Predicting social capital based on cultural intelligence of Farhangiān University student teachers

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Abstract

Social capital is a set of social interaction assets such as partnerships that enable student-teachers to work together in groups to improve teaching and learning. Also, cultural intelligence refers to an individual's ability to function and manage effectively in various cultural contexts. Despite the cultural diversity of Farhangiān University student-teachers and the importance of their social interactions in their learning and their future students' learning, studying the relationship between social capital and their cultural intelligence was necessary. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to predict social capital based on cultural intelligence among student teachers of Farhangiān University (Isfahān Branch). The research method was descriptive-correlational. The research population included all student-teachers in the last two years of primary school education at the Farhangiān University of Isfahān (۳۷۹ student-teachers) in the academic year of ۲۰۱۹-۲۰۲۰. The research sample consisted of ۱۸۱ student-teachers who were selected based on Krejcie and Morgan's table of sample size, using the stratified random sampling method. The research instrument consisted of Early and Ang (۲۰۰۳) Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire and the Nahapit and Gushal (۱۹۹۸) Social Capital Questionnaire. The reliability of the cultural intelligence questionnaire in the cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient as ۰.۷۶, ۰.۷۱, and ۰.۷۴, respectively. The reliability of the social capital questionnaire for the cognitive, structural, and relational dimensions was computed as ۰.۶۸, ۰.۶۶, and ۰.۶۹, respectively. The validity of the questionnaires was confirmed using the opinion of experts. Data was analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression test. The results showed that there is a positive and significant correlation among the structural and cognitive components of social capital and the motivational and behavioral dimension of cultural intelligence. Findings also showed that the behavioral dimension of cultural intelligence could predict the social capital.

Key words: Student-teacher, Social Capital, Cultural Intelligence, Farhangiān University, Descriptive-Correlational Research

Introduction

Today, the quality of teachers is the main focus of educational research. Some research has focused on teachers' social capital and found that effective schools are defined by a trustworthy environment in which teachers constantly collaborate and trust each other in the educational counseling. A vital aspect of the factors that affect the quality of teachers is their social capital. Teachers' social capital is a set of social interaction assets such as partnerships that enable teachers to work together in groups to improve teaching and learning. This improves the

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education and success of students at school. The existence of positive norms of trust and care that shape the teachers' relationships can lead to the constructive acceptance of criticism and effective group decision-making. Research shows that improving the social capital leads in promoting the teacher learning, increasing the teacher's motivation and maintenance, and these factors help to improve teacher's teaching (Schaaf, ٢٠١٧).

One of the constructs that is related to the ability of individuals to do effective work in different cultural situations is cultural intelligence. This construct has been first defined by Earley and Ang (٢٠٠٣)to describe the ability to learn new patterns in the cultural interactions. Cultural intelligence which is related to the emotional intelligence, refers to an individual's ability to function and manage effectively in the diverse cultural contexts. It allows the individuals to have a proper understanding when facing the different cultures, to behave appropriately, and in this way, to lead in reducing the communication barriers and improving the social interactions and interpersonal understanding. Lack of attention to the cultural diversity can be a potential source of conflict and make it difficult for people to interact and communicate (Deng & Gibson, ٢٠٠٨). Unlike the other aspects of personality, cultural intelligence can be nurtured in individuals (Early & Mosakowski, ٢٠٠٤).

Based on the theoretical foundations, cultural intelligence has been defined with three dimensions: cognitive, motivational and behavioral. The cognitive dimension refers to an individual's understanding of cultural similarities and differences, and reflects a person's general knowledge and mental and cognitive maps of the other cultures. This dimension of cultural intelligence includes knowledge of general culture and specific cultural knowledge. Therefore, people with high cultural intelligence also have higher knowledge on the different cultures. Motivational dimension is the source of motivation that gives energy and effort to perform effectively in situations that have the cultural diversity (Joo-seng, ٢٠٠٤). In other words, people with this dimension of cultural intelligence have intrinsic and intrinsic motivations for the intercultural situations.

