

Full Length Research Paper

The relationship between principals' cultural intelligence levels and their cultural leadership behaviors

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This study aimed to identify school administrators' views on school administrators' cultural intelligence and cultural leadership behaviors. The study employed relational screening model, a descriptive research method, since it set out to determine the existing situation. "Cultural Intelligence Scale" and "Cultural Leadership Scale" were used in the study as data collection tools. Pearson correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis were used in data analysis. The population of this study was composed of 328 school administrators employed in Duzce province during 2013 to 2014 academic year. Based on the result obtained from the participants, it can be argued that administrators have high perception levels regarding Cultural Intelligence and Cultural Leadership. The administrators employed in schools regard themselves as competent in terms of cultural intelligence levels and they believe they present cultural leadership behaviors. Based on participants' perceptions, there is a medium level of positive significant relationship between cultural intelligence levels, cultural leadership roles and cultural intelligence, and its sub dimensions significantly predict cultural leadership roles and behaviors.

Key words: Principal, cultural intelligence, cultural leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Culture is the sum of tangible and intangible values of a society, and it is developed by previous generations and transferred to next generations to be further developed and transferred. Organizational culture is a system composed of various elements such as emotions, norms, interactions, efforts, expectations, symbols, rituals, myths, values, beliefs, attitudes, traditions, patterns of behavior and habits, and it is the product of organization's interaction with its environment in various manners (Çelik, 1997; Schein, 1992; Yıldırım, 2001). The identified

elements of a culture can be changed and the changeable characteristics are considered as manageable/administrable. However, a leader is required to transform, recreate and maintain in other words to manage a culture (Şişman, 1994; Yıldırım, 2001) since the leader provides sense and meaning to the cultural environment (Erçetin, 1998).

The leader in the traditional leadership process is considered to be the individual who has the biggest or most influential effect on the members of the group and it

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is basically defined as the person with most influence on the individuals or the group (Freadman et al., 2003) and as the person who directs the others to behave with a specific purpose (Hitt et al., 1975). Especially since the second half of the twentieth century, scientific studies on leadership have started to focus on the traits that distinguish leaders from non-leaders and followers (Hoy and Miskel, 2012) and traits that separate effective leaders from ineffective ones. The first theory on leadership suggests studying the traits that separate leaders from non-leaders (Robbins and Judge, 2012). Previous studies have presented many personal traits of leaders. As a matter of fact, the elements that distinguish leaders are their personal traits. Especially, the psychological and physiological traits of leaders have been the focus of studies so far (Şişman, 2002; Çelik, 1999; Stogdill, 1981; Immegart, 1988).

What makes a leader effective? The answer to this question has been intensely examined by the researchers since the 1970's in the framework of behavioral approaches to leadership. Studies in the framework of behavioral approaches have mostly focused on leader behaviors, leadership styles as a pattern of behaviors and their effects on the group. The success of the behavioral leader lies in the attitudes and behaviors of the leader presented to the observers. Based on this approach, leadership is a behavioral process in leadership role systems. The leader relies on main personal resources to ensure desired behaviors in the group towards which he has responsibility (Werner, 1993). Leader behaviors are based on two different dimensions in the theory. While one dimension is related to individuals, interpersonal relationships and the permanency of the group, the other dimension is interested in production job definitions and obtaining the goals (Cartwright and Zander, 1953). Therefore, the approach highlights the leadership behaviors that focus on interpersonal relationships, take the needs of the personnel and differences among members into consideration and emphasize the job technique and content (Robbins and Judge, 2012).

The last phase in leadership theories is based on situational leadership and more recent leadership theories. Conditions in situational leadership approaches mostly require different leadership styles and "situations create the leader" understanding is prominent (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). In the situational theory which states that it is impossible to predict the effective leadership behaviors in different situations and that there is no single most effective leadership style valid for all situations (Şimşek, 2010; Çelik, 1999), researchers have attempted to identify the distinctive traits of the environments that can be the source of leader success and distinguish the traits of leadership situations related to leader behavior and performance (Campbell et al., 1970; Vecchio, 1993). Contingency either increased or limits the influence of the

leader (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). From another perspective, situational leadership theory should focus on the observers. Situational models assume that selecting the most appropriate leadership style based on the qualities of the tasks that the observers desire or can accomplish or based on observer traits will define the success level of leadership (Robbins and Judge, 2012).

