



The Relationship between the Personality Traits and Cultural Intelligence of Primary School Teachers of the Department of Education and Training in Bojnourd, 2014

Abdollah Ayeneh Beigi¹, Mahbubeh Soleimanpoor omran^{2}*

¹Master Graduate in Education Management, Bojnord branch, Islamic Azad University, Bojnord, Iran.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Education Management, Bojnord branch, Islamic Azad University, Bojnord, Iran

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of the present research is to study the relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of Department of Education and training in Bojnourd in 2014. **Methodology:** The current research methodology is Descriptive and Correlation research. The research question is to investigate whether there is any statistically significant relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and training in Bojnourd in 2014 which is addressed by developing five alternative hypotheses about big five personality traits. The research population consists of 147 participants chosen through simple Random sampling among which 120 candidates were selected as the sample population according to Cochran's Sample Size Formula. As the data collection tools, the researchers used two different questionnaires, whose validity has been already approved by professors and experts in the field and whose reliability was estimated through Cronbach Alpha Coefficient indexing 0.85 and 0.78 respectively in earlier studies, for the research variables namely Personality Traits and Cultural Intelligence; the required data for the former variable was collected using NEO Personality Questionnaire and a Cultural Intelligence Standardized Questionnaire developed by Badi' et al was used for the latter variable. **Results:** For the purpose of this study, the standardized questionnaire was analysed, the reliability of which was accordingly estimated as having %95 correlation coefficient by means of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient reliability estimation. To analyse the data, Descriptive Statistics including statistical indices of Frequency Distribution Table, Percentage and Charts as well as Inferential Statistics including Horizontal Bar Charts, Pearson Correlation Test and Friedman Test, were both used. **Conclusion:** According to the estimated correlation coefficient and the significant level showing 0.698 and 0.5 values, the results indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers.

1. Introduction

Education is the best factor which can influence and change the culture of societies. With the advent of 21st century, attention has been paid to the systems of formal education more than ever so that by assisting to make transformations and to increase the efficiency in this area as a subset of social systems human societies are able to practically confront and deal with the forthcoming problems and challenges. Therefore, for bright men, transformations and/or evolutions in the systems of education is considered as a pre requisite for achieving sustainable development goals (Bakker and Bal, 2010). The importance of human resources for management theoreticians cannot be overlooked. Today, the human resources are regarded as human capitals in developed countries which are indicative of its prominence (Bahmani and Pourouman Soleiman, 2015).

* Corresponding author: m.pouromran@gmail.com

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Today's organizations are supplied with their required commodities and raw materials by organizations in other countries; the only resource which is not readily tradable as an ideal resource is human resources; therefore it can be declared that the most important competitive asset of a country is its standard and efficient human resources (Cascio and Aguinis, 2005). In recent years the consultant psychologists and human resource recruitment managers more than ever necessitated the use of precise and convenient methods to evaluate the job characteristics of candidates in the critical moments of recruitment.

The studies done by Hunt and Braw on thousands workers in different institutions showed that the main factor in the dismissal, failure, lack of success, promotion and job advancement of human resources in institutions is to a great deal related to the personality trait factors than the lack of skills and talents in workers. These studies contributed workers' dismissal to several reasons other than lack of productivity. The process of workers' recruitment, staff transfer and turnover, and promotion is enhanced with regard to evaluating individual's personality traits. Since workers' personality traits are indicators of their behaviors, it is possible to draw on a framework to predict their behaviors by identifying such personality traits. The managers' awareness of the personnel's personality traits helps them delegate and appoint qualified persons to different positions in the organizations which in turn will reduce staff turnover and increase job satisfaction (Poropat, 2009).

On the one hand, each occupation has unique job characteristics such as whether the job requires intellectual or physical potentials, involves in a crowded or quite environment, is done individually or in a team work, as well as how the job is supervised and monitored etc. However, each individual has their own unique personality traits; for instance, they prefer to work individually and on their own in a team work business. Personality is a combination of psychological and intellectual characteristics and distinct personal qualities which exist in every person in a sustainable way influencing their behavior and way of thinking. More precisely defined, personality is a combination of psychological characteristics in individuals which are used in order to determine their status in the classification (Rastegar and Memarpour, 2009). On the other hand, cultural intelligence is one of the important issues in organizations upon which individuals seriously take their identity in organization, participate and is involved in organization, and enjoy their membership in the organization.

