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The role of cultural intelligence in enhancing the adaptive performance of employees at the University of Maysan

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the impact of cultural intelligence on improving employees' adaptive performance. To do this, the researchers relied on four dimensions of cultural intelligence (metacognitive cultural intelligence, cognitive cultural intelligence, behavioral cultural intelligence, and motivational cultural intelligence). Conducted at the Faculty of Administration and Economics, Maysan University, the study collected the necessary information through a questionnaire prepared for this purpose. The sample consisted of 40 people. The importance of this research lies in the results and recommendations it provides to all organizations, as well as in determining the level of cultural intelligence that contributes to improving the adaptive performance of employees at Maysan University. The study produced a set of results, the most important of which is the existence of a significant positive correlation between cultural intelligence and employees' adaptive performance. It also presents a series of recommendations, including the need for university leaders to focus on developing and defining the dimensions of cultural intelligence for employees through a set of training programs aimed at increasing cultural intelligence, cultural awareness, and intercultural behavior training.

Keywords: Cultural intelligence (metacognitive intelligence), adaptive performance (workplace stress management), Maysan University - faculty of administration and economics

1. Introduction

The nature of work and dynamic organizations has become increasingly complex and often unpredictable. The need for highly competent individuals to manage and adapt to a diverse environment is a key characteristic of the work context. Complexity, uncertainty, and doubt over the extent to which traditional measures focus exclusively on the completion of tasks in job descriptions have contributed to redefining the behaviors that are encouraged by organizations in order to achieve a specific goal.

The concept of performance has been expanded to include behaviors that are consistent with organizational developments. Adaptive performance has the ability to adapt to work situations and modify behavior according to environmental requirements and emerging events. Therefore, adaptive performance has gained attention to better understand the dynamic nature of the rapidly changing work environment and reflects the need to address employees' ability to adapt significantly to changes in the work environment. At the individual level, adaptive performance can facilitate positive outcomes and improve the ability to succeed and perform job duties, leading to keeping pace with changes in customer expectations. Adaptive performance is an important topic in human development topics and has been recognized as a key area in human resource development. Employees' ability to adapt has become important and organizations need to improve adaptive performance.

Cultural intelligence, which refers to the capabilities required to work effectively in culturally diverse environments, has been shown to be positively associated with adaptive behavior for performance in a new environment. The concept of cultural intelligence applies across cultures, thus helping individuals and organizations improve performance in global and diverse environments. The concept of intelligence provides numerous benefits to each individual in terms of performance outcomes and behaviors. It is expected that the desired outcomes will be demonstrated by the individual's ability to adapt well to any type of work

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environment. With the significant changes in organizations, the importance of adaptive performance in work environments has increased significantly. This type of capability is essential for organizations that need more adaptable employees who can work, learn skills, and adapt to a diverse work environment. This research aims to identify the outcomes of cultural intelligence that can be used to enhance employee adaptive performance.

1. Research methodology

1.1 Research problem

There is controversy about the existence of intelligence and it has not been precisely defined. The reason for this is the complexities of the relationship between the surrounding environment and individuals. There is a group of evidence that focused on the successful interaction between members of different cultures, which requires cultural intelligence. The concept of intelligence has gained great attention because existing theories have capabilities such as social and cognitive intelligence, and they do not provide a complete explanation across cultures. Interaction with other individuals who adhere to different values, and the ability of employees to adapt is a means to avoid failure in performance results. The ability to be flexible is an assumed process for many discussions. The research problem is represented by the following question: What is the level of impact of cultural intelligence in enhancing adaptive performance at the employee level at the University of Maysan?

2.1 The importance of research

1. Identifying the role of cultural intelligence and its impact on the organization under study.
2. Explain the differences between workers regarding their attitude towards cultural intelligence. It is necessary to know these differences that best distinguish between workers and whether they have knowledge of the culture they use with people from different cultural backgrounds.
3. The importance of the current research lies in the results and recommendations it provides to organizations and in determining the level of cultural intelligence that contributes to enhancing the adaptive performance of employees at the University of Maysan.

