

# **A survey on the relation between the employees' viewpoint with knowledge management and cultural intelligence among the employees working in Social Security Organization of Ardabil**

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## **Abstract**

This study has reviewed the “A survey on the relation between the employees' viewpoint with knowledge management and cultural intelligence among the employees working in Social Security Organization of Ardabil”. The present study is functional in terms of objective and the method is descriptive and survey. This has asked the others' ideas and viewpoints concerning a specific subject and has analyzed them. About the nature and the method used, the present research is of correlation research. The population applied in this research includes all employees working in Social Security Organization of Ardabil consisting of 400. The method used for sampling is simple random sampling. To collect the information in the first step of the research the library method has been used. In this research the data has been collected through standard questionnaires. Then, via descriptive and inferential statistics the research data has been characterized and regarding the spatial scaling of the measurement to test the hypothesis the, correlation analysis of Pearson has been used and also to specify the reliability of the questionnaire the Chronbach's Alpha has been taken in use and the SPSS software to analyze the data also. The findings resulted from the study showed that there is a significant relation between the factors concerning employees' efficiency with knowledge management and the cultural intelligence and all hypotheses was confirmed.

**Keywords:** the employees' efficiency, knowledge management, cultural intelligence, Social Security.

## **1. Introduction**

Since its creation, knowledge management has stirred up diverse discussions and feelings. A quote about knowledge management that we like derives from Oxbrow and Abell (2002) in their prophetic article about life after knowledge management. They write that ‘some people love knowledge management, some hate it, some claim that they have always done it, but few people have been able to ignore it’. Knowledge management is not a fad but a reflection of the real world we live in, the enterprise we work at and the people that live on the earth. The center of knowledge management was and still remains the same: people. Knowledge management as a collection of strategies has arisen in response to the needs of organizations, businesses, communities and governments in the knowledge-based society and economy of the twenty-first century (Rowley, 2003).

Nowadays, knowledge and its management are vital areas in most organizations. It is well known that the business world was the first domain to recognize the importance of knowledge. Intelligence in the real world includes the intelligence focusing on specific conceptual aspects such as social intelligence, emotional intelligence and functional and practical intelligence. The emotional intelligence assumes that people are familiar with their own culture; therefore,

to interact with others they use their cultural methods. Cultural intelligence means that individuals can effectively manage cultural diversity. Individuals who manage the cultural diversity have cultural intelligence capability (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008). Cultural intelligence requires diversities of individuals and adaptation of individuals to unfamiliar cultural environment (Deng & Gibson, 2008).

Cultural intelligence requires to understand individuals having different culture. Also information accumulation is needed to coordinate with individuals. Accordingly adaptation capability of individuals who have cultural intelligence is very high (Yeşil, 2009). The cultural intelligence is demonstrated in place where the emotional intelligence cannot. The cultural intelligence verifies the scientific realities and concentrates on intercultural issues (Cavanag & Guderham, 2007) the concept, cultural intelligence, was first implemented by Erly and Ang. They have defined the cultural intelligence as the ability to learn new patterns in cultural interactions and providing accurate responses concerning these patterns (Earley & Ang, 2003). They have believed that facing the new cultural situations the individuals, based on the existing information, codify a shared cognitive framework even if this framework has no sufficient perception around local norms and behaviors. To codify such a framework is only by the ones who have high cultural intelligence. Concerning other definition the cultural intelligence is an individual capability to perceive, interrupt and influential proceedings in various cultural situations and adapts the intelligent related concepts finding intelligence more as a cognitive ability (Peterson, 2004).

The cultural intelligence is the key to success in the present world. To have efficient operation of work groups, the group must develop the cultural intelligence itself. The heterogeneous groups have more potential to win or lose compared to single-cultural groups. The trick needed to be applied is to maximum the positive effects and minimize the negative effects, as well. (Thomas & Inksen, 2008). Increasing the cultural intelligence the manager and the group members can be the foundation for mutual perception and respect and indeed, increase the individuals' ability to recognize the solutions. The variable related to cultural intelligence is the knowledge. Knowledge is counted as an intangible property which in the new economy is more important than traditional properties. The intangible properties in offices include: information, knowledge, experience, and the skills of the employees in the organization, which of course is not easy to measure, because there is no specific technique or scale for this objective.