Thomas and Inkson stressed on the role of three cultural variables viz. Cultural Knowledge, Cultural Considerations and Cultural Skills. With regard to cultural knowledge, the effect of culture on individuals' behaviors is studied by means of motivation and recognition mechanisms. Cultural considerations act as a mediator between cultural knowledge and cultural skills. Finally, cultural skills categorize the required skills for a better and more efficient communications in three areas that is emotional, interactive and adaptive. Individuals' performances and functions are different from person to person due to the difference in their cultural intelligence level by which their whole life is affected (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009).

The term cultural intelligence is a compound and a contradictory word which is divided into both emotions and intelligence i.e. sense and logic. Aristotle was the premier who put the words sense and logic together. He exemplifies "anybody can get angry, that is easy; but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way; that is not within everybody's power and is not easy." The righteousness-thinking and the application of cultural intelligence in today's organizations, which is based on knowledge-based societies, cannot be overlooked in our country because one of the factors enhancing the efficiency and the practicality of knowledge-based organizations is the reasonable use of cultural intelligence and culture of meritocracy by managers and employees which will not occur in organizations unless they concern the staff personality traits. As a consequence, investigating personality traits and cultural intelligence and their relationship is significant since researchers have recently agreed on the point that the five-factor model of personality can be, first, used to describe the most aspects of personality in individuals (Kokkinos, 2007). The structures of five factor model of personality share the same values, cultures and evaluation resources. Secondly, the five-factor model of personality has been reviewed and studied in the fields of organizational and industrial psychology in relation to job performance of staff (Barrick et al., 2009). In a meta-analysis study by Barrick and Mount (2009), it was concluded that conscientiousness is the best personality trait predictive of job performance and extraversion and neuroticism are good predictive of job satisfaction.

Kark et al. (2003) studied the relationship between the big five personality traits and job performance; they concluded that conscientiousness has the strongest correlation with job performance. Laidra et al. (2007) investigated the relationship between personality traits and job performance and concluded that conscientiousness could significantly predict the job performance. In a study by Smith (2004) about the effect of personality traits of 131 supervisors on the attitudes of 467 subordinate staff; the result showed that the personality traits of supervisors correlate with the staff's attitudes. High levels of agreeableness, emotional stability and extraversion in managers and their low levels of conscientiousness correlate with the degree of satisfaction, emotional commitment and staff turnover in subordinate staff (Wentzel, 1991).

Staff and employees are the main assets and capitals in any organization particularly in knowledge-based organizations like the organization of Education and Training. One of the problems schools confront is inappropriate behaviors such as aggression, defiance and lack of commitment etc. among school teachers which can influence schools' performance, interpersonal relationships and morale. A teacher who has a high level of cultural intelligence can effectively communicate with any specific cultural context. Thus, studying the effect of the personality traits of teachers and its pertaining factors can set the ground for increasing teachers' concern and participation in their involvement in such behaviors.

1.1 Research question and hypotheses

Due to the fact that teachers' personality and behavior are accounted as an influential behavioral pattern for students, conducting further research about this field in the department of education and training is effective. To this end, the present study addressed the following research question:

RQ1: Is there any statistically significant relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and training in Bojnourd?

1.2 Research Alternative Hypotheses

Accordingly, the research alternative hypotheses were developed hereunder:

H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between Neuroticism trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and training in Bojnourd.

H2: There is a statistically significant relationship between Extraversion trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and training in Bojnourd.

H3: There is a statistically significant relationship between Openness trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and Training in Bojnourd.

H4: There is a statistically significant relationship between Agreeableness trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and Training in Bojnourd.

H5: There is a statistically significant relationship between Conscientiousness trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and Training in Bojnourd.