3.1 Research objectives

1. Discovering the availability of cultural intelligence and its dimensions at the University of Maysan.
2. Determining the nature of the relationship between cultural intelligence and adaptive performance of employees at the University of Maysan.
3. Determining the direction and extent of cultural intelligence in improving and enhancing the adaptive performance of employees at the University of Maysan.

4.1 Research hypotheses

The first main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant correlation between cultural intelligence in its dimensions (metacognitive cultural intelligence, cognitive cultural intelligence, behavioral cultural intelligence, motivational cultural intelligence) and adaptive performance in its dimensions (dealing with emergencies, managing work stress, solving problems in a creative way, demonstrating the ability to adapt).

The second main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect between cultural intelligence in its dimensions (metacognitive cultural intelligence, cognitive cultural intelligence, behavioral cultural intelligence, motivational cultural intelligence) and adaptive performance in its dimensions (dealing with emergencies, managing work stress, solving problems in a creative way, and demonstrating the ability to adapt).

2. Cultural intelligence

2.1. The concept of cultural intelligence: Cultural intelligence can be defined as follows

- The individual's ability to perceive different cultures and act effectively and efficiently according to their nature and understanding (attitudes, values, behaviors, beliefs) helps in negotiating, cooperating, and communicating with individuals from different cultures. (Hilal: 2017).
- The concept of intelligence overlaps with four concepts: (practical, emotional, general, and social intelligence), all of which are pillars from which cultural intelligence arises and is formed. (Al-Masari, 2018:188) ^[27].
- The ability to engage in a set of behaviors that use skills and are appropriately controlled to assess the culture and situation. (Al-Sumaida'i and Al-Zubaidi, 2021: 3705) ^[28].
- The ability to make judgments in an effective and distinguished situation, as well as the ability to adapt better and faster to the new environment and culture. (Cissy, 2018:563) ^[29].
- The ability of individuals to behave in a variety of ways, including adapting, thinking, adjusting, perceiving, integrating, feeling, performing tasks, behaving well, living, and understanding. (Nizar, 2019:34) ^[30].

From the previous definitions, cultural intelligence can be defined from the researcher's point of view as the individual's ability to successfully adapt to the new cultural environment and the ability to act easily and efficiently. It is characterized by multiculturalism and represents an interactive system and skills linked to cultural knowledge views in order to enable individuals to adapt and choose the formation of their environment.

2.2 The importance of cultural intelligence

The importance of cultural intelligence lies in the following: The ability to create productive situations in which cultural differences play a role in terms of the important efficiency of managing innovation by innovating and providing a framework for understanding different cultures and their impact on the way of thinking and interpreting each other and their unpredictable behavior (Darvishmotevali *et al* 2018: 9) ^[14].

Mangla (2021: 65) ^[19] noted that the cultural difference between individuals involved in communication leads to difficulty in communication due to diversity, and therefore its importance is highlighted among team members.

Either (Cabral *et al*, 2020: 5) ^[13] sees that the importance of cultural intelligence is related to the effectiveness of managers' interaction with multiple cultures and the display of cooperative behavior in various contexts and has an important positive impact on international network relations

and the existence of relationships with stakeholders. Since the work environment is a network in which the cognitive and emotional dimensions that contribute to cultural intelligence are embodied in the relationships of medium and small companies, which helps in building good relationships with suppliers and competitors, and it can be identified in the context of multiple cultures, and intelligent individuals are more cultured and exposed to others and social ties, and the distance reduces the levels of conflict within cultures (Cabral *et al* 2020: 3) ^[13].

2.3 Types of cultural intelligence

When looking at the research that has dealt with the concept of cultural intelligence, it can be noted that cultural intelligence is divided into the following types.