Almost approximately one hundred new leadership theories have been developed or proposed in this process identified as modern/new and even newer leadership theories in the last phase of approaches in the field. One of these prominent leadership approaches is cultural leadership (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2013; Elmore, 2000). Cultural leadership is especially crucial to realize the mission of schools (Çelik, 1999). Cultural leadership is a leadership style that aims to establish and develop organizational culture and strives to shape and develop a strong and at the same time flexible cultural structure for the organization (Erdoğan, 2002). The most important aspect of cultural leadership is the change and transformation of culture and values (Şimşek, 1997). There are three basic roles for cultural leaders in the context of educational institutions: interpreting the tasks, norms and values of the school, modeling behavior and identifying the details of the behavior (Gürses, 2003).

Intercultural studies undertaken so far have presented the importance of personal competences (Ang et al., 2007; cited by Şahin et al, 2012) and leadership competences focus on three general knowledge field (Northouse, 2004; Erzurum, 2007): conceptual, technical and social knowledge and skills.

These competences are also called the power of expertise that the leader will have. In general sense, conceptual expertise is the competence to work with ideas and concepts. Technical expertise points to knowledge and competence in a specific task or activity. Social expertise is related to ability to work with individuals and have knowledge in this regard. All these are the personal competences of the individual. Cultural intelligence, one of the personal competences, is highly crucial for effectiveness in intercultural leadership (Şahin, 2011). For instance, it was found that cultural intelligence contributed to individual performance more than their demographic characteristics and general cognitive competences and that finding shows that cultural intelligence positively affects individuals' performances in intercultural or multicultural environments. The concept provides important opportunities for practice in terms of leadership. Based on the research, cultural intelligence was found to provide a set of important competences for cultural leadership (Şahin, 2011).

School leadership and school culture can be defined as intertwined processes. Although, school culture is founded on the deep values of the school history and the society, transformation and renewal of the school culture becomes more prominent with the basic function of the

leader. The relationship between school culture and leadership is also related to negative or positive evolution of the culture (Deal and Peterson, 2009). Schools with cultures that are strong and open to sharing, have higher chances to transform individual goals to shared targets because there is a collective consciousness in strong organizational cultures. Therefore, the consistency of the vision with the organizational culture is more important than who has developed the vision individually. Cultural intelligence is a set of competences that allows individuals to function efficiently and be successful in a different cultural or multi-cultural environment. Cultural intelligence develop according to multiple intelligence theory is composed of meta cognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral components (Van Dyne et al, 2008; Earley and Ang, 2003; cited in Şahin, 2011).

Cultural intelligence which is one of the personal competences is very important for and effective in cultural leadership (cited in Şahin, 2012).

That is to say, cultural intelligence is a personal competence in its general sense (İşçi et al., 2013). Cultural intelligence is required to effectively interact with different cultures (Triandis, 2006). The studies show that cultural intelligence contributes to individual performance more than demographic characteristics and general cognitive competences, and it is found that cultural intelligence can positively affect performance in intercultural or multicultural environments. The concept provides important opportunities for leadership practices. Studies in the field show that cultural intelligence provides an important skill set for cultural leadership (Thomas et al., cited in Şahin et al, 2012) reported that one of the main factors that highlights the failure of international businesses is the lack of managers in competences and skills necessary for intercultural success and stressed the importance of cultural intelligence (cited in Yeşil, 2009). Based on the importance of cultural intelligence and cultural leadership concepts, it is necessary to investigate whether there is a relationship between school administrators' cultural intelligence levels and cultural leadership, and to what extent cultural intelligence levels predict cultural leadership.

Purpose of the study

What are school administrators' views related to cultural intelligence and cultural leadership behaviors? Answers to questions below were sought in this context.

1. What are administrators' cultural intelligence and cultural leadership levels?
2. Is there a relationship between administrators' cultural intelligence levels and cultural leadership behaviors?
3. To what extent do administrators' cultural intelligence levels predict cultural leadership?