The behavioral dimension includes the individual's ability to adapt to verbal and nonverbal behaviors that are appropriate for dealing with different cultures (Ang et al, ٢٠٠٧). People who have this dimension of cultural intelligence show more flexibility in intercultural interactions and interact appropriately with people from different fields. Research has shown that openness is one of the personality traits that has a significant relationship with all aspects of cultural intelligence (Ang et al, ٢٠٠٦). Cultural intelligence is also a capability that connects different individuals and groups in an organization, and this leads to the interaction and communication of employees with each other in the organization's network and transfer of their knowledge and experience, and ultimately increasing the social capital (Mohsenzadeh et al.,٢٠١٧).

Another construct that plays a very important role in communication and social interaction and interacts with cultural intelligence is the social capital (Mousavi chelak et al., ٢٠١٥; Fakhrerad, ٢٠١٨). In the ١٩٨٠s, James Coleman devoted an important chapter of his book, "fundamentals of social theory", to the discussion of social capital, and throughout the book he explained its elements and components. Coleman defined social capital through its function. In his view, "social capital is a socio-structural resource that is the property and capital of individuals. This asset is not a single object, but features that exist in the social construct and make it easier for individuals to engage in social action (Coleman, ١٩٨٨). Social capital, then, is a set of shared values that allow individuals to work together in a group to achieve a common goal, and it refers to communication and the exchange of information and mutual cooperation between individuals to solve the problems. Social capital includes respecting differences and the ability to accept and adapt to change. Societies which are based on the mutual trust are rich in social capital. They could learn from the collective experiences and can both identify opportunities and coordinate the resources needed to take advantage of them (Ring et al, ٢٠١٠). Existence of the social capital along with the human and intellectual capital in any organization,

especially educational organizations, is one of the basic necessities for the growth and development of that organization. In fact, social capital is one of the most tangible assets of any organization.

Nahapit & Gushal (١٩٩٨) refer to the three dimensions for the social capital: the communication dimension, which shows the nature of the relationships in a set and focuses on the nature of interpersonal communication and its dimensions. The most important aspects of this dimension are: trust, norms, requirements and expectations, and identity. The cognitive dimension refers to the resources that provide the manifestations, interpretations, and systems of common meanings among groups, and it shows the degree of commonality, common codes, and common narratives of individuals within a social network. The structural dimension pays attention to the general pattern of relationships between people; that is, whether people are connected to each other within a collection such as an organization, University, etc., and what is the quality of these connections. Accordingly, the social capital can be considered as an important asset in the organization and cultural intelligence can be considered as a factor in recognizing the cultural differences and complexities of organizations. According to the research, social capital and cultural intelligence in academic settings, which are very diverse in terms of ethnic and religious context, increases the students' adjustment and leads to improving their academic performance (Ghaffari and Khani, ٢٠١٣). Also, cultural intelligence is an important predictor of performance in multicultural contexts (Sahin & Gürbüz, ٢٠١٤) and the existence of high social capital can enrich the accumulated knowledge resulting from the intercultural education (Susanto & Rostiani, ٢٠١٢).

Education systems face various problems over time, including unpredictable crises such as epidemics and pandemics, various environmental changes, and new and up-to-date technologies, and so on. Therefore, the transfer of knowledge to gain competencies commensurate with these changes and developments in an educational organization is an inevitable necessity and an advantage, and social capital can be used to transfer knowledge in the multicultural environments. In this regard, the importance of teachers' cultural intelligence in three dimensions of cognitive, motivational and behavioral can be justified in such a way that teachers must have cultural intelligence of cognitive type or cultural knowledge to understand the cultural values, norms and systems of their students. Also, they should have cultural intelligence in a motivational or inclined dimension and strive to succeed in their intercultural interaction with students. Cultural intelligence in the behavioral dimension or appropriate action capacity includes not imposing their cultural behaviors and norms on their students.

Various researches have been done on the cultural intelligence and related social variables. The results of research that has been done so far indicate that the promotion of students' cultural and social capital has a significant role in promoting the development-oriented values (Sahami, ٢٠١٦). Also, cultural intelligence has a significant effect on the effectiveness of student-teachers' teaching (Droudy and Droudy, ٢٠١٧) and among the components of cultural intelligence, behavioral and motivational factors have the highest correlation with teachers' empowerment (Hosseinzadeh and Safari, ٢٠١٤). The results of Parvinzadeh Leylan et al. (١٤٠٠) show that the social capital and cultural intelligence are involved in the identity of students and as a result it is necessary to provide training on the social capital and cultural intelligence.