Administrative cultural intelligence

Is the possession of valuable resource intelligence by organizational managers, especially when it is present at the top level or project managers, if it is able to contribute to the senior management team and shape a vision and outlook for the organization. (Al-Sumaida'i, 2021: 9) ^[28].

Structural cultural intelligence: It is one of the contextual factors that provide development with intellectual capital and representation among individuals. This means that cultural intelligence leads to change and improvements in the organizational structure, which leads to designing a development structure for human resources (Nosratabadi *et al*, 2020: 6) ^[21].

Competitive cultural intelligence

It is the process that is greatly affected by situations and what organizations possess in the course of their development and have adapted. Accordingly, capabilities are their guaranteed efficiency in their processes and paths by determining the competitive advantage (Yitmen, 2013: 8) ^[26].

2.4 Dimensions of cultural intelligence

The author (Franklin, 2021: 230) presented a set of dimensions of cultural intelligence, as follows.

1. The cognitive dimension: All cultures share a number of characteristics and features, called cultural axioms, and consider them a basic need represented by words, gestures, drawings, sounds, and devices. Therefore, artifacts are an important material, as they are embodied in a physical form, such as a word, a written creation, or a solid object such as an architectural structure. They help an individual understand their surrounding environment (Tu *et al.*, 2020: 4). At the individual cognitive level, they indicate a culture that differs from other cultures in terms of individual cultural levels and includes knowledge of legal, religious, social, and economic systems (Kong *et al.*, 2020: 171) ^[16].

2. Metacognitive dimension: Metacognitive cultural intelligence: Any individual with a high degree of metacognitive intelligence modifies and reviews assumptions and mental models of cultures before and during interactions. Its importance is highlighted by the ability to plan between cultures, awareness, and the ability to monitor control processes and operations during these interactions. Metacognitive intelligence is the pillar that

enables understanding issues and using them to be more effective (Azevedo and Shane, 2019: 3) ^[11].

3. Behavioral dimension: Cultural intelligence ensures individual abilities to develop a repertoire and response that can be used appropriately in a different situation and includes the ability to modify and adapt verbal and nonverbal behavior to be appropriate for a specific group when interacting with individuals in different cultures. (Ahmed, 2018: 429) ^[1].

4. Motivational dimension: This dimension reflects the enthusiasm for learning about different cultures. Individuals with high levels of intelligence usually exert the most effort and understanding of the culture in this effort, out of the desires of individuals and their adaptation to these cultures (Ldrus, 2021: 222).

3. Adaptive Performance

3.1 The concept of adaptive performance

Adaptive performance can be defined as follows

In an increasingly fluid world, organizations and the functions they perform can no longer be described continuously and many sources can be predicted, including political, economic and social instability, cultural transformation, and the development of organizational structures and processes (Ramos-Villgrasa *et al* 2020) ^[23].

It is well known that adaptive performance is perceived by researchers in traditional models as fixed and needs to be expanded to include response to work and variables. As a result, researchers expect adaptive performance to lead to a more dynamic understanding of job performance under conditions of ambiguity and change, and thus provide guidance regarding the best way to continuously change employee skills (Kadir and Taha, 2019: 17) and the older adults' adaptation to changing workplaces (Bienkowska and Tworek, 2020: 5) ^[31].

Pandey (2020: 125) defined it as the conditions that require fulfilling duties and exceed the person's ability to perform the required work, and in the presence of a large difference between rewards. Despite this, stress is a bad aspect and not necessarily bad, and the lack of balance between work and life. Work pressure is a response that individuals get when work requirements are compatible with their talents.

It is the behavior of change to meet the modern, new or dynamic requirements of the current situation. (Kafi & Amina, 2021: 18).

Based on the above, adaptive performance can be defined from the researcher's point of view as the ability to deal with changing requirements in new and unusual situations and decision makers who deal in a confirmed environment and are able to think in flexible ways and the ability to evaluate situations in order to identify potential problems and create a set of alternative procedures that enable them to anticipate unusual events.