METHODOLOGY

Research model

Since the study aims to identify an existing situation, the study employed relational screening model which is one of the descriptive research methods. Screening models are research approaches that aim to describe a past or present situation as is. The subject or object of the study is attempted to be defined as its own conditions and is not tried to be changed or influenced in any manner (Karasar, 2005).

Research universe and sample

The universe of this study was composed of a total of 447 school administrators, 177 school principals, 28 head assistants and 242 assistant principals on permanent staff in 331 schools in Duzce province employed in 2013 to 2014 academic year. Sampling method was not used in the study, and surveys were sent to the whole universe. 338 of the surveys were received back and some of the surveys were left out after assessing them based on the purpose of the study. The remaining 328 surveys were analyzed. Table 1 presents the participant data. 267 (81%) of the participating administrators were males whereas 61 (19%) were females. 92 (28%) of the participating administrators were principals, 20 (6%) were head assistants and 216 (66%) were assistant principals. 48 participants (14.6%) worked for 1 to 5 years, 77 (23.5%) for 6 to 10 years, 79 (24.1%) for 11 to 15 years, 67 (20.4%) had 16 to 20 years professional experience and 57 participants (17.4%) had 21 years and more experience. 26 (7.9%) of the participating administrators graduated from 2 to 3 year college and 235 (71.6%) graduated within 4 years faculties. 66 (20.1%) participants had master's degree and 1 had (0.3%) doctorate degree. 272 (82.9%) of the administrators were employed at their present schools for 1 to 5 years, 40 (12.2%) for 6 to 10 years, 12 (3.7%) for 11 to 15 years, 3 (0.9%) for 16 to 20 years and 1 (0.3%) for 21 years and more.

Data collection tools and validity-reliability studies

"Cultural Intelligence Scale" and "Cultural Leadership Scale" were used in the study as data collection tools. "Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) was developed by Ang et al. (2007) and adapted to Turkish by Şahin et al. (2012). The scale is composed of four sub factors. The first factor is meta cognitive cultural intelligence (1,2,3,4. items), the second factor is cognitive cultural intelligence (5,6,7,8,9 and 10. items), the third factor is motivational cultural intelligence (11,12,13,14,15. items) and the fourth factor is behavioral cultural intelligence (16,17,18,19,20. items). Cultural Intelligence Scale Cronbach Alpha reliability values were found to be 0.78, for "Meta Cognitive Cultural Intelligence" factor, 0.81 for "Cognitive Cultural Intelligence" factor, 0.78 for "Motivational Cultural Intelligence" factor and 0.82 for "Behavioral Cultural Intelligence" factor. General reliability value for the scale was found to be 0.87. Cultural Leadership Scale was developed by Yıldırım (2001) and it has 21 items and one dimension. Cronbach Alpha and item analysis statistical work as well as reliability and validity studies of the Cultural Leadership Scale were undertaken by Yıldırım (2001). Reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be as Cronbach Alpha = 0.88. Reliability coefficient of the scale was investigated in the current study as well and as can be seen in Table 2, Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the Cultural Leadership and Cultural Intelligence and its sub dimensions were found to be at rather high levels.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of administrators in the participant group (N = 328).

Variable	N	%
Gender		
Male	267	81
Female	61	19
Age		
21-30	17	5
31-40	170	52
41-50	100	30
51 and higher	41	13
Status		
Principal	92	28
Head Assistant	20	6
Assistant Principal	216	66
Professional Experience		
1-5 Years	18	5
6-10 Years	97	30
11-15 Years	89	27
16-20 Years	67	20
21 Years and higher	57	18
Education		
2-3 Year College	26	7.9
4 year Faculty	235	71.6
Master's	66	20.1
Doctorate	1	0.3
Employment Period at Present School		
1-5 Years	272	82.9
6-10 Years	40	12.2
11-15 Years	12	3.7
16-20 Years	3	0.9
21 Years and higher	1	0.3

Statistical analysis of the data

Normality assumptions of the data were tested in the study with the help of "One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov". Pearson correlation analysis and multi regression analysis were used to determine the relationship.