Deraker believes that in today's economy, knowledge as the result of learning process is not a source equal to other production, resources such as job, finance and earth rather is considered as a much more crucial source for the present era (Nikbakht et al., 2009). According to the above mentioned about the organizational knowledge we are to define the history of knowledge management. Knowledge management as a new approach focuses on the organization's need which consists of organizing the intellectual, human and scientific capital, and has been expressed as a modern approach to change and replacement from human force management to mind management and has led to a fast growth in knowledge and technology (Nikbakht, 2009).

Huffman and his colleagues believe that knowledge management and the attitudes toward creating and sharing knowledge is the way that can be used as effectively in the organizations (Huffman et al., 2005). On the other hand Gupta et al has defined the organization management as an approach helping the organization in order to find, choose, distribute and transfer information and the specialty needed for activities such as problem solving, dynamic learning, practical planning decision making (Gupta et al., 2000).

Baron has considered the knowledge management as a systematic and a seamless approach to know, use and share the needed experiences and specialties, whether written or unwritten, in the organization. In Simon's viewpoint knowledge management is the wise planning of approaches, tools, structure, etc. intending to increase, reconstruction sharing or improvement of the knowledge use appeared in each of the three elements intellectual capital which are structural, humanistic and societal. In Mayer's way of thinking, knowledge management is a strategy to create access and support the vital resource of the knowledge. Knowledge management is the approach to manage the intellectual capital of the organization. knowledge management has been introduced as the approach to create, assess, open, distribute and apply the knowledge (Hassan zadeh, 2007).

Here it is necessary to mention the basic factors of substructure in knowledge management briefly. Referring different essays different factors can be named as substructures of knowledge management. Previous research confirms that efficient knowledge management is in need of a combination of organizational elements including information technology, human resource, culture and organizational structures.

Stancowski and Baldanz (2001) have introduced the organizational culture, organizational structure, information technology, leading and learning as the success factors of knowledge management plans. Mc Elroy (2000) have categorized the effective factors on knowledge management in three groups of management, environmental and resource factors. Also the successful performance of knowledge management is in debt of five factors which include leading, organizational culture, organizational structure, the roles and the responsibilities. But among the implemented factors the factors organizational culture, organizational learning, information technology and human resource can play a fundamental role in performing the knowledge successfully, mentioned as following: Of the new concepts in

organization which has an expanded research and application domain and also has a great impact on employees' productivity is the managers' efficiency. The efficiencies have different advantages for organizations and managers in different levels and also the organizations for variety of reasons such as: transferring valuable attitudes and organizational culture, effective operation for all employees, emphasizing the individuals' capacities (instead of their jobs) in order to achieve the competitive benefit, to strengthen team and mutual behavior use the efficiencies. The efficiency was first introduced by professor McClelland in 1970s as a predictor for employees' success. In this sense he suggested the efficiency as selection qualification, then in 1982 with the help of his colleagues presented his first definition about a successful manager in the book *manager efficiency* (the same reference) which was as follows: "The thematic characteristic of a person (motivation, traits, skill, social role, total knowledge) to use for doing his duty" the approach efficiency has been implemented and quickly used in the literature of human resource management since 1990s (McClelland, 1973).