3.2 The importance of adaptive performance

The importance of adaptive performance is represented by the following points: (Al-Sahlan, 2020:68) and (Park *et al*, 2020: 3) ^[5, 22].

1. The ability of employees to adapt to changing workplace situations and perform at the most critical level ever
2. Changing technologies are changing the design of the

- business and must adapt quickly
3. The change process requires structural work and workers adapting to changing environments, acquisitions and merger
 4. Recognizing performance as a key area in human resource development
 5. Performance behavior leads to maintaining performance levels or working to reduce them and the decline in performance to adapt to new variables and attempts to influence these variables
 6. Increase the level of job satisfaction among employees who have the ability to adapt in adaptive performance

3.3 Factors affecting adaptive performance

(Kanten *et al*, 2018:2) refers to a group of factors that influence emotional intelligence, including.

1. Internal factors such as transformational leadership, team learning climate, organizational learning, organizational structures.
2. External factors such as the environmental conditions in which the organization operates
3. Human resource management practices, employee retention, employee performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction.

3.4 Dimensions of adaptive performance

Experiences and activities were found to predict performance in research (Milledge, 2021: 38). Although researchers have developed many concepts in the dimensions of adaptive performance, the current research relied on four dimensions, which are evident from the following.

1. Emergency Handling: It requires adapting to a new dynamic situation and solving a new problem accordingly. It ensures one of the aspects of performance and has been discussed by the authors. It is an activity in which employees solve unlimited, complex and illogical problems. It requires an aspect of performance and the individual brings the complex situation to the end and provides a new creative solution. It is a correct insight and planning that can help organizations not only survive but also manage in any crisis to face problems properly, protect themselves and reduce their effects. (Salman & Mahawi, 2018:187) ^[4].

2. Work stress management: Stress is the effort and anxiety that individuals face in their workplaces and is

heavy with demands and abundant expectations that must be met within a limited time frame. It is called work stress. Dealing with procedures can be employed to direct solutions and build flexibility and efficiency in stressful conditions (Kafi & Amina, 2021: 520).

3. Dealing with uncertain and unpredictable work situations: Many researchers and authors have discussed the broad adaptability of dealing with an unpredictable work situation and its resulting effects, many different factors, a change in priorities, a change in available resources, or new groups. The main aspects of performance are represented by events in terms of the ease with which they can adapt and deal with the nature of this situation and the efficiency of their ability to change their focus when necessary and to the extent of reasonable procedures (Kaltainen and Hakanen, 2022: 31) ^[15].

4. Demonstrating adaptability: The demand for culture within organizations with the globalization of the work environment and the extent to which it changes for today's individuals in their organizations and that the ability to perform effectively varies across environments is increasingly recognized as important and represents a proposal that includes components of performance, goals, values, history and politics, other than the definition of a new environment. This type of adaptation is included under the model of success and the new environment in understanding and willingly acting according to the customs, rules and structure of the worker inside (McLoughlin and Priyadarshini, 2021: 5) ^[20].

Research Community and Research Sample

This research seeks to analyze the identifying information and demographic characteristics of the research sample members, where 40 questionnaire forms were distributed to the study population, which includes Maysan University and its sample members, which includes a group of employees at Maysan University, the Faculty of Business and Economics, where the employees of the Faculty of Business and Economics are among the categories in which cultural intelligence can significantly affect adaptive performance. Enhancing the cultural intelligence of the university's employees helps to improve communication and cooperation among them, leading to improved overall performance of the university.

