intelligence present respondent with a list of statements relevant to multiple dimensions of cultural intelligence. The most empirical research uses 20 item four factor cultural intelligence scale (CQS) introduced by (Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., Koh, C., Ng, K.Y., Templer, K.J., Tay, C., 2007).
- 2) **Observer –reports of cultural intelligence:** These are fundamental source of information about a person's external manifestation and reflect a person's CQ reputation. In this method acquaintances summarize their perception of someone's cultural intelligence reputation. (Van Dyne, 2008)
- 3) **Test of cultural intelligence:** this is based on the performance of the individuals in laboratories or other controlled conditions. (Rockstuhl, 2013) Introduced a situational judgment test to measure meta cognitive cultural intelligence. These tests present the respondents with multimedia challenges and record their responses. Records are then scored in terms of effectiveness.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Cultural intelligence refers to potential of working in a cross cultural organization effectively and efficiently. It is the distinct capability of performing in intercultural context. It is an important measure as it will help the organizations to measure the capability of working and adapting the cross cultural environment. It being an important aspect in today's highly globalised economy need a good and accurate way of measurement. Hence we believe that the future research should focus on increasing diversity in tools to measure cultural intelligence. The future work can explore the team composition of cultural intelligence i.e. how cultural intelligence can be distributed in a team.

Several qualitative studies highlight the crucial role that cultural intelligence plays in managing subordinates and offshoring vendors from different cultural backgrounds. Quantitative studies confirm the importance of cultural intelligence for global leaders. Specifically, studies show that cultural intelligence predicts (1) subordinate-rated leader performance in multicultural teams, (2) peer-rated leadership emergence in multicultural teams, (3) peer-rated cross-border leadership effectiveness but not general leadership effectiveness, and (4) peer-rated international leadership potential. At the dyadic level, cultural intelligence of the lower of two negotiation partners.

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