The results of Fazlolahi Ghomshi and Afrasiabi (١٣٩٧) also indicate that: ١. There is a relationship between cultural intelligence and social capital with the responsibility of high school teachers. ٢. There is a relationship among the cognitive, structural and relation dimensions of social capital with teachers 'responsibility, and ٣. There is a relationship between the metacognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral dimensions of cultural intelligence

with teachers' responsibility. Finally, cultural intelligence and social capital are good predictors of teachers' social responsibility.

The results of Mousavi Chelek et al. (٢٠١٥) indicate that social capital has a positive and significant relationship with all elements of cultural intelligence. However, the research of Heidari and Mohammadjani (٢٠١٥) on "the relationship among the cultural intelligence with the social capital and intellectual capital of faculty members" shows that there is no significant relationship between social capital and cultural intelligence. Ghasemi and Gholami (٢٠١٥), in their study on "the effect of cultural intelligence on the promotion of social capital among the students" concluded that only the motivational and metacognitive dimensions of the cultural intelligence construct explain and predict the social capital.

The results of Yar Mohammadzadeh and Dadashzadeh (٢٠١٥) showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between cultural intelligence and social capital with job adjustment. Also, the analysis of the mediating role of social capital showed that cultural intelligence through social capital has an indirect role in explaining the job adjustment and by adding the social capital to the forecasting model, due to the mediating role of the social capital, the power of predicting job adjustment based on the cultural intelligence increases.

Afshar (٢٠١٤)'s study aimed at sociological analysis of the relationship between the social capital and cultural intelligence among the students of Tabriz University. The results of this study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the social capital and all components of cultural intelligence and the social capital predicts ٢٣٪ of the cultural intelligence changes. The study of Brikhojasteh and Abbaszadeh (٢٠١٢) on the students of Islamic Āzād University (Tabriz Branch) also showed that the social capital has a negative and inverse relationship with the metacognitive, motivational and behavioral dimensions of cultural intelligence and it has a positive and direct relationship with the cognitive dimension of cultural intelligence.

The study of Thompson (٢٠١٨) suggests that the emotional and cultural intelligence play an important role in empowering students for social integration. For students, the social integration with a culture which is different from their own is very challenging and therefore it requires emotional and cultural intelligence, because it affects the way people think and their ability to adapt. A person with a high level of emotion and cultural intelligence is more efficient in dealing with cultural diversity and could better adapt to changes.

The research of Imai & Gelfand (٢٠١٠) shows that the cultural intelligence is recognized as a major factor in the effectiveness of intercultural negotiation and the exploratory analysis of this study also shows that the motivational dimension of cultural intelligence has a stronger predictive power than the other dimensions. Susanto & Rostiani (٢٠١٢) also showed in a study that social capital can improve the relationship between intercultural education and success in the adjustment process.

Since social capital contains valuable resources, such as honesty, purity, empathy, trust, solidarity, sacrifice and the like, and teachers with these components can create, nurture and transmit them to their students (Yarmohammadzadeh Dadashzadeh, ٢٠١٥), the results of this research can be relevant and considered for educational and curriculum planners of Farhangiān University and the related professors in terms of the content production as well as contextualizing the cultural programs to increase and promote the social capital and cultural intelligence of student-teachers. Considering that conducting the present study in the field of teacher training can provide a deeper insight into the conditions that affect communication and also due to the high cultural diversity among Farhangiān University students, the present study has been seeking to examine the amount of social capital prediction, based on the cultural intelligence in student-teachers of Farhangiān University and answering these questions:

١. Is there a relationship between the dimensions of social capital and the dimensions of cultural intelligence among Farhangiān University primary education student-teachers?