Table 1: Mean Averages and Standard Deviations of the Cultural Intelligence Variable

Dependent variable (adaptive performance)				
t	Paragraph	Arithmetic Average	Standard deviation	Degree of Response
First: Dealing with Emergencies				
1	Ability to be fully prepared to act quickly in an emergency	3.80	0.67	agree
2	Analyze solutions quickly to choose the most suitable solution	3.95	0.61	I totally agree
3	Decision making immediately after action to be taken in solving problems	4.10	0.53	agree
4	I'm not in a position to respond quickly.	3.80	0.57	I totally agree
Second: Managing Work Stress				
5	Feel comfortable even if tasks change and request additional tasks	4.00	0.62	agree
6	Feeling anxious when asked for extra tasks	4.27	0.68	agree
7	Staying calm when I'm asked to do extra tasks	3.90	0.61	agree completely
8	Additional work requirements negatively affect the quality of performance	3.97	0.70	agree
Third: Dealing with Uncertain Situations				
9	Sudden working conditions impair the ability to act	3.92	0.65	agree
10	Contribute to team stability by directing others towards our priority tasks	3.97	0.65	agree

11	Reorganization with work facilitates adaptation to the changing conditions	4.07	0.64	agree
12	Wait for information from the department manager	3.85	0.65	agree
Fourth: Demonstrating adaptability				
13	Trying to understand colleagues' perspectives to improve interaction between them	4.02	0.67	agree
14	Developing a relationship with colleagues is an important factor in business effectiveness	4.27	0.63	agree
15	I modify the working methods if someone points to the solution	3.95	0.55	agree
16	I don't care about negative comment about how it works	4.11	0.55	agree
	Result of the dependent variable (adaptive performance)	3.991	0.0495	agree

It is clear from the table that the answers of the research sample members confirm the presence of cultural intelligence in their various activities and in a good way, where the variable of cultural intelligence reached an arithmetic average of (3.975) and a standard deviation of (0.0782).

Paragraph (4) was the most contributing paragraph to the cultural intelligence variable, which states ("Knowledge of the rules and vocabulary of the language of different cultures for employees at the university.") where the arithmetic average of the paragraph was (4.35) and a standard deviation of (0.81).

While paragraph (3) received the lowest contribution among the total paragraphs of cultural intelligence, which states ("Knowledge of rules and the expression of the different cultures of the employees at the university.") where the arithmetic average of the paragraph reached (3.70) with a standard deviation of (0.68).

Second: The dependent variable (adaptive performance): It is the ability of the individual to adapt to a dynamic situation, and employees show adaptive performance in ways of modifying behavior according to new requirements and events.

Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of the Adaptive Performance Variable The answers of the research sample members through the table indicate that Maysan University depends on adaptive performance in most of its activities, as this is explained by the result of the arithmetic average of the total paragraphs, which reached (3.991) and a standard deviation of (0.0495).

The most prominent paragraph contributing to the adaptive performance variable was paragraph (14), which states ("Developing the relationship with colleagues is an important factor in effective factors at work.") with an arithmetic average of (4.27) and a standard deviation of (0.63).

While the least paragraph in terms of contribution to adaptive performance was paragraph (1), which clarifies that ("the ability to achieve full readiness to act quickly in emergency situations.") with an arithmetic average of (3.80) and a standard deviation of (0.67).

Testing correlation and influence relationships

This paper aims to test the research hypotheses, including evaluating and knowing the degree of correlation between cultural intelligence and adaptive performance on the one hand, and testing the relationship between the effect of cultural intelligence on adaptive performance on the other hand.

First: The Correlation Relationship between the Independent Variable (Cultural Intelligence) and the Dependent Variable (Adaptive Performance)

The first main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant correlation between cultural intelligence and its dimensions (cognitive intelligence, metacognitive intelligence, behavioral intelligence, motivational intelligence) and adaptive performance with its dimensions (dealing with emergencies, managing work stress, dealing with uncertain situations, demonstrating adaptive ability).