Findings

Findings regarding administrators' cultural intelligence and cultural leadership levels

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics related to administrators' views on the levels of Cultural Intelligence and Cultural Leadership and its sub dimensions. Table 3

presents the arithmetic mean of administrators' Cultural Leadership as (\bar{X} = 4.02) and Cultural Intelligence arithmetic mean as (\bar{X} = 3.62). For Cultural Intelligence scale sub dimensions; average arithmetic mean for Meta Cognitive Cultural Intelligence sub dimension was (\bar{X} = 2.72), average arithmetic mean for Cognitive Cultural Intelligence sub dimension was (\bar{X} = 3.74), average arithmetic mean for Motivational Cultural Intelligence sub dimension was (\bar{X} = 3.77) and average arithmetic mean for Behavioral Cultural Intelligence sub dimension was (\bar{X} = 3.62). Based on the obtained results, participating administrators' perception levels for Cultural Leadership and Cultural Intelligence were found to be

Table 2. Predicted cronbach alpha values for the scales used in the study.

Variable	R
Cultural Leadership	0.914
Meta Cognitive CQ	0.824
Cognitive CQ	0.871
Motivational CQ	0.861
Behavioral CQ	0.903
Total CQ	0.923

Table3. Descriptive statistics for the scales used in the study.

Variable	\bar{X}	SS	Kurtosis	Skewness
Cultural Leadership	4.02	0.57	-0.77	0.73
Meta Cognitive CQ	2.72	0.44	-1.05	2.22
Cognitive CQ	3.74	1.06	0.07	-0.75
Motivational CQ	3.77	0.84	-0.47	-0.18
Behavioral CQ	3.69	0.86	-0.56	-0.19
Total CQ	3.62	0.65	-0.24	0.05

Table 4. Correlation and multi variable regression matrix.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	B	SE (B)	β
1 Cultural Leadership	1.00	0.470**	0.326**	0.404**	0.404**	0.491**			
2 Meta Cognitive CQ		1.00	0.387**	0.536**	0.417**	0.669**	1.469**	0.259	0.322
3 Cognitive CQ			1.00	0.505**	0.473**	0.803**	0.168	0.128	0.074
4 Motivational CQ				1.00	0.627**	0.842**	0.217	0.193	0.076
5 Behavioral CQ					1.00	0.809**	0.520**	0.173	0.187
6 Total CQ						1.00			
Breakpoint							45.593*	3.723	
$R^2 = 0.282$									

generally high whereas their perception levels regarding Meta cognitive cultural intelligence were found to be low.

Findings regarding the relationship between administrators' cultural leadership and cultural intelligence and its sub dimensions

The study investigated whether there was a statistically significant relationship between administrators' cultural leadership and cultural intelligence sub dimensions and whether administrators' cultural intelligence levels predicted their cultural leadership behaviors. Table 4 presents the results for correlation analysis undertaken to determine the relationship between school administrators'

cultural leadership and cultural intelligence sub dimensions and the results of regression analysis results conducted to identify to what extent participants' cultural intelligence perceptions predicted their cultural leadership behaviors. The correlation coefficient between 0 to 0.30 points to no relationship, values between 0.31 to 0.49 point to weak relationship, values between 0.50 to 0.69 point to medium level relationship and values between 0.70 to 1.00 shows strong relationship (Sönmez, 2008). As can be observed in Table 4, there is a statistically significant relationship between Cultural Leadership and Meta Cognitive Cultural Intelligence, Cognitive Cultural Intelligence, Motivational Cultural Intelligence, Behavioral Cultural Intelligence and Cultural Intelligence Total scores ($p < 0.01$). A medium level of

positive and significant relationship was found to exist between Cultural Leadership and Cultural Intelligence ($p < 0.01$).