٢. Could cultural intelligence predict the social capital?

Research methodology
The present study was applied in terms of purpose and in terms of the method of descriptive data collection was correlational. The research population included ٣٧٩ primary school student-teachers of Farhangiān University (Isfahan University) in the academic year of ٢٠١٩-٢٠٢٠. Because primary school teachers spend more time together in the same place than the other teachers, due to the work schedule, and gain a lot of knowledge about each other during the year, they can use their cultural intelligence to improve communication among the colleagues as well as students and the other school parents to provide a suitable context for strengthening the dimensions of the social capital among them. Table ١ shows the characteristics of the research population by the place of education and gender, respectively.

Table ١. the characteristics of the research population in terms of the place of education and gender, respectively

place of education	females	place of education	males
Fateme Zahra Campus (Isfahan)	٤٦	Shahid Bāhonar Campuse (Isfahan)	٨٥
Fateme Zahra Campus (Isfahan)	٩١	Shahid Āyat Center (Najafābād)	٢٤
Imam Khomejni Center (Kāshān)	٢٣	Shahid Bāhonar Campuse (Isfahan)	١١٠
Total	١٦٠	**Total**	٢١٩

Based on the standard table of Krejcie and Morgan, the sample size was estimated to be ١٨١ people who were selected by stratified random sampling method appropriate to the size of the research population. A standard questionnaire was used to collect data. Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire (Early & Ang (٢٠٠٣) including cognitive (٦ items), motivational (٥ items), and behavioral (٥ items) dimensions in a ٧-point Likert scale from the highest agreement (score ٧) to lowest agreement (score ١) was designed. The reliability of this questionnaire was calculated by Cronbach's alpha method for the cognitive, motivational and behavioral dimensions as ٠٫٧٦, ٠٫٧١ and ٠٫٧٤, respectively.

The other research tool was the Nahapit & Gushal (١٩٩٨) Social Capital Questionnaire, which contained three dimensions: cognitive (٣ items), structural (٣ items), and relational (٧ items) based on a ٥-point Likert scale from strongly agree (score ٥) to strongly disagree (score ١). The reliability of the Social Capital Questionnaire in the present study was obtained by Cronbach's alpha method for cognitive, structural and relational dimensions equal to ٠٫٦٨, ٠٫٦٦ and ٠٫٦٩, respectively. Also, the face and content validity of the questionnaires were approved by experts (two University professors of educational sciences and sociology) and after the necessary corrections, they were distributed among the research sample.

Also, conducting factor analysis on the Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire showed that the components of this questionnaire, in total, explain ٧٥٫٨٠٤٪ of the total variance. This finding can be considered as one evidence on the validity of the questionnaire. Conducting the factor analysis on the social capital questionnaire also showed that the factors of this questionnaire, in total, explain ٦٨٫١٢٨٪ of the total variance, which can be considered as one evidence on the validity of the above-mentioned questionnaire.

Data analysis has been done by Pearson correlation coefficient at the significance level of ٠٫٠٥ and stepwise multiple regression test (to predict social capital components using three

dimensions of cultural intelligence, i.e., motivational, behavioral and cognitive) using SPSS ٢٦ software.

Findings

In this section, first the descriptive findings and then findings based on the inferential statistics are presented. In relation to the status of cultural intelligence variable, the score of cultural intelligence variable has been obtained by calculating the sum of scores of all items of the Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire (Early & Ang, ٢٠٠٣).

Table ٢- Mean and standard deviation of the cultural intelligence variable's sub-scales		
cultural intelligence questionnaire's sub-scales	mean	standard deviation
cognitive	٣,٨١	٠,۴٣
motivational	٣,٨٠	٠,۴٢
behavioural	٣,۶٧	٠,٣٨

Table ٢ shows the descriptive characteristics of the mean and standard deviation of the scores of the subscales of the Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire. As it can be seen, the various components of the cultural intelligence questionnaire of the students under study are higher than the mean ٣. The highest mean is related to the cognitive component with the mean ٣,٨١, followed by the motivational component with the mean ٣,٨٠ and the behavioral component with the lowest mean ٣,۶٧. Regarding the status of the social capital variable, the score of this variable has been obtained by calculating the sum of the scores of all the items of the social capital questionnaire (Nahapit & Gushal, ١٩٩٨). The statistical characteristics of the social capital variable have been shown in table ٣.