2. Materials and methods

Since the current study is investigating the relationship between the research variables, the research is a fundamental research study and with regard to the nature of research it is a descriptive-Correlation research. The statistical population of this study all consists of 373 male and female teachers of primary school of the department of education and training in Bojnourd among which 116 and 257 teachers were respectively female and male. The sampling size of the population was calculated based on Cochran's Sample size formula as presented below:

$$n = \frac{Nt^2 pq}{Nd^2 + t^2 pq} = \frac{273(1/96)^2 (0/5)(0/5)}{178(0/05)^2 + (1/96)^2 (0/5)(0/5)} = 189 \quad (1)$$

To collect data, the following two questionnaires were used:

2.1 NEO Personality Questionnaire

NEO-FFI personality questionnaire also known as NEO was developed by McCrae & Costa (1989), which was revisited and used by Haghshenas (2008) in Iran. The questionnaire was designed consisting 60 items to briefly evaluate the five-factor personality Model, including Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness each of which encompasses 12 items of the all.

2.2 Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire

The Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire was developed by Ali Badi', Elham Savari, Najmeh Bagheri Dasht Bozorg and Vahideh Latifizadegan embracing 42 items for 4 cultural intelligence factors.

This section of the research is given to discuss statistical population, sample size and sampling method, research analysis tools (Validity and Reliability), and data analysis methods (excluding non-research articles).

3. Discussion and results

3.1 Research Hypotheses Testing

For the purpose of the present study, the hypotheses were tested; the results are which are presented hereunder.

Testing the Main Hypothesis

The main hypothesis is developed to investigate the relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of department of education and training in Bojnourd. To this end, this hypothesis is divided into statistical hypotheses as:

1. Main Hypothesis (Claim Hypothesis) as H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and training in Bojnourd.

2. Null Hypothesis (Counterclaim Hypothesis) as H0: There is not any statistically significant relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education and training in Bojnourd.

In order to test the hypothesis, the items and questions of both the aforementioned questionnaires were used and the subsequent data were analyzed by Pearson Correlation Coefficient the result of which are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Testing the Main Hypothesis

Main Hypothesis	Variables	Values	
	Personality Traits and Cultural Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	0.698
		Sig. Level	0.000
		Sample Size	254

According to the data provided in Table 1 above, the results shows that the correlation coefficient between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of teachers equals 0.698 and with regard to the sig. level which is 0.000 it can be concluded that the Null hypothesis i.e. there is not any statistically

significant relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd, was rejected at %95 confidence level and the reverse claim was confirmed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the personality traits and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd.

3.2 Testing the First Alternative Hypothesis

The first alternative hypothesis is developed to investigate whether there is a statistically significant relationship between Neuroticism trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd. In order to test this hypothesis, the items and questions of both the aforementioned questionnaires were used and the subsequent data were analysed by Pearson Correlation Coefficient the result of which are displayed in Table 2 hereunder.

Table 2. The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Testing the First Alternative Hypothesis

First Alternative Hypothesis	Variables	Values	
	Neuroticism and Cultural Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	-0.321
		Sig. Level	0.05
		Sample Size	100

The results given in Table 2 above displays that the correlation coefficient between the Neuroticism and cultural intelligence of teachers index a value of -0.321 and with regard to the sig. level which is 0.05 it can be concluded that the Null hypothesis i.e. there is not any statistically significant relationship between the neuroticism and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd, was rejected at %95 confidence level and the reverse claim was confirmed that both neuroticism and cultural intelligence negatively correlates; thus, there is a statistically significant negative relationship between the neuroticism and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd.

3.3 Testing the Second Alternative Hypothesis

The second alternative hypothesis is developed to investigate whether there is a statistically significant relationship between Extraversion trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd. In order to test this hypothesis, the items and questions of both the aforementioned questionnaires were used and the subsequent data were analyzed by Pearson Correlation Coefficient the result of which are displayed in Table 3 hereunder.

Table 3. The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Testing the Second Alternative Hypothesis

Second Alternative Hypothesis	Variables	Values	
	Extraversion and Cultural Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	-0.269
		Sig. Level	0.05
		Sample Size	100

The results given in Table 3 above displays that the correlation coefficient between the Extraversion and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers index a value of -0.269 and with regard to the sig. level which is estimated as 0.05 it is concluded that the Null hypothesis i.e. there is not any statistically significant relationship between the extraversion and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd, was rejected at %95 confidence level and the reverse claim was confirmed that both extraversion and cultural intelligence negatively correlates; thus, there is a statistically significant negative relationship between the extraversion and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd.

