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**Enhancing Educational Leadership through Cultural Intelligence: For School Leadership in Thailand by 2025**

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**Abstract**

This academic article synthesizes theories and relevant literature regarding the application of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) in the management of educational institutions in Thailand. It focuses on enhancing the effectiveness of educational leaders in a culturally diverse context by the year 2025. The primary objective of this paper is to analyze the role of CQ in improving communication, fostering collaboration, and managing conflicts within educational environments.

The study employs a literature review and case study methodology, examining educational institutions that have successfully implemented CQ. The findings indicate that leaders with high CQ can effectively enhance collaboration among students from diverse backgrounds and efficiently manage cultural misunderstandings. Furthermore, it was found that designing culturally responsive curricula is crucial for creating an open learning atmosphere and promoting student engagement.

In conclusion, the development of CQ among educational administrators is essential for achieving educational goals in Thailand. Future research should focus on developing training programs to enhance CQ and explore its long-term impacts on educational outcomes, in order to create a sustainable and effective learning environment.

**Keywords**

Cultural Intelligence (CQ),Educational Administration, Cultural Diversity

**1. Introduction**

In the contemporary global landscape, characterized by rapid cultural changes and increasing interconnectedness—driven by factors such as the growing influence of digital communication and migration—the ability to understand and effectively navigate diverse cultural environments has become a critical skill for leaders at all levels. This is especially relevant in the context of education in Thailand, where students come from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Developing Cultural Intelligence (CQ) has thus become essential for educational administrators to effectively manage their institutions and adapt to the evolving needs of culturally diverse communities (Ang & Dyne, 2008).

**1.1 The Importance of Cultural Intelligence (CQ)**

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) refers to an individual's ability to adapt and function effectively in culturally diverse settings (Earley & Ang, 2003). CQ can be broken down into four key components: **Metacognitive CQ** The ability to be aware of and regulate one's thought processes when interacting with different cultures. **Cognitive CQ** Knowledge about norms, practices, and conventions in various cultures. **Motivational CQ** The motivation and interest in engaging with different cultures. **Behavioral CQ** The ability to adjust behavior to fit different cultural contexts (Van Dyne et al., 2012). CQ is not just a theoretical concept but a skill that can be cultivated, and it is essential for managing the complexities of multicultural environments (Livermore, 2011).

In educational settings, school administrators who possess high CQ are better equipped to foster an open environment that encourages the exchange of ideas among students and teachers from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, CQ helps administrators manage conflicts that arise from cultural misunderstandings and supports effective cross-cultural learning (Thomas & Inkson, 2017). Building CQ in educational institutions is particularly significant in Thailand, where cultural diversity has grown due to regional integration within ASEAN and the increasing openness to international education.

**1.2 Objectives of the Article**

The primary objective of this article is to analyze and propose methods for applying Cultural Intelligence (CQ) in managing educational institutions in Thailand. The goal is to foster positive relationships among administrators, teachers, students, and other stakeholders from diverse cultural backgrounds. This article will explore the relationship between the different components of CQ and educational administration, offering practical strategies that align with the current educational environment. Furthermore, case studies and lessons from CQ applications in other countries will be discussed to adapt these practices effectively in the Thai educational context.

The application of CQ in educational management not only helps administrators address challenges arising from cultural differences more effectively but also creates a learning environment that values diversity and encourages collaborative learning within the educational community (Leung et al., 2014).

**2. Concepts and Related Theories**

**2.1 Theory of Cultural Intelligence (CQ)**

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) refers to an individual's ability to adapt and perform effectively in culturally diverse environments (Earley & Ang, 2003). CQ is a comprehensive framework that includes four main components

* **Metacognitive CQ**: The capacity to be consciously aware of cultural dynamics and to regulate one's cognitive processes when interacting with different cultures.
* **Cognitive CQ**: Knowledge about cultural norms, practices, and conventions across various cultures.
* **Motivational CQ**: The motivation and interest to engage and persist in culturally diverse interactions.
* **Behavioral CQ**: The capability to exhibit appropriate verbal and non-verbal actions when interacting in different cultural settings (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008)

These components work in tandem to enhance an individual's overall cross-cultural competence. Metacognitive CQ helps individuals plan, monitor, and adjust their understanding of different cultural contexts. Cognitive CQ provides the necessary cultural knowledge, allowing individuals to grasp social norms and rules across cultures. Motivational CQ drives individuals to engage actively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, while Behavioral CQ ensures the ability to adapt one's behavior to fit culturally diverse situations effectively (Livermore, 2009).

**2.2 Developing Cultural Intelligence in Educational Contexts**

In educational contexts, CQ plays a key role in fostering a collaborative learning environment for students and teachers from various cultural backgrounds. Developing cultural intelligence can be achieved through targeted training that focuses on raising awareness of cultural diversity, improving cross-cultural communication skills, and encouraging motivation to understand different cultures (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014). In Thailand, fostering CQ is particularly important due to the increasing integration of education with the ASEAN community and the influx of international students (Sorasri, 2018).

Educational Management Concepts Modern school management requires diverse competencies to effectively navigate the challenges of rapidly changing environments, including increased cultural diversity in schools. Key competencies include leadership, adaptability, and communication skills, all of which are essential for managing cultural diversity. CQ is therefore a vital tool for school administrators to create a learning atmosphere that promotes understanding and respect for cultural differences (Atikhomsuwan, 2016).

**Roles of School Administrators in Diverse Environments** The role of school administrators in culturally diverse environments goes beyond policy-making and general management. It also requires the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds. Administrators with high CQ are better equipped to leverage their cultural knowledge, understanding, and adaptability to solve problems and build strong cooperative relationships within schools (Thomas & Inkson, 2017).

**Challenges in Educational Management in the Era of Globalization** Globalization has brought significant changes to the educational system in Thailand and around the world. These changes include technological advancements, increased international student mobility, and cultural exchange. Technological advancements, in particular, have transformed educational practices by enabling new forms of digital learning, expanding access to information, and fostering global collaboration among educators and students. School administrators must be equipped with skills to address challenges such as the diversity of students with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and the rising expectations from the global community regarding education management. Administrators who apply CQ in their management practices will be more effective in adapting schools to meet these challenges (Livermore, 2011).

In summary, CQ is not just a theory about cross-cultural interactions; it is a crucial tool for educational management in an era where diversity and global interconnectedness are part of everyday life. Recent research supports this view, emphasizing that CQ significantly influences cross-cultural leadership effectiveness, particularly in cross-border contexts. For instance, Rockstuhl et al. (2011) found that CQ is a stronger predictor of leadership effectiveness in cross-border situations compared to general intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ). Moreover, Deng and Gibson (2008) highlighted that CQ positively impacts the cross-cultural leadership effectiveness of expatriate leaders, demonstrating its practical value in diverse cultural settings.

**3. Application of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) in Educational Administration**

The application of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) in educational administration in Thailand is a key tool for improving the effectiveness of educational management in culturally diverse environments. School administrators need to understand CQ principles to effectively apply them in areas such as communication, relationship building, conflict management, and curriculum development, all aimed at addressing the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008).

**3.1 Cross-Cultural Communication in Educational Institutions**

Communication is a central aspect of educational administration in culturally diverse settings. Effective cross-cultural communication helps build understanding and minimizes issues that may arise from cultural differences. For example, misunderstandings can occur due to different communication styles, such as direct versus indirect ways of expressing opinions, which can lead to conflicts or feelings of exclusion.

***Effective Communication Techniques for Students from Diverse Cultures*** In managing schools with students from different cultural backgrounds, administrators should develop communication skills that can adapt to various cultural contexts. This includes using neutral language and avoiding jargon that might lead to misunderstandings. Communication that emphasizes respect and openness is also crucial for reducing potential conflicts (Earley & Ang, 2003).

***Creating an Open Environment for Expression*** Creating an environment that encourages everyone to express their opinions openly is a key strategy for reducing cultural gaps and fostering participation in the educational community. For example, allowing students to share their cultural experiences during class discussions can help others understand different perspectives and create a more inclusive atmosphere. Establishing spaces where students and teachers can freely and safely exchange ideas helps build trust and strengthens cooperation within the institution (Livermore, 2011).

**3.2 Building Relationships and Collaboration**

Building positive relationships and fostering collaboration in a culturally diverse educational environment are essential for promoting an effective learning atmosphere.

***Creating Diverse Teams and Encouraging Collaboration***Administrators with high CQ can form teams composed of individuals from diverse backgrounds, promoting creative and equitable collaboration. Strategies may include actively recruiting team members with different cultural perspectives, ensuring balanced representation, and facilitating team-building activities that emphasize inclusivity and cultural exchange. Assigning tasks based on each member's skills and experiences, and providing opportunities for cross-cultural experience sharing within the team are also effective techniques (Thomas & Inkson, 2017).

***Supporting and Developing Students from Diverse Backgrounds***Administrators should implement clear policies to support students from diverse backgrounds, both academically and socially. Organizing activities that promote understanding and acceptance of cultural differences is crucial in helping all students feel valued and equally supported (Atikhomsuwan, 2016).

**3.3 Managing Conflict in Culturally Diverse Environments**

Conflict arising from cultural differences is often unavoidable in a diverse environment, but effective conflict management can be achieved through the use of CQ.

***Methods for Managing Conflicts Caused by Cultural Misunderstandings***To manage conflicts, administrators should use cultural intelligence to understand the root causes of issues and select appropriate solutions based on the cultural contexts involved. Emphasizing open communication and creating spaces for constructive discussions are effective methods for reducing tension and resolving conflicts (Livermore, 2009).

***Case Studies on Successful Conflict Management*** Numerous case studies show successful conflict management in schools through the use of CQ. For example, in managing conflicts between students from different countries, administrators with high CQ were able to mediate between teachers and students to find fair and appropriate solutions for all parties involved (Thomas & Inkson, 2017).

**3.4 Developing a Curriculum that Responds to Diversity**

Designing a curriculum that meets the needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds is essential for promoting effective and equitable learning.

***Designing a Culturally Responsive Curriculum*** School administrators with high CQ can design curricula that reflect cultural diversity by integrating culturally relevant content into subjects, allowing students to learn about and understand different cultures. This also includes adapting teaching methods to fit the cultural backgrounds of individual students (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014).

***Learning Activities that Promote Cross-Cultural Understanding*** In addition to curriculum design, organizing learning activities that encourage participation from students of different cultures is another way to promote understanding and respect for diversity. Examples include cultural exchange activities among students of various ethnicities or inviting experts in cultural fields to give lectures and share their experiences, which help students appreciate different cultures and develop empathy for diverse perspectives (Livermore, 2011).

**4. Case Studies**

In a world characterized by complex cultural interconnectedness, Cultural Intelligence (CQ) has been recognized as one of the key factors enabling leaders and administrators to effectively manage cultural diversity. The application of CQ in educational administration can help reduce cultural conflicts, foster cooperation in diverse environments, and enhance the effectiveness of learning and collaboration among students and teachers. The following case studies illustrate the positive impact of implementing CQ in educational institutions.

**4.1 Application of CQ in Thai Educational Institutions**

Example of a Successful Educational Institution UsingCQ In Thailand, an international school in Bangkok has successfully implemented CQ in managing an educational environment with students from diverse nationalities and cultures. The school administrators have fostered a learning atmosphere that respects cultural diversity through activities and training, using CQ as a primary tool for building positive relationships between students and teachers.

***Cultural Exchange Activities*** The school organized an "International Day" event where students showcased their own cultures through performances, food, and traditional arts, promoting an understanding of cultural differences and reducing potential conflicts stemming from misunderstandings.

***CQ Training for Teachers*** The school conducted training sessions for teachers to enhance their ability to communicate with and manage students from various cultural backgrounds. Teachers were able to adapt their teaching methods and build positive relationships with students by utilizing CQ (Atikhomsuwan, 2016).

A study by Trisri (2018) supports the use of CQ in undergraduate education in Thailand, indicating that training and cross-cultural experiences are essential for developing students' CQ. Programs focusing on cross-cultural communication and collaboration were shown to improve students' adaptability in culturally diverse environments.

Impact on Academic Achievement and School Atmosphere. The application of CQ in the international school in Bangkok has resulted in a harmonious learning environment. Students have gained confidence in communication and improved their ability to work collaboratively with peers from different cultural backgrounds. Academic performance has also shown improvement, particularly in areas of communication and teamwork in cross-cultural contexts (Livermore, 2009).

A study at Srinakharinwirot University found that CQ training for students in the ASEAN context helped them better understand and adapt to culturally diverse environments (Sarawut, 2018). Developing cultural intelligence in students is a crucial factor in preparing them for work in multicultural societies.

The positive impact of applying CQ extends to both the school environment and academic performance. Research by Termsap & Chongvisal (2019) at a financial institution in Bangkok confirmed that CQ is significantly correlated with work flexibility and the development of servant leadership. The use of CQ helps administrators manage multicultural teams smoothly and achieve organizational goals.

**4.2 Comparison with International Approaches**

Approaches to Educational Administration Abroad that Emphasize CQIn several countries, CQ is recognized as an essential tool in educational administration. For instance, in Singapore and Malta, the use of CQ to foster understanding and cooperation among students from different ethnic backgrounds has garnered significant attention. In a primary school in Malta, administrators used CQ to develop curricula and activities that promote cross-cultural understanding and reduce conflicts arising from student misunderstandings (Darmanin, 2020).

In Singapore, training teachers in CQ has enabled them to teach and communicate effectively with students from various nationalities. Teachers with high CQ have successfully created a learning environment that fosters cooperation and engagement in the classroom (Zhang, 2021).

**Lessons for Application in the Thai Context** Lessons from international case studies demonstrate that CQ is a powerful tool for enhancing the learning environment and supporting student development in culturally diverse contexts. Thailand can adapt these approaches by providing CQ training to administrators and teachers, developing curricula that emphasize cultural diversity, and promoting activities focused on cross-cultural experiences in schools (Sarawut, 2018).

**5. Recommendations and Future Directions**

In modern society and within educational systems, cultural diversity has become increasingly prevalent, underscoring the necessity for the development of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) among school leaders. CQ is pivotal in enabling administrators to navigate and respond effectively to challenges arising from cultural diversity. Moreover, CQ functions as an instrument for cultivating an inclusive educational environment that fosters engagement among students and educators from diverse cultural backgrounds.

**5.1 Training and Development for Administrators**

***Strategies for Developing CQ Skills for School Administrators*** School administrators must enhance their CQ to lead schools effectively in culturally diverse contexts. The development of CQ skills should begin with structured learning about various cultures through targeted workshops and seminars aimed at deepening cultural understanding. Additionally, administrators must cultivate competencies in cross-cultural communication and collaboration to manage their schools effectively in an increasingly multicultural landscape (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Metacognitive CQ development enables administrators to reflect on and adjust their cognitive processes when interacting with staff or students from different cultural backgrounds. Cognitive CQ enhances administrators' comprehension of distinct cultural frameworks and systems. Motivational CQ is crucial for maintaining commitment when addressing challenges linked to cultural diversity, while behavioral CQ allows administrators to adapt their behaviors appropriately across varying cultural contexts (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008).

***Appropriate Training Programs*** Effective CQ training programs for administrators should encompass both theoretical foundations and practical applications. The learning process should begin with an introduction to core CQ concepts through seminars and workshops designed to build specific skills related to each CQ component. To ensure sustainable development, training programs must incorporate continuous assessment and follow-up mechanisms, such as regular feedback sessions, self-assessment tools, and peer evaluations.

Examples of training methodologies include case study analyses, cultural simulations, and engagement in culturally heterogeneous teams. Such training should prioritize the development of cross-cultural communication and adaptability skills essential for navigating diverse cultural contexts (Livermore, 2009).

**5.2 Promoting a Culture of Diversity in Schools**

***Policies and Approaches to Promote CQ*** Policies aimed at promoting CQ within schools should prioritize the creation of an environment that is conducive to cross-cultural learning. Such an environment can be cultivated by encouraging open communication, fostering curiosity and respect for different cultures, providing safe spaces for intercultural dialogue, and actively engaging students and educators in culturally diverse activities. These policies might include integrating culturally diverse content into the curriculum and organizing initiatives that foster understanding of cultural differences, such as cultural heritage days, student-led presentations on local cultures, and structured discussions on culturally relevant topics (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014).

Furthermore, school administrators should facilitate and support teachers and students in developing and implementing initiatives that advance cultural diversity. This could involve creating clubs or activities that enable collaboration among participants from diverse backgrounds, as well as encouraging school-based research on cultural issues to deepen understanding and promote inclusivity.

***Building a Sustainable Learning Community*** Building a sustainable learning community within culturally diverse schools necessitates the integration of CQ at every level of school management, including policy formulation, curriculum development, teacher professional development, and the facilitation of collaboration between students and educators from different cultural backgrounds. Creating an environment that supports CQ will equip students with the competencies required to thrive in a diverse society (Livermore, 2011).

Establishing a sustainable learning community also requires the adoption of teaching approaches that embrace and value diverse perspectives. Examples include case-based learning, collaborative projects, and discussion-driven activities that encourage students to articulate their cultural viewpoints. These pedagogical methods promote the reciprocal exchange of knowledge and experiences between students and educators from varied backgrounds. Schools must foster an open and inclusive atmosphere where all individuals feel empowered to express their views and cultural identities freely and with mutual respect (Thomas & Inkson, 2017).

**6. Summary**

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is a crucial tool for managing educational institutions in increasingly complex multicultural environments. The research and case studies presented in this article demonstrate that CQ is a key factor in enabling administrators and teachers to create an open learning environment that fosters understanding of cultural differences. Effective use of CQ in school administration not only helps to foster positive relationships between students and staff but also directly contributes to educational achievement and the long-term development of the institution.

**6.1** **Study Summary**

***The Importance of CQ in School Management*** CQ enables school administrators to work effectively with teachers and students from diverse cultural backgrounds. CQ consists of four key components: Metacognitive CQ, Cognitive CQ, Motivational CQ, and Behavioral CQ, each of which plays an important role in building relationships and understanding in culturally diverse societies. Administrators with high CQ skills can better adapt to the needs of learners from diverse backgrounds and manage challenges and conflicts arising from cultural differences more effectively (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008).

***Effective Application of CQ Leads to Sustainable School Development*** Effective use of CQ in school management can help develop a sustainable institution. Promoting cultural diversity in schools not only ensures quality education for students but also creates an appropriate environment for learning and collaboration. Applying CQ helps to reduce conflicts, build cooperation, and strengthen trust between students and teachers, resulting in a more effective learning atmosphere and sustainable progress in the school (Livermore, 2009).

**6.2 Recommendations for Future Research**

***Further Research on CQ and School Management***For future research, the link between CQ and educational outcomes at different levels should be thoroughly explored. Moreover, research should focus on developing CQ training programs for school administrators and teachers, as well as evaluating the outcomes of such training to improve management and teaching practices. Research that focuses on how CQ can be applied in educational institutions in different contexts, both in Thailand and internationally, will provide useful information for developing comprehensive and effective school management approaches (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Additionally, further study should focus on adapting CQ to the Thai education system at regional and national levels to find suitable approaches for promoting CQ in teaching, learning, and management within the Thai context. Research projects that focus on using CQ to develop both teachers and administrators will help foster sustainability and adaptability in a rapidly changing educational environment.

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