First of all, multicollinearity statistics were examined in order to conduct multiple regression analysis and it can be argued that the assumption was validated since VIF values were lower than 20 and tolerance values were higher than 0.05 (Tabachnick and Fidel, 2013). Later, multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine to what extent cultural intelligence levels predicted cultural leadership levels. Results of these analyses are provided in Table 4. According to the results, the linear combination of these four sub dimensions significantly predict cultural leadership $F(4,323) = 31.702, p < .01$. These four predictor variables explain 28% of cultural leadership. Unique predictive effects of Meta Cognitive Cultural Intelligence [$t(326) = 5.67, p < 0.01, \beta = 0.322$] and Behavioral Cultural Intelligence [$t(326) = 2.99, p < 0.01, \beta = 0.187$] were found to be statistically significant. On the other hand, unique predictive effects of Cognitive Cultural Intelligence and Motivational Cultural Intelligence sub dimensions were not found to be significant ($p < 0.01$). Based on this, these variables were found to have no significant effect on cultural leadership when the effects of all other predictor variables were controlled.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study which aimed to identify the relationship between school administrators' cultural intelligence levels and cultural leadership behaviors provided the following results. Based on the obtained findings, the participating administrators have high levels of perceptions regarding cultural intelligence and cultural leadership. Therefore, while school administrators regard themselves to be competent in terms of cultural intelligence levels, they also think they display cultural leadership behaviors. This result is believed to be rather positive finding for the education system and educational staff. Based on participating administrators' perceptions, there is a medium level of positive and significant relationship between their cultural intelligence levels and cultural leadership roles. Therefore, administrators believe that their cultural leadership roles increase when their cultural intelligence levels rise. Similarly, they believe their cultural leadership roles and behaviors will decrease when their cultural intelligence levels decline.

Study results show that cultural intelligence and its sub dimensions predict cultural leadership roles and behaviors. Therefore, school administrators can be said to display cultural leadership behaviors to the extent that their cultural intelligence levels are high. In other words, school administrators' cultural leadership roles can be explained with their cultural intelligence levels to some extent. The facts that school achievement will increase

when school administrators undertake more cultural leadership roles and that there is a positive relationship between cultural leadership and organizational commitment are supported with the findings of study. The study examined the effects of cultural intelligence levels of staff employed in health organizations and some professional and socio-demographic traits on cultural intelligence and found that the participants used cognitive processes the most in order to obtain and comprehend knowledge. Therefore, it can be argued that cultural intelligence is an important factor in cultural behaviors.

Dhaliwal's (2010) study that investigated the relationship between school leaders' leadership styles and their cultural intelligence levels identified a strong relationship between school leaders' (administrators and teachers) leadership styles and their cultural intelligence levels. Kim (2009) reported a strong relationship between cultural intelligence and job performance and job satisfaction. Matear's (2009) study presented a relationship between transformational leadership and emotional as well as between cultural intelligence and motivation. Scholl's (2009) study pointed to a direct positive relationship between multinational team work and organizational performance. Karaköse's (2008) study which investigated school administrators' cultural leadership behavior levels in practice found that participating teachers believed that administrators had "indecisive" attitudes towards implementing cultural leadership behaviors in practice; administrators should first adopt and internalize the values and norms of the organization to undertake cultural leadership roles, administrators should be good role models that would reflect cultural values and norms in their behaviors and would ensure other staff to act accordingly to contribute to the development of school culture. Şahin (2011) investigated the relationship between leader's cultural intelligence and the subordinates' organizational citizenship behaviors and job satisfaction.

Results of the study supported the view that leaders' cultural intelligence levels are related to subordinates' organizational citizenship behaviors and job satisfaction. As a result, the findings that point to the existence of a positive, medium level and significant relationship between school administrators' cultural intelligence levels and cultural leadership roles and that cultural intelligence and its sub dimensions significantly predict cultural leadership roles and behaviors are parallel to various research results in the literature. It can be argued that cultural intelligence levels of especially the administrators are important factors in the cultural behaviors that they will display.

Conclusion

This study aimed to identify school administrators' views on school administrators' cultural intelligence and cultural

leadership behaviors. Based on the obtained findings, the participating administrators have high levels of perceptions regarding cultural Intelligence and cultural leadership. Administrators believe that their cultural leadership roles increase when their cultural intelligence levels rise. Similarly, they believe their cultural leadership roles and behaviors will decrease when their cultural intelligence levels decline. Also, school administrators can be said to display cultural leadership behaviors to the extent that their cultural intelligence levels are high. Since there is a strong relationship and causality between school administrators' cultural intelligence levels and their cultural leadership roles and behaviors, the following suggestions can be made for school administrators: cultural leadership behaviors and cultural intelligence levels of administrators who will be assigned or selected for administrative roles in educational organizations should be taken into consideration. Cultural leadership training should be provided for school administrators assigned to existing posts. Opportunities should be presented to establish administrative and organizational structures in which school administrators can present their cultural leadership roles and practice opportunities should be given to school administrators in this regard.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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