3.4 Testing the Third Alternative Hypothesis

The third alternative hypothesis is developed to investigate whether there is a statistically significant relationship between Openness trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd. In order to test this hypothesis, the items and questions of both the aforementioned questionnaires were used and the subsequent data were analyzed by Pearson Correlation Coefficient the result of which are displayed in Table 4 below

Table 4. The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Testing the Third Alternative Hypothesis

Third Alternative Hypothesis	Variables	Values	
	Openness and Cultural Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	0.245
		Sig. Level	0.01
		Sample Size	100

The results given in Table 4 above displays that the correlation coefficient between the Openness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers index a value of 0.245 and with regard to the sig. level which is estimated as 0.01 it is concluded that the Null hypothesis i.e. there is not any statistically significant relationship between the openness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd, was rejected at %95 confidence level and the reverse claim was confirmed that both openness and cultural intelligence positively correlates; thus, there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the Openness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd.

3.5 Testing the Fourth Alternative Hypothesis

The fourth alternative hypothesis is developed to investigate whether there is a statistically significant relationship between Agreeableness trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd. In order to test this hypothesis, the items and questions of both the aforementioned questionnaires were used and the subsequent data were analyzed by Pearson Correlation Coefficient the result of which are displayed in Table 5 below.

Table 5. The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Testing the Fourth Alternative Hypothesis

Fourth Alternative Hypothesis	Variables	Values	
	Agreeableness and Cultural Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	0.320
		Sig. Level	0.05
		Sample Size	100

The results given in Table 5 above displays that the correlation coefficient between the Agreeableness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers index a value of 0.320 and with regard to the sig. level which is estimated as 0.05 it is concluded that the Null hypothesis i.e. there is not any statistically significant relationship between the agreeableness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd, was rejected at %95 confidence level and the reverse claim was confirmed that both agreeableness and cultural intelligence positively correlates; thus, there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the Agreeableness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd.

3.6 Testing the Fifth Alternative Hypothesis

The fifth alternative hypothesis is developed to investigate whether there is a statistically significant relationship between conscientiousness trait and Cultural Intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd. In order to test this hypothesis, the items and questions of both the aforementioned questionnaires were used and the subsequent data were analyzed by Pearson Correlation Coefficient the result of which are displayed in Table 6 hereunder.

Table 6. The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Testing the Fifth Alternative Hypothesis

Fifth Alternative Hypothesis	Variables	Values	
	Conscientiousness and Cultural Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	0.557
		Sig. Level	0.05
		Sample Size	100

The results given in Table 6 above displays that the correlation coefficient between the conscientiousness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers index a value of 0.557 and with regard to the sig. level which is estimated as 0.05 it is concluded that the Null hypothesis i.e. there is not any statistically significant relationship between the conscientiousness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd, was rejected at %95 confidence level and the reverse claim was confirmed that both conscientiousness and cultural intelligence positively correlates; thus, there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the conscientiousness and cultural intelligence of primary school teachers of the department of education in Bojnourd.

3.7 Ranking the Personality Traits

The researchers used Friedman test to rank the personality traits to determine which of the personality traits has got a higher status in comparison to the other personality traits. The results of Friedman Test are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Friedman Test for Ranking the Research Hypotheses Variables

Variables	Average	Ranking
Neuroticism	5.16	5
Extraversion	5.22	4
Openness	6.40	1
Agreeableness	5.39	3
Conscientiousness	6.04	2

As shown in the abovementioned table, among the personality variables, Openness has got the first rank whereas Extraversion and Neuroticism got the lowest ranks among all. In order to enhance the status of the variables, decrease organizational conflicts, increase organizational participations and have a secure and healthy working environment, attempts must be made by the department of education and training in this regard.

4. Conclusion

Today, it has been accepted that a person who lacks the necessary talent for learning the required expertise in their job will be rejected even though they possess other remarkable personality aspects. Likewise, if the person has such required potential talents while their behaviors hinder their adjustment and adaptation to the organization and/or other individuals, they will be rejected once more. These considerations may be influenced by common sense. Research by Hunt and Braw on thousands of workers in different institutions showed that the main factor in the dismissal, failure, lack of success, promotion and job advancement of human resources in institutions is to a great deal related to the personality trait factors than the lack of skills and talents in workers. These studies contributed workers' dismissal to several reasons other than lack of productivity.