According to Spenser (1993) the efficiency is the fundamental criterion of a person which on the whole has relation with effective or superior operation in a job or situation. In Boyatzis (1995) point of view the efficiency emphasizes the basic characteristics of a person. Such criteria can be the motivation, behavior, skill, or imagination of an individual or a collection of knowledge used by the person in doing jobs and activities. The first approach seen in Spenser (1993) is called the character-based and the latter is called manner-based. In other words in the first approach the efficiency equals to basic characteristics and in the latter is a series of behaviors. Dilek & Clapp-Smith (2014) investigated concept of cultural psychological capital, its impact on motivational cultural intelligence (CQ), the influence of motivational cultural intelligence on metacognitive awareness, and the moderating role of perspective taking on the relationship between motivational cultural intelligence and metacognition. They founded that cultural psychological capital has a positive relationship with motivational cultural intelligence, which in turn relates to metacognitive awareness, and perspective taking does not moderate the relationship between motivational cultural intelligence and metacognition.

Zhang et al. (2015) investigated the relationship among emotional intelligence (EI), conflict management styles (CMSs) and innovation performance, and test the mediating effects of various types of CMSs. Innovation is playing a more and more critical role in the survival and development of companies. Results indicate that EI is positively and significantly associated with integrating, compromising and dominating styles, as well as innovation performance in the construction industry. In addition, the integrating style has a significantly positive relationship with innovation performance. This research also confirms the mediating effect of integrating style on the relationship between EI and innovation performance.

Wiles (2003) have reviewed this contrast as the mutuality of the traditional overview of evaluating the person's character and the newer overview of the job position pattern (Khorshidi, 2009). According to above mentioned, what forms our objective in this research is to answer the question "what is the relation between the managers' efficiency with the knowledge management and the cultural intelligence (the case study: the Directorate General of Economic and Financial Affairs of Ardabil)?"

## **2. Theoretical foundations background research**

Of the interesting models presented for management efficiency is the model that has categorized the efficiencies as hierarchical. He classifies the efficiencies in seven levels and sets the lower level step as the prerequisite for the higher level ones.

These seven steps are as follows: 1. Organizational, 2. Group, 3. Inter-personal, 4. Communications, 5. Effectiveness, 6. Career, 7. Reasoning. Sanchez (2005) has summarized the efficiency needed for managers in seven steps: Leading, Training, human resource, supervisory, plan monitoring, reporting the national development proceedings and social participation skills. Chen et al. (2002) also listed the efficiency of managers as follows: authority and effectiveness, social responsibility, the ability to research, the tendency towards success, decision making abilities, interpersonal skills, innovation, confidence, the human resource management ability.

Alavi, M., Leidner (2001) has listed the efficiency of management in 9 categories as follows: the progress and development of employees, communications, problem solving, change management, technical and duty skills, operation (duty) management, and interpersonal awareness, to make the ideas seamless. The efficiency management is an important research subject concerning knowledge management and an efficiency management system is mostly mixed with learning management systems. Since efficiency management determines the key knowledge needed for an employee or organization to reach its objectives can have an important share in organizational and individual level. The efficiency and skill management is strongly dependent on the attempt made by an organization to make a complex in order to capacitate the job forces to increase the competitive profit, innovation and effectiveness. Moreover, the

efficiency management is directly related to the organization's efforts to develop the internal knowledge and set knowledge management operation which is compatible with the institute's operation. The efficiency management has recently been turned into a research field of study attracting the organization's efforts toward the development in training employees, knowledge sharing, and the e-learning attempts of the institute and also applying cognitive technologies such as ontology (Choi, 2000).

Knowledge management brings different meanings into a person's mind. But in the field of marketing is considered as a common, scientific definition. It is not easy to accurately manage the knowledge. Knowledge management is not a technology, though to improve its ability the technology is also needed. Knowledge management is not an instruction or a guideline, though operational guidelines are necessary in the way for an organization to succeed. Knowledge management is no the market guideline, although the market guidelines must be accompanied by knowledge management principles. Knowledge management is an inter-field subject and derives from the following majors:

- Religion and Philosophy to realize the role and the nature of the knowledge.
- Psychology to realize the role of knowledge in organizational behavior
- Economy and social science to realize the social role
- The enterprise theory to understand and organize that (Wing, 2010)

Knowledge management is to take use of intelligence and wisdom to increase the replication and innovation, knowledge management is a system to collect, adjust and publicize the knowledge in all its forms in an organization (Pablos, 2002). Knowledge management lets us know to learn from others and share our information with others and train each other not repeating the things again and again. Knowledge management is the process to make value for the intangible property of an organization. Intangible property which is also called spiritual property includes human resource, structural property and the customers or relations.

