



The Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Organizational Indifference among Managers of Hospitals

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Organizational indifference is a kind of silent and destructive operational crisis in organizations that continually conceals its negative effects on the organization. Therefore, this research was conducted to study the relationship between cultural intelligence and organizational indifference among managers of hospitals in 2020. **Methods:** This is a descriptive-analytic study carried out in 2020. The statistical population of this study included 120 managers of hospitals of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences. Data collection was done using two questionnaires, namely cultural intelligence questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.85$) and a conflict management strategies questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.91$). The sample included the entire statistical population. For analysis of the data, Spearman and Pearson correlation tests were employed using SPSS-22. **Results:** The average organizational indifference (3.6 ± 1.3) and cultural intelligence (3.7 ± 0.8) of the managers of university hospitals in Ahvaz were in "high" condition. Among the cultural intelligence dimensions, the strategic dimension had the highest score (4.5 ± 0.7) and the behavioral dimension had the lowest score (3.2 ± 0.9). Also, among the organizational indifference dimensions, the indifference to work dimension had the highest score (4.1 ± 1.2), and indifference to the client had the lowest score (3.3 ± 1.1). With increasing emotional intelligence, organizational indifference was reduced in the managers of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences hospitals. **Conclusion:** As each dimension of cultural intelligence increases, the organizational indifference of the managers of Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences decreases. It is suggested that when formulating organizational goals, employee involvement and collaboration are used and involved in setting goals so that they are not indifferent to organizational goals, and that the communication networks within the organization are identified, strengthened, and utilized to enhance the cultural intelligence of the organization.

Keywords: Cultural Intelligence, Organizational Indifference, Hospital Managers, Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the technology progress at various levels like medical technologies and the in-

crease in public expectations of the health systems, changes in people's lifestyles and thus the increase in the incidence of chronic diseases have increased health costs at all levels, espe-

cially hospital care and diagnostic services [1, 2]. Among the skills required to avoid organizational conflicts, the ability to continuously get adapted to people from different cultures and the ability to manage intercultural communication are of paramount importance [3]. Cultural intelligence is a new domain of intelligence that has many links with diverse workplace environments. This type of intelligence is one of the most effective tools for performing tasks efficiently in environments with a diverse and heterogeneous workforce. Cultural intelligence is a special ability and skill that allows a person to act effectively in multicultural situations [4-6]. Peterson defines cultural intelligence as the ability to apply skills and abilities in different environments [7].

Personnel indifference to the problems of the organization is a problem that has plagued most government agencies and some NGOs in Iran. Managers react differently to this, some are just greedy, some find indifference to be passive, some find work to be staff training, some inexperienced longtime ones not even notice it. They don't. Indifference is a deviation from the balanced situation in the organization. Indifference may be the name of a silent crisis, a slow downfall, and continuous and sound destruction [8]. A situation that does not differ from the occurrence or non-occurrence of peripheral phenomena and specifically the achievement of organizational goals (success or failure of an organization) for a member or group of members is called organizational indifference [9].

Keshavarz Haghighi in a study presented a model of managing corporate indifference (a case study of a private bank). The results showed that improvements in performance appraisal, pay and reward systems, promotion, transparent and fair appointments, greater attention to personal and family wellbeing, use of flexible work packages, and attention to organizational citizenship behaviors are all factors influencing managers' skills by improving the motivation system. It leads to more organizational creativity and better perception of organizational justice for employees, which ultimately leads to the management of organizational indifference [10]. The organizations' move toward a diverse workforce is associated with changes, and an important question at this juncture is: How do managers tend to cope with conflicts in different

organizations with a variety of cultural backgrounds? The approach adopted by managers for conflict resolution has a direct impact on employee job satisfaction since unresolved conflicts reduce employee engagement. Without conflicts, an organization will not grow, and both managers and employees should think of resolving conflicts instead of avoiding them [11]. Organizational indifference is a kind of silent and destructive operational crisis in organizations that continually conceals its negative effects on the organization. Given the definition of emotional intelligence, which is a set of abilities and skills that equip a person to cope with the environment and achieve success in life, it appears that the presence of this indicator in employees improves their job position, understand and manage and avoid organizational indifference [12]. Since no research has been done so far in the field of health, especially among hospital managers. Therefore, this research was conducted to study the relationship between cultural intelligence and organizational indifference among managers of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences hospitals in 2020.

