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## Cultural-oriented Leadership Style

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Article info	Abstract
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received 21 May 2023</p> <p>Received in revised form 1 Sep 2023</p> <p>Accepted 30 Oct 2023</p> <p>Available online 20 Feb 2024</p>	<p>Leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of people to influence and guide followers or members of an organization, society, or team. Culture provides context for the styles and behaviors of leaders, enabling the identification of whether a particular action will be considered appropriate or inappropriate within a society. Culture-oriented leadership is a type of leadership in which leaders engage in organizational management based on cultural elements and within the cultural context. According to Vazifeh Damirchi (2014), the cultural-oriented leadership style encompasses ten dimensions: "texture management," "knowledge management," "rationalism," "organizational affiliation," "organizational insight," "transformationalism," "employee orientation," "commitment," "employee emotional support," and "cultural intelligence." This review article aims to elucidate and interpret each dimension and component of the culture-oriented leadership style. Additionally, it concludes by categorizing this style alongside other research and findings from various researchers.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>Culture,</p> <p>Leadership,</p> <p>Cultural-oriented Leadership,</p> <p>Organization.</p>	
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### 1. Introduction

The confluence occurring today between economic, technological, social, and demographic changes is creating an organizational environment in which change is constant, nimbleness is imperative, a broad base of talent is essential, and maintaining a balance between innovation and brand identity is key to survival. In such an environment, an organization's ability to nurture partnerships at various levels becomes essential. For innovation to flourish within an organization, there must be "tolerance at the margins," as noted by Arie de Geus. The only leadership shown by energy conglomerates is to sustain the corporate structure, not to meet our energy needs. Jago (1982) argues that good leaders are made, not born. If you have the desire and willpower, you can become an effective leader. Good leaders develop through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience (Vazifeh Damirchi et al., 2014).

Today, the societal and organizational atmosphere is predominantly cultural. In fact, individuals and employees who have undergone cultural development have evolved (Rahimi et al., 2010, p. 89).

Studies of leadership have produced theories involving traits, situational interaction, function, behavior, power, vision, values, charisma, and intelligence, among others (Vazifeh Damirchi et al., 2016). Leadership style is a set of skills and behaviors that leaders use to influence and persuade (Lussier & Achua, 2004).

Traditions and cultural values play important role in leadership style (Duggan and Media, 2013). GLOBE (1999) in a research on worldwide differences and culture based in understood leadership traits which was concentrated on middle level managers, wanted to study that whether certain conducts of leaders are important to change them to the outstanding managers or not. There is contradiction in leadership. Connections in this world are so easy and available, but distinguished and separated cultures will be forever and will exist in all of the world economy. The most successful careers would be those which not only understand the minimal cultural differences, but also inform their managers about these issues (Vazifeh Damirchi et al, 2015).

There is no single style that can encompass all the traits of a leader. Culture is a complex concept that encompasses the highest ideals of growth, development, expansion, striving for perfection, and purity. This is because traditions and behavioral habits fall within the realm of culture (Rafii, 2006; p. 98).

Now, in a community where people have been raised with a particular culture and have established organizations, the author of this article utilizes an established theoretical framework to measure leadership styles within the context of culture.

## **2. Culture-Oriented Leadership Style**

Culture-oriented leadership is a type of leadership in which leaders engage in organizational management based on cultural elements and within the cultural context.

The culturally-oriented leadership style encompasses ten dimensions: "texture management," "knowledge management," "rationalism," "organizational affiliation," "organizational insight," "transformationalism," "employee orientation," "commitment," "employee emotional support," and "cultural intelligence" (Vazifeh Damirchi, 2014, p. 131). Figure 1 displays dimensions and components.