The human resource is concerned with the brain and knowledge power of the employees working in an organization. Knowledge management encourages the adjustments and innovations. Knowledge management is accepted on the whole. The main story of the knowledge management is that we grow via changing our information and the way to achieve it.

As Davenport et al. (1998) have noted, the knowledge which is not emerged will stay in the mind. Knowledge management has always been a complicated subject and it will, in connection with a number of inferior subjects being complex equally on their own. Knowledge management in the first step is to recognize the knowledge. After recognizing the knowledge (whether being subjective which is formed in the mind or objective being simply coded), the knowledge can be shared with others. Afterwards, the individuals will apply this shared knowledge and characterize it using their ideas. As a result a new knowledge may appear needing to be recognized and the cycle will repeat again.

Borjigen (2015) revealed the underlying principles of knowledge processing in a new era of mass collaboration and provide an integrated guideline for organizational knowledge management (KM) based on identifying the gaps between the existing KM theories and emerging knowledge initiatives such as Web 2.0, Pro-Am, Crowdsourcing, as well as Open Innovation. They showed proposes the novel KM paradigm called MCKM and also provides its main principles and the interaction model. First, it identifies the gaps between emerging practices and existing KM theories. Second, it embraces the long tails into the scope of organizational KM and extends the scope of prevailing KM studies. Third, it falls back on Pro-Ams to save the costs of and to reduce the risk to organizational KM as well. Fourth, it highlights the advantages of opening organizational internal knowledge and transforms the core beliefs in conventional KM. Finally, it classifies organizational knowledge into two types, domain knowledge and non-domain knowledge, and provides some managing policies, respectively.

**Cultural intelligence:** the intelligence in the real world is the intelligent focusing on specific conceptual aspects such has social intelligence, emotional intelligence and practical intelligence. The emotional intelligence considers people as being familiar with their own culture; hence, uses cultural method to interact with people. The cultural is demonstrated where the cultural intelligence cannot. Cultural intelligence confirms the scientific facts and focuses inter-cultural terms (Cavanaugh & Gooderham, 2007). The concept of cultural intelligence was first established by Early and Ang. They have defined the cultural intelligence as the ability to learn new patterns in cultural interactions and providing accurate responses concerning these patterns. (Earley & Ang 2003) they have believed that facing the new cultural situations the individuals, based on the existing information, codify a shared cognitive framework even if this framework has no sufficient perception around local norms and behaviors. To codify such a framework is only by the ones who have high cultural intelligence. Concerning other definition the cultural intelligence is an individual capability to perceive, interrupt and influential proceedings in various cultural situations and adapts the intelligent