METHODS:

This research was a descriptive-analytical and cross-sectional study. The statistical population of this research included 120 senior and middle managers (head of the hospital, hospital director, matron, accounting officer, medical equipment officer, etc.) of university hospitals affiliated to Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences. Due to the limited statistical population, no sampling was done in this study. The present study was conducted in all university hospitals of Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences in Ahvaz including Golestan, Shafa, Imam Khomeini, Razi, Abouzar, and Taleghani hospitals. After collecting a research report from the School of Public Health, the researchers distributed and collected data within 4 weeks. The questionnaires were distributed among all managers, and explanations were offered by the researcher if needed.

Data were collected using two questionnaires of cultural intelligence and organizational indifference. At the beginning of the Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire, questions were asked about the demographic characteristics of the

subjects, such as gender, marital status, organizational position, ratings, and staffing history. Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire [13] includes 19 items that are related to the concept of cultural intelligence with 4 dimensions: strategic dimension (4 questions), knowledge (7 questions), motivational (4 questions), and behavioral (4 questions).

To measure organizational indifference, the following five questionnaires were administered: indifference to the manager (10 questions), indifference to the organization (6 questions), indifference to the client (6 questions), indifference to the colleague (4 questions), indifference to the work (7 questions) containing 33 five-choice questions [14]. The mean scores for the variables of cultural intelligence and organizational indifference were as follows: 1 to 1.8 (very low), 1.8 to 2.6 (low), 2.6 to 3.4 (average), 3.4 to 4.2 (high) and 4.2 to 5 (very high).

The validity of this questionnaire was confirmed by 5 faculty members. The reliability values of the Organizational Indifference Questionnaire and Cultural Intelligence were calculated to be 0.91 and 0.85, respectively.

To analyze the data, descriptive statistics including relative frequency, mean and standard deviation, as well as T-test, ANOVA and Spearman correlation test were analyzed by SPSS-22.

RESULTS:

Of the 130 individuals making up the population, 120 completed the questionnaires and the response rate was 92.3. Of these participants, 36 (30%) were male and 84 (70%) were female. 52.5% of the respondents aged between 25 and 35 years, 40% between 36 and 45, and 7.5% were above 45. In terms of marital status, 20% of the respondents were single and 80% were married. As far as qualifications were concerned, 21.8% of the respondents had a master's degree, 66.7% had a bachelor's degree and 11.8% had associate degrees or diplomas. As with their work experience, 44.2% of the respondents had less than 10 years of experience, 43.3% between 11 and 20 years, and 12.5% had more than 20 years of service experience. The highest and smallest number of managers was in Golestan Hospital (20%) and Abouzar Hospital (13.3%), respectively. Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of cultural intelligence and organizational indifference dimensions.

Table 1: The mean and standard deviation of cultural intelligence and organizational indifference dimensions.

Mean	Standard Deviation	Dimensions	Variables
	0.7 ± 4.5	Strategic	cultural intelligence
	0/7 ±3.5	Knowledge	
	0.8 ± 3.9	Motivational	
	0.9 ± 3.2	Behavioral	
	0.8 ± 3.7	Total	
	1.2 ± 3.9	Indifference to the manager	organizational Indifference
	0.9 ±3.5	Indifference to the organization	
	1.1 ± 3.3	Indifference to the client	
	3.5 ± 1.3	Indifference to the colleague	
	1.2 ± 4.1	Indifference to the Work	
	1.3 ± 3.6	Total	

Table 1 shows the average cultural intelligence of the managers of university hospitals in Ahvaz (3.7 ± 0.8) was in "high" condition. The strategic dimension had the highest score (4.5 ± 0.7), and the behavioral dimension had the lowest score (3.2 ± 0.9). Also, the organizational indifference of managers of university hospitals in Ahvaz (3.6

± 1.3) was in "high" condition. The indifference to work dimension had the highest score (4.1 ± 1.2), and indifference to the client had the lowest score (3.3 ± 1.1). Table 2 shows the correlation between organizational culture and organizational indifference.