Table 2: Correlation results for the first major hypothesis

Correlations			
		Cultural Intelligence	Adaptive Performance
Cultural Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.762**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	40	40
Adaptive Performance	Pearson Correlation	.762**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	40	40

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table results show

- There is a correlation between the independent variable (cultural intelligence) and the dependent variable (adaptive performance) where the Pearson correlation coefficient reached a value of (0.762**).
- The statistical significance of the relationship was less than (0.001).
- The validity of the first main hypothesis

Second: The Relationship of Influence between the Independent Variable (Cultural Intelligence) and the Dependent Variable (Adaptive Performance).

The second main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect between cultural intelligence in its dimensions (cognitive intelligence, metacognitive intelligence, behavioral intelligence, motivational intelligence) and adaptive performance in its dimensions (dealing with emergencies, managing work stress, dealing with uncertain situations, demonstrating adaptive ability).

Table 3: The Relationship of Influence between Cultural Intelligence and Adaptive Performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.762a	.581	.570	.23274
a. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural Intelligence				

Table 4: The Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Adaptive Performance

ANOVA a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.850	1	2.850	52.616	.000b
	Residual	2.058	38	.054		
	Total	4.908	39			
a. Dependent Variable: Adaptive Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural Intelligence						

Table 5: The Relationship of Influence between Cultural Intelligence and Adaptive Performance

Coefficients					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	1.022	.411		.017
	*P ≤ 0.05 d.f: (1,38) N= 40				
	Cultural Intelligence	.749	.103	.762	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Adaptive Performance					

Table 6: Results of the effect of the independent variable (cultural intelligence) on the dependent variable (adaptive performance)

Variable Independent / Variable minion	Cultural Intelligence		R2	T		F	
	B0	B1		Calculated	Tabularity	Calculated	Tabularity
Adaptive Performance	0.762	0.749	0.581	2.486	1.684	52.616	4.084

Highlights of the results

- There is an effect relationship between the independent variable (cultural intelligence) and its dimensions in the dependent variable (adaptive performance) with its dimensions, where the coefficient of determination R2 reached a value of (0.581).
- This value is explained by the fact that half of the changes that occur in adaptive performance are the result of cultural intelligence influences.
- The calculated F value is equal to (52.616) which is higher than the tabular F (4.084) and this explains the statistical significance that the independent variable (cultural intelligence) has an effect on the dependent variable (adaptive performance).
- The calculated T value is (2.486) which is greater than the tabular T (1.684) and this explains the validity of the second major hypothesis.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

1. Intercultural interaction has a positive impact on the development of an individual's intelligence, and there is a difference among workers regarding their attitude towards cultural intelligence. The aspects of cultural intelligence that best distinguish workers indicate how interested workers are in knowing the economic and legal systems of different cultures
2. The sample's response and analysis of cultural intelligence were high, indicating that the research sample agrees that university employees certainly

possess the cultural nature required for interaction with employees from different cultures

3. The level of cultural intelligence among individuals determines their ability to adapt and stabilize in a new environment. Because employees possess a high level of cultural intelligence, it allows them to demonstrate experience in dealing with stress, as they are accustomed to the new sales situation 4- Cultural intelligence provides the ability to predict the adaptive performance of individuals in a multicultural environment, and university employees possess a high level of adaptive capabilities that contribute to effective performance within the university.

5.2 Recommendations

1. The importance of recognizing the cultural differences among employees. They must be more culturally open, establish a culturally intelligent organization, and take several aspects into account.
2. Managers should approach cultural intelligence from different perspectives. First, it is a personal trait that can be easily identified and measured. Employees with this trait are more adaptable and better at accepting differences. Second, cultural intelligence is reflected within a specific culture and helps identify those who are most interested in building a work group.
3. The need to engage employees within the organization in training courses that enhance their ability to improve task completion in an innovative manner.
4. Developing cultural intelligence through various

techniques and cross-cultural training programs will provide individuals with the opportunity to develop a set of skills and knowledge about how to demonstrate appropriate behavior when dealing with uncertain situations.

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