Furthermore, cultural intelligence and other skill factors in staff is one of the fundamental and important issues which managers and administrators endeavor to enhance them. Since the midst of the 20th century, a considerable tendency has been raised for understanding cultural intelligence in staff as well as a majority of human resources who has been devoted to analyze and evaluate this issue. The results of the current research study confirm that there is a relationship between the personality traits and occupational behaviors of staff. To indicate some, it can be stated that personality type and personality traits of staff have potential serious effects on organizational performance. In order for an organization to achieve its objectives and goals, its staff and employees should perform their duties and responsibilities at an acceptable level of efficiency. This issue is of a necessary and critical consideration for not only the state organizations whose poor performance set the ground for their failure in providing public services but also private organizations whose poor performance results in their bankruptcy. Socially speaking, the most interesting point for organizations is that they need to recruit staff who perform their duties efficiently since proper performance enhances organizational efficiency which leads to an increase in National Economy (Spector, 2000).

Research has shown that there are several factors affecting the enhancement of staff's occupational performance and commitment to organization. If considerable attentions are paid to these factors, not only the staff's performance is enhanced effectively but also other organizational factors, qualities and efficiencies are positively influenced and thus improved. Personality traits are accounted as constructive factors which are of utmost importance in organizations. Based on the preceding research, personality is a variable which can lead to advanced organizational commitments, and enhanced performance among staff which is achieved by analyzing and evaluating the strength and weakness of organizations due to the intelligence level of organizations' managers and staff. Studies indicated that many common problems in different organizations are probably related to personality factors. Hence, focusing on the individuals' personality traits in their job environment and at the time job recruitment can prevent the upcoming problems which may later get the staff and individuals involved and struggled with challenges in their work environment and negatively influence their occupational performance. According to the results of the earlier research studies as well as the results obtained from the present study, the organization's great attention to individuals' personality traits, and their providing a situation in which individuals can use their insights and intelligence about the organization's problems, can create a better context to enhance staff's performance and organization's efficiency.

In the process of ranking the personality traits, Friedman test was used to determine which of the personality traits has got a higher status in comparison to the other personality traits. As noted earlier, among the personality variables, Openness has got the first rank whereas Extraversion and Neuroticism got the lowest ranks among all. In order to enhance the status of the variables, decrease organizational conflicts, increase organizational participations and have a secure and healthy working environment, attempts must be made by the department of education. Accordingly, it is recommended that organizations make use of personality tests in the process of employment and recruitment in order to help individual's personality traits adapt to the vacant job requirements to a greater degree so that the organization can benefit from the merits of such approach. In knowledge-based organizations particularly in the department of education and training it is important to recruit and employ staff who has personality traits more compatible with the values of department of education and training. For example, based on the results of the hypotheses testing in this research, individuals who have neuroticism personality trait are not an apt candidate for being employed in such organizations. Because it is necessary to employ individuals who can express their opinions, comments and suggestion and who are creative and innovative, in research organizations.

As a final remark, further research is recommended to be done regarding the other personality traits affecting the cultural intelligence as an important factor in organizations since it can increase the level of perception and awareness in researchers and managers about this significant concept and prevent staff's silence in this regard and thus results in a proper management strategies in organizations.

Nowadays, the importance of non-financial rewards has been increased compared to financial rewards. It seems that it is necessary to enhance such process in staff especially those who have got a higher level of education and training. In the meantime, it has been always proposed that working environments and circumstances have always been influencing the performance of organizational human resources. Hence, the department of Education and training should hold training courses and workshops for managers and employees to learn how to support staff.

In order to enhance the openness trait in staff, the department of education and training should make attempts to reinforce in staff the feeling of usefulness and efficiency in working environment. This, in turn, would help enhance the cultural intelligence in teachers.

The department of education and training should provide the staff with the appropriate contexts for working, fitting the status of job requirements and the employee, making a proper and timely evaluation, and providing a right track for promotion opportunities in their career by means of which the cultural intelligence of teachers and thus their performance and efficiency are enhanced successively.

Due to the importance of the effectiveness of employees' performance in the department of education and training, it is required to recognize the factors through which the performance efficiency is enhanced; one of these factors is personality traits. Consequently, the department of education and training should give the most attempts to enhance efficiency in the performance of the employees.

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