Table ٢- Mean and standard deviation of the social capital variable's sub-scales		
social capital questionnaire's sub-scales	mean	standard deviation
cognitive	٣.۵٨	٠.۵٢
structural	۴.١٠	٠.٠۵
relational	٣.٩٣	٠,٣٢

Table ٣ presents the descriptive characteristics of the mean and standard deviation of the student-teachers' scores on the subscales of the Social Capital Questionnaire. As it can be seen, the highest mean (۴,١٠) belongs to the structural component of social capital and the lowest mean belongs to the cognitive component (mean= ٣,۵٨).

In the second stage, findings based on the inferential statistics and investigating the research questions are presented: Question ١: Is there any relationship between the components of social capital and the components of cultural intelligence among the primary education student-teachers of Farhangiān University?

Table ۴- the results of Pearson correlation test between the components of social capital and cultural intelligence

Social capital dimensions		cognitive	motivational	behavioural
relational	Pearson correlation	۰٫۰۹۶	۰٫۰۵۸	۰٫۱۰۴
	Significance level	۰٫۲۰۰	۰٫۴۴۰	۰٫۱۶۲
cognitive	Pearson correlation	-۰٫۰۶۹	۰٫۲۴۴**	۰٫۱۷۴*
	Significance level	۰٫۳۵۸	۰٫۰۰۱	۰٫۰۱۹
structural	Pearson correlation	۰٫۰۰۳	۰٫۲۲۳**	۰٫۲۶۴**
	Significance level	۰٫۹۷۲	۰٫۰۰۳	۰٫۰۰۰
The number of samples		۱۸۱	۱۸۱	۱۸۱
*Significance level at ۰٫۰۵ level			****Significance level at ۰٫۰۱ level**	

Based on the results in Table ٤, the relational dimension has no significant relationship with any of the dimensions of cultural intelligence ($\alpha = ۰٫۰۵$). Cognitive dimension has a positive correlation with the motivational dimension ($\alpha = ۰٫۰۱$, $r = ۰٫۲۴۴$) and positive correlation with the behavioral dimension ($\alpha = ۰٫۰۵$, $r = ۰٫۱۷۴$). Structural dimension also has a significant positive correlation with motivational dimension ($\alpha = ۰٫۰۱$, $r = ۰٫۲۲۳$) and behavioral dimension ($r = ۰٫۲۶۴$).

Question ٢: Could cultural intelligence predict the social capital?

To investigate the second question, considering the normality of the distribution of the criterion variable scores, the regression test was used.

Table ۵- the results of regression for predicting the components of social capital using the three motivational, behavioral and cognitive dimensions of the cultural intelligence					
Dependent variable	**Independent variable**	**F ratio**	**Significance level**	**R coefficient**	**R۲ coefficient**
cognitive	motivational	۸٫۹۱۹	۰٫۰۰۰	۰٫۳۰۲	۰٫۰۹۱
	cognitive				
structural	behavioral	۱۳٫۳۹۰	۰٫۰۰۰	۰٫۲۶۴	۰٫۰۷۰
relational	behavioral	۸٫۴۵۳	۰٫۰۰۴	۰٫۲۱۲	۰٫۰۴۵

Table ۵ shows the results of regression for predicting the components of the social capital using three dimensions of motivational, behavioral and cognitive of the cultural intelligence. Two motivational and cognitive dimensions could explain ۹٫۱٪ (R^2) of the changes in the cognitive dimension of the social capital ($\alpha = ۰٫۰۱$). The behavioral dimension could explain ۷٪ (R^2) of changes in the structural dimension of the social capital ($\alpha = ۰٫۰۱$).