related concepts finding intelligence more as a cognitive ability. (Peterson, 2004). The cultural intelligence is to understand both the appearance and inside the people in terms of practicality and mentality. Also it gives us the framework through which we can realize the differences and invest on them rather than tolerating or ignoring them. The person with high cultural intelligence has the ability to learn in new cultural atmosphere and enjoys facing new cultures (Deng & Gibson, 2008:184) . According to multiple dimensions of intelligence in Earley and Ang (2003) viewpoint the cultural intelligence include strategy, knowledge, behavior and motivation relating to different cultural situations. Cultural intelligence strategy: includes codifying strategies before intercultural collision, reviewing the hypothesis at the time of collision and adjusting or altering the mental plans in case the achieved results are in conflict with the expected results. This aspect of will improves the active thinking about different cultural situations and prevents the inflexible hypothesis and limited cultural thinking and leads the people toward recreating the strategies. De Angelis (2016) demonstrated that the integration of intelligences plays a great role in changing the organizational and national culture and, in consequence, in changing governmental intelligence (GI). They investigated the impact of national culture (NC) and knowledge management (KM) on GI. They founded the high correlation between organizational/national cultures on GI raises the discussion of these relationships in the academic community. The impact of organizational/national culture on GI is much higher in Brazil than in Germany. In opposition to Germany, in Brazil, the GI is more influenced by culture than by knowledge. This is related to the fact that German culture, in opposition to Brazil, is future- and performance-orientated, getting information from facts, books and statistics, instead of being people-oriented, getting the first-hand (oral) information. The major practical implication is to demonstrate the importance of integration of intelligences to improve GI. Gonçalves et al. (2016) evaluated the extent to which variables such as cultural intelligence and self-monitoring can positively influence the ability to solve interpersonal conflicts more effectively. They showed that cultural intelligence presents itself as a reasonable predictor of conflict management styles, whereas self-monitoring appeared as a dispositional and controversial measure in relation to those styles. Self-monitoring exhibited itself as an important predictor of conflict management, but on the other hand, it had an influence on the choice of the dominating style in conflict situations. O'Sullivan (2017) described how religious symbols might impede employees' motivational cultural intelligence (CQ) in some international contexts, and how multinational managers might employ this knowledge to respond in a manner that mitigates risks to knowledge sharing. It is conjectured that the salience of religious-based value conflict, learned both vicariously and through direct experiences, will adversely impact motivational CQ, and that the introduction of religious symbols may exacerbate this relationship. A framework of possible interventions is offered, and each intervention approach is evaluated in terms of how it may mitigate or exacerbate the risks raised by the model.

Therefore they tend to experience successful intercultural relations (Imai & Gelfand, 2007). Therefore, the hypothesis of the research is as follows:

1. There is relation between the factors the employees' efficiency and the knowledge management of the employees working in Social Security Organization.
2. There is relation between the factors the employees' efficiency and the cultural intelligence of the employees working in Social Security Organization.

### **3. Research Method**

The present study is functional in terms of objective and the method is descriptive and survey. This has asked the others' ideas and viewpoints concerning a specific subject and has analyzed them. About the nature and the method used, the present research is of correlation-descriptive research. The population applied in this research includes all employees working in Social Security Organization of Ardabil consisting of 400. The method used for sampling is simple random sampling. To collect the information in the first step of the research the library method has been used. To determine the sample size Morgan table was used in which the sample population included 196. For sampling also simple random sampling has been applied. Data collection method: To collect the information in the first step of the research the library method has been used and in the second step field method and the questionnaire was used as the tool. Data analysis: In this research the data has been collected through standard questionnaires, then, through Pearson testing and multi variable regression has been used to analyze the hypothesis. to determine the reliability of the questionnaire the Chronbach's Alfa was applied.

#### 4. The results of the study hypothesis test

Hypothesis1. There is relation between the factors, employees’ efficiency and the knowledge management between the clerks working in Social Security Organization.

The results are in table1.

**Table 1:** Study hypothesis test

Knowledge Management	Statistic	variable
0.669	Pearson correlation coefficient	Human skills
0.000	significance	
0.420	Pearson correlation coefficient	Technical skills
0.001	significance	
0.349	Pearson correlation coefficient	Cognitive skills
0.000	significance	
0.460	Pearson correlation coefficient	Recognition skills
0.000	significance	
0.329	Pearson correlation coefficient	Communication skills
0.000	significance	
0.256	Pearson correlation coefficient	Decision-making skills
0.000	significance	

Based on the results from table1 since the significance for confidence level 0.99 is lower than 1, it can be said that the hypothesis1 is confirmed and there is relation between the factors, employees’ efficiency (human, technical, cognitive, recognition, communication and decision-making skills) and the knowledge management between the clerks working in Social Security Organization.

Hypothesis2. There is relation between the two factors, employees’ efficiency and the cultural intelligence between the clerks working in Social Security Organization.