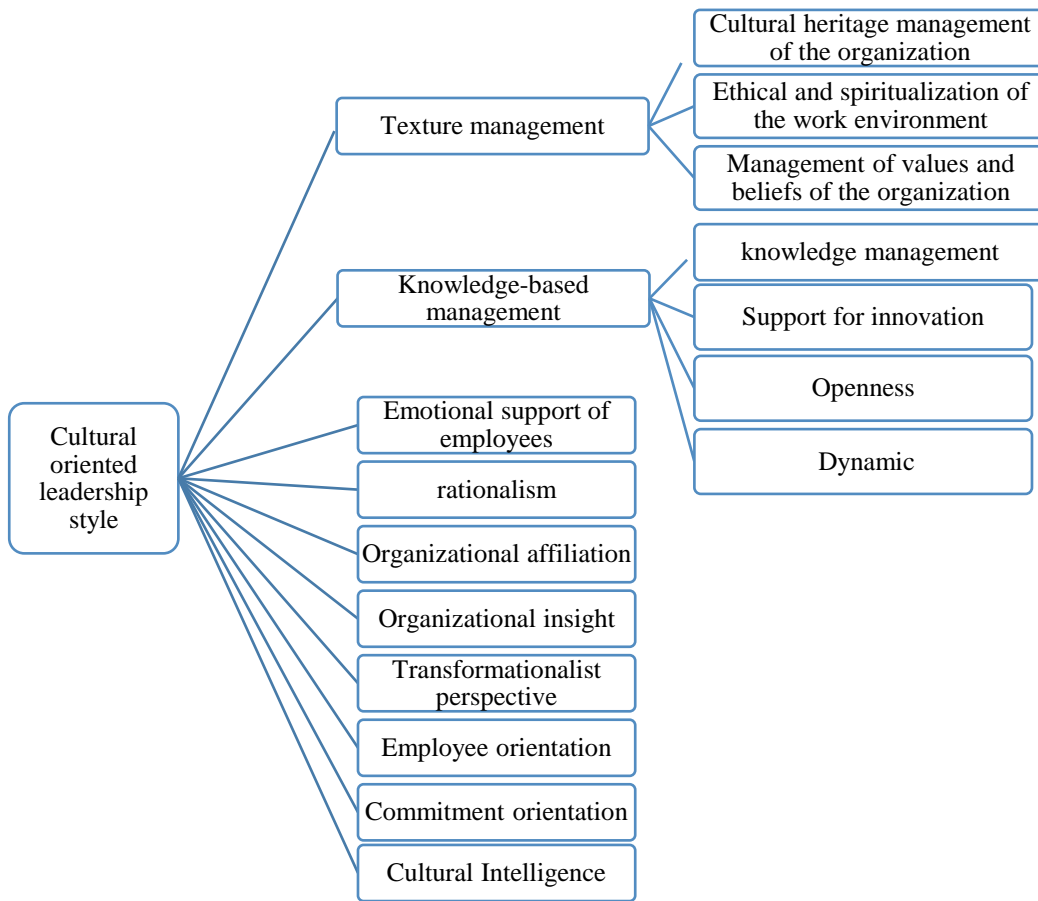


Figure 1: Dimensions and Components.

### 2.1. Texture management

The texture management has ten components: organizational cultural heritage management, workplace ethics and spiritualization, and the management of organizational values and beliefs.

A) *Organizational Cultural Heritage Management*: it refers to anything that originates from our ancestors and predecessors. All that we inherit from our ancestors does not necessarily have a cultural background. We refer to it as cultural heritage, where culture and its factors play a significant role in shaping its structure. The cultural heritage is manifested in two concrete ways (cities, buildings, objects) and intangible ways (beliefs, customs). The intangible cultural heritage is a manifestation that, although not tangible, is understood through its material effects, encompassing beliefs, customs, and traditions that are not physical in nature but have tangible impacts (Palizban and Salehi Amiri, 2012). The cultural heritage carries a human message (Hojjat, 2001, p. 81). Heritage management is an emerging field that identifies, protects, and monitors cultural heritage for the public benefit (Nafziger and Nicgorski, 2010).

Concepts related to cultural heritage management encompass its intangible manifestations within organizational culture. According to the findings of this research, these concepts include supporting positive practices, acknowledging organizational customs, understanding traditional processes, recognizing public customs, appreciating historical meanings, acknowledging organizational stories, adhering to organizational traditions, and valuing cultural originality.

- B) *Ethical and spiritual development in the workplace*: Human behavior, in an intangible manner, has had a significant impact on various organizational and national dynamics, as well as in a broader global context. Modern humans have adopted different moral standards compared to the past and exhibit distinct behaviors (Borba, 2005, p. 23). Ethics, although a concept that has been around for a long time, is a relatively new area of knowledge in the field of organization and business (Qaramaleki, 2011, p. 90). Organizational leaders need to adhere to accepted ethics without exception in order to persuade their employees to achieve a common goal and to demonstrate their commitment to morality through concrete behavior. For a leader, honesty means that he must fulfill his promises, behave transparently, not conceal facts, avoid engaging in activities of low value, and not incur unnecessary costs (Hazrati and Memarzadeh, 2014). According to Gbadamosi (2004), "the ethics of how people behave and how they behave in their own organization" are intertwined. Also, Fisher, Josie, and Bonn (2007) argue that "in general, the term ethics deals with the standards relating to the correctness and misconduct of behaviors" (Moghimi, 2008). From the perspective of Allameh Jafari, "The morality of the human personality is a wise path to the courtyard" (Gholami, 2009). Ott (2004) claims that an ethical culture "provides an emotional sense of participation and commitment to ethical values and codes and strongly influences employee performance" (Moghimi, 2008). The concepts of ethics and the spiritualization of the work environment reflect ethical and spiritual principles in the discussion of culturally-oriented leadership. According to ethics and spirituality, religious orientation, attention to human values, the promotion of conscientiousness, building public confidence, promoting truth, integrity, and honesty, encouraging sacrifice, optimism, respect for the rights of others, and justice can make the workplace ethical and spiritual.
- C) Management of organizational values and beliefs: Leaders formulate the mission, vision, values, and ethics of the organization and behave themselves as a model of a culture of excellence (Najmi and Hosseini, 2009, p. 23). The success or failure of organizations is highly dependent on their organizational culture. Considering that organizational culture is often the most invisible element within any organization. Organizations must consider not only hardware but also the intellectual software of individuals (Cultural Thinking) (Momeni, 2007). Robbins (1973) states, "The core values of an organization, which are of universal interest to all, embody the culture of that organization" (Bastan, 2005). According to Pearce and Robinson (1998), organizational values are common assumptions in the field of organizational culture driven by the process of internalization by members of the organization (Bastan, 2005).