Table ۶ – the results of the regression coefficients for predicting the components in the ۲nd question						
Dependent variable	**Independent variables**	**Regression coefficient**	**Standard error**	**Beta standard coefficient**	**T value**	**Significance level**
cognitive	motivational	۰٫۱۶۱	۰٫۰۳۹	۰٫۳۱۹	۴٫۱۱۲	۰٫۰۰۰

	cognitive	-۰,۱۰۶	۰,۰۴۳	-۰,۱۹۳	-۲,۴۹۱	۰,۰۱۴
structural	behavioral	۰,۱۳	۰,۰۳۷	۰,۲۶۳	۳,۶۵۹	۰,۰۰۰
relational	behavioral	۰,۰۷۵	۰,۰۲۶	۰,۲۱۲	۲,۹۰۷	۰,۰۰۴

Table ٦ presents the regression coefficients of the final model based on the stepwise method. When explaining the cognitive dimension, the motivational dimension has the most significant positive effect (β = ۰,۳۱۹) and the cognitive dimension has the most significant negative effect (β = -۰,۱۹۳). In explaining the structural dimension, the behavioral dimension (β = ۰,۲٦۳) has a significant positive effect and finally, among the three components of the cultural intelligence, in explaining the relational dimension, its behavioral dimension has a positive effect (β = ۰,۲۱۲) on the component of the social capital can significantly explain this component.

Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between social capital and cultural intelligence among the primary education student-teachers of Farhangiān University (Isfahan branch). Findings of the first question of the study indicated that there is a relationship between the components of social capital and the components of cultural intelligence among the primary education student-teachers of Farhangiān University. Among the components of social capital, the structural component with the behavioral dimension of cultural intelligence and the cognitive component with the motivational dimension of cultural intelligence had the most positive and significant correlations, respectively. As stated by Joo-seng (۲۰۰٤), the motivational dimension can be a source of motivation to create energy and effort to function effectively in situations with greater cultural diversity, and to develop better and more effective social relationships.

Also, this motivational dimension can lead to gaining knowledge of cultural elements and more desirable social behaviors and thus increase the social capital and trust. According to Coleman (۱۹۸۸), since the existence of social capital facilitates social actions, any society should work to strengthen the factors affecting important social capital and thus the social participation of citizens. This finding is consistent with the results of research by Mousavi, Chalak et al. (۲۰۱٥) and Afshar (۲۰۱٤), which showed that social capital has a positive and significant relationship with the components of cultural intelligence.

The results of the second question showed that among the three components of cultural intelligence, only two cognitive and motivational variables predict the cognitive dimension of social capital. The behavioral variable of cultural intelligence also predicts the structural dimension of social capital. This finding is consistent with the results of Tabarsa et al. (۲۰۱٤), Mousavi Chelek et al. (۲۰۱٥), Ghasemi and Gholami (۲۰۱٥), Brikhojasteh and Abbaszadeh (۲۰۱۲) and also it is in line with the research of Susanto & Rostiani (۲۰۱۲) which showed the relationship between the components of social capital and cultural intelligence and also, they tried to explain and predict the social capital by the cultural intelligence variable. However, it was in contradiction with the results of Ghasemi and Gholami (۲۰۱٥) in which only the motivational and metacognitive dimensions of the cultural intelligence construct explain and predict the social capital. Based on the results of this research, and considering that primary education student-teachers it can be said that people with high cultural intelligence are able to learn new cultures and by knowing how others behave, they can give appropriate answers to others, thus reducing many communication barriers and creating social capital. And increases

Based on the results of this study and considering that student-teachers of primary education, during their studies and in the very near future at work, spend a lot of time together and interact with each other, through strengthening their cultural intelligence, they could be more successful

in advancing the educational goals. Therefore, it is suggested that considering the important role of the student-teachers' cultural intelligence in playing the role of teacher:

- Courses related to the concept of cultural intelligence and its development should be considered in the curriculum of Farhangiān University

- Also, to promote the cultural intelligence of student-teachers in order to accumulate much social capital as the valuable assets in the educational system, teaching knowledge and multicultural skills in the student-teacher courses of Farhangiān University should be given special attention

- In order to develop the skill of dealing with different cultures and strengthen the cultural intelligence of students, recreational camps and group activities with the participation of students from different ethnicities, be planned and implemented.

- Multicultural intelligence training courses should be held for professors of Farhangiān University to be able to deal with issues related to this issue.

- Cultural intelligence can be considered as one of the criteria for admission of student-teachers in the teaching profession and they should be assessed in interviews by experts from now on.

- This research can be done using qualitative methods with interview techniques to collect the necessary data.

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