The results are shown in table2.

**Table 2:** Study hypothesis test

Cultural intelligence	Statistic	variable
0.344	Pearson correlation coefficient	Human skills
0.000	significance	
0.669	Pearson correlation coefficient	Technical skills
0.000	significance	
0.247	Pearson correlation coefficient	Cognitive skills

0.000	significance	
0.748	Pearson correlation coefficient	Recognition skills
0.000	significance	
0.217	Pearson correlation coefficient	Communication skills
0.000	significance	
0.675	Pearson correlation coefficient	Decision-making skills
0.000	significance	

Based on the results from table2 since the significance for confidence level 0.99 is lower than 1, it can be said that the hypothesis1 is confirmed and there is relation between the factors, employees' efficiency (human, technical, cognitive, recognition, communication and decision-making skills) and the cultural intelligence between the clerks working in Social Security Organization.

**Table 3:** Regression analysis of the different aspect of employee's efficiency with knowledge management

Independent variables	Non-standardized coefficient	Standardized coefficient	T value	significance
	B	Beta	T	
Fixed value	5.297		13.214	.000
Human skills	.928	.288	2.816	.005
Technical skills	.848	.318	2.977	.000
Cognitive skills	.474	.227	1.656	.049
Recognition skills	.347	.506	1.140	.032
Communication skills	.234	.451	2.442	.000
Decision-making skills	.247	.260	1.830	.004

According to table 3. It can be said that according to Beta coefficient the most prediction ability is for Recognition skills with the Beta coefficient of 0.50 and the communication skills 0.45, technical skills 0.35, human skills 0.28, Decision-making skills 0.28 and Cognitive skills 0.22 predict and determine the dependent variable (knowledge management).

**Table 4:** Regression analysis of the different aspect of employee's efficiency with cultural intelligence

Independent variables	Non-standardized coefficient	Standardized coefficient	T value	significance
	B	Beta	T	
Fixed value	45.178		4.072	.000
Human skills	1.074	.338	3.298	.006
Technical skills	1.317	.456	3.148	.000
Cognitive skills	1.180	.401	2.472	.000
Recognition skills	1.898	.612	1.860	.000
Communication skills	1.572	.714	1.238	.000
Decision-making skills	1.249	.373	2.828	.001

According to table 4. It can be said that according to Beta coefficient the most prediction ability is for Communication skills with the Beta coefficient of 0.71 and the Recognition skills 0.61, technical skills 0.45, Cognitive skills 0.40, Decision-making skills 0.37 and Human skills 0.33 predict and determine the dependent variable (cultural intelligence).

## 5. Conclusion

The result of the hypothesis1, there is relation between the factors, employees' efficiency and the knowledge management between the clerks working in Social Security Organization, showed that the significance for confidence level 0.99 is lower than 0.01; therefore, the hypothesis1 is confirmed and there is relation between the factors, employees' efficiency (human, technical, cognitive, recognition, communication and decision-making skills) and the knowledge management between the clerks working in Social Security Organization. The results of hypothesis2, there is relation between the two factors, employees' efficiency and the cultural intelligence between the clerks working in Social Security Organization, showed that there is a significant relation between the factors, employees' efficiency (human, technical, cognitive, recognition, communication and decision-making skills) and the cultural intelligence between the clerks working in Social Security Organization. And based on the results from multi-variable regression, the most prediction ability is for Recognition skills with the Beta coefficient of 0.50 and the communication skills 0.45, technical skills 0.35, human skills 0.28, Decision-making skills 0.28 and Cognitive skills 0.22 predict and determine the dependent variable (knowledge management), respectively and according to Beta coefficient the most prediction ability is for Communication skills with the Beta coefficient of 0.71 and the Recognition skills 0.61, technical skills 0.45, Cognitive skills 0.40, Decision-making skills 0.37 and Human skills 0.33 predict and determine the dependent variable (cultural intelligence).

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