Table 2: Correlation of organizational indifference with cultural intelligence dimensions.

organizational Indifference				Dimensions cultural intelligence
correlation coefficient				
Spearman		Pearson		
P-value	Correlation(r)	P-value	Correlation(r)	
*0.001	-0.655	*0.001	-0.432	Strategic
*0.001	-0.542	*0.001	-0.632	Knowledge
*0.001	-0.633	*0.001	-0.655	Motivational
*0.001	-0.421	*0.001	-0.554	Behavioral
*0.001	-0.501	*0.001	-0.545	Cultural Intelligence

Table 2 shows that there was a significant and inverse statistical relationship between cultural intelligence and organizational indifference among Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences hospital managers. That is, with increasing emotional intelligence, organizational apathy was reduced in the managers of Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences' hospitals. Given that all dimensions of cultural intelligence have a meaningful and inverse relationship with organizational apathy, thus, overall, as each dimension of cultural intelligence increases, the organizational apathy of the managers of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences decreases.

DISCUSSION:

The average cultural intelligence of the managers of university hospitals in Ahvaz was in "high" condition. The strategic dimension had the highest score of and the behavioral dimension had the lowest score. The results of Mohammadi-Khah *et al* is in line with the present study. In their research, the highest and lowest ranks of cultural intelligence were related to the strategic and behavioral dimensions, respectively [15]. Ghorbani in a study concluded that cultural intelligence is essential in selecting and improving the performance of high-level managers and paving the way for continuous and accurate conflict recognition and management by continuous training of managers in conflict resolution [16]. The average organizational indifference of the managers of university hospitals in Ahvaz was in "high" condition. The indifference to work dimension had the highest score and indifference to the client had the lowest score. In an article, Turkzadeh *et al.* reported a high average of indifference to work [17]. Hariri and *et al.* reached a similar conclusion about the mean of indiffer-

ence, but the mean of indifference toward the organization was also high in their study [18]. Regardless of the type of organization, it seems that indifference to work is one of the major problems for employees across the country, which can be due to many factors such as lack of interest in the job, lack of motivation and life-long employment.

The findings indicate that there are reverse and significant statistical relationship between the knowledge dimension of cultural intelligence and the organizational indifference of the studied managers. In his research, Keefe found that increasing social capital provided the basis for reducing organizational indifference [19]. On the other hand, the existence of organizational culture in the business environment creates trust, cooperation, and mutual coordination among managers, which increases their sense of responsibility and commitment to the organization and decreases their indifference. The emphasis on structural capital strengthens the bond between individuals, connectivity, and the formation of organizational fit for the purposes required. This feature can certainly reduce staff indifference in the workplace. Cognitive capital also enables employees to share a common language and insight into organizational goals and values. Admittedly, in a network or group where there are a common language and vision, their commitment and responsibility are greater than others [20]. In his research, Boon *et al.* have identified coordination and regular communication as one of the factors affecting the reduction of indifference in organizations [21].

CONCLUSION:

As each dimension of cultural intelligence increases, the organizational indifference of the managers of Jundishapur University of Medical

Sciences decreases. It is suggested that when formulating organizational goals, employee involvement and collaboration are used and involved in setting goals so that they are not indifferent to organizational goals and that the communication networks within the organization are identified, strengthened, and utilized to enhance the cultural intelligence of the organization. Employees' understanding of the common symbols and meanings within the organization is strengthened to make communications easier and to enhance organizational cultures.

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