Collins and Porras (2001) stated that "The principles of value refer to the fundamental and enduring principles of each organization." The number of these guiding principles is small, but their lifespan is long. They do not need to be judged by others and hold intrinsic value for those within the organization (Bastan, 2005).

Concepts related to the management of organizational values and beliefs embody the principles of cultural values and beliefs in discussions of culturally-oriented leadership. This includes focusing on the development of cultural values, organizational beliefs, supporting cultural behaviors and employees, fostering cultural appropriateness, and dissemination. Cultural values can help leaders guide the organization.

## 2.2. Knowledge-based management

Knowledge management has four components: knowledge management, openness, dynamics and support for innovation. Each description is given below:

Knowledge management has four components: knowledge creation, sharing, dynamics, and support for innovation. Each description is given below:

- A) *Knowledge management*: it is becoming increasingly important in today's societies, as they shift towards a knowledge-centered approach in their day-to-day activities (Ramezan, 2011). Therefore, it can be said that dynamic and active management of knowledge is essential for increasing organizational performance and decision-making (Ellahi et al., 2014). More knowledge management focuses on human resources as a crucial asset, emphasizing organizational culture and teamwork (Vonkrogh, 1999). Concepts about knowledge management involve applying knowledge management, imparting information, creating the context for using knowledge and experiences of individuals, and providing opportunities for learning and gaining knowledge in culturally-oriented leadership discussions.
- B) *Openness*: The concept of openness impacts at least three aspects of interpersonal communication and influences this unavoidable human activity. First, in interpersonal communication, the sender of the message must be clear and open to their communication partners, displaying a relative level of openness. The second aspect of self-disclosure reflects the sender's desire to honestly convey their impulses and the impact it has on them. The third aspect of self-disclosure, first articulated by Arthur Bochner and Clifford Clay, relates to the concept of owning emotions and thoughts. With such concepts, openness is understood to mean that the person involved is fully aware of their feelings and thoughts, taking responsibility for acknowledging them and informing the other recipient of the message (Farhangi, 2000, p. 183). The concepts of openness, such as face-to-face communication development, critique, advocacy, and dialogue, embody interpersonal communication within the framework of culturally-oriented leadership.
- C) *Dynamism*: No organization can survive without proactive, rational, and dynamic activity. In this regard, all organizations have the power to enable or even encourage individuals to have sufficient passion to drive their initiatives forward. Dynamics is an individual-social approach. Dynamics is an element that organizations often overlook and fail to show interest in, yet it is at the core of organizational functioning. Concepts of dynamism, such as learning opportunities, avoiding intellectual exhaustion, modeling, and apprenticeship, encompass individual and organizational interactions.
- D) *Support for innovation*: is akin to a dynamic force that overtly and covertly infiltrates the process of activities, dismantling outdated and ineffective methods to establish a new and robust foundation (Khodabakhshi and Vazifeh Damirchi, 2008, p. 76). Modernism is a process of social rationalism (Molana, 2008, p. 6). The term in its original root structure is the concept of being "up to date" or "keeping up with" (Rahnamaiee, 2001, p. 132). Modernism encompasses three dimensions: human-centered (focused on the power of human thought), materialism (addressing spiritual needs through emotional fulfillment in the modern world-view), and rationality (approaching the world intellectually and based on reason). This argument is supported by Gates (2004). The concepts supporting innovation involve the

capacity and ability to utilize innovations, as well as the human application of knowledge and technology.

### **2.3. Rationalism**

The product of intellectual power is the wisdom of reason, which is the will of intelligence; the rationale of the will is equivalent to rationales or general perceptions. Usually, reason comes along with rationality. An important feature of humans is that they have beliefs about themselves and the world around them, and in certain circumstances, they change their beliefs. Rationality stems from a place where individuals seek to make judgments. