


# Chapter 11

## Diversity Management as a New Organizational Paradigm: Leading With Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

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### ABSTRACT

*In an era of globalization and increased diversity, there is a wide agreement on the need to actively deal with diversity in educational organizations. In this scenario, the challenge of global competition for UAE schools requires principals to lead differently and deal more effectively with teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds and fulfil their diverse needs. There is strong empirical evidence for the positive link between effective diversity management and overall organizational effectiveness. This chapter sheds light on cultural intelligence (CQ) as a viable entrée from which leaders can manage diversity effectively and lead in multicultural settings successfully. This chapter also unlocks several key multidisciplinary trends between diversity management and organizational performance outcomes.*

### INTRODUCTION

By bringing culture to the level of the organization and even down to the groups of people working within 21st century organizations, leaders need to recognize that leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin. Livermore (2010) argued, “Leaders across every profession are being propelled into

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a culturally rich and diverse challenge” (p.13). Educational settings and schools are not different from others in this context. Schools in the UAE have become increasingly turbulent and more demographically complex with teachers of diverse cultural backgrounds working and interacting on a daily basis (Malik & Singh, 2017). In addition, organizational behaviours considered appropriate for a group of people are not the same for others. Such differences can cause a dangerous clash of cultural norms in educational settings.

This chapter casts light on diversity management as a new organizational paradigm by using the context of UAE schools, the world’s most diverse organizations.. It also crystalizes the concept of cultural intelligence (CQ) in light of a peculiar skill to lead in a more transformational manner and deal more effectively with teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds to fulfilling their diverse needs.

## **BACKGROUND**

The past three decades have been marked by significant growth in the empirical examination of the influence of diversity on individual, group, and organizational level outcomes (Herdman & McMillan-Capehart, 2010; Harrison & Klein, 2007; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). This growth in diversity research casts light on the dramatic increases in the heterogeneity of the workforce (Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). These changing demographics of the population globally have been and will be increasingly reflected in educational organizations such as schools. More specifically, schools have become increasingly turbulent and more demographically diverse with teachers of different cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds interacting and working together (Malik & Singh, 2017).

In light of this globalization process, advancing conditions in the world have caused transformation in teaching and learning environments. For example, global educational trends, international rankings, new expectations for student achievement and school improvement have placed principals and teachers at the crossroads between traditional and the new meaning of educational change. In an increasingly unstable environment, the range of educational goals, the pressure of accountability, overload, the adaptation to ever-changing conditions and multifaceted diversity present intolerable conditions for satisfying work experiences (Fullan, 2007). According to Sadri and Tran, workforce diversity may introduce work conflicts or tensions because the differences in norms and values among groups from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds are likely to manifest themselves in various work-related attitudes and behaviors (2002). In fact, being part of a global work team with team members of diverse cultural backgrounds is different from being a member of a culturally homogeneous team to which most people belong to their local cultural settings (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008).

As global interdependence, multinational corporations, cultural and social interconnections of the global economy strengthen and invigorate, educational leaders must be more proactive on issues of diversity, act differently, and most importantly lead differently (Williams & Tierney, 2013). This chapter sheds light on this interdisciplinary and multidimensional concept of diversity with the promise of unlocking the “black box” between diversity management and performance outcomes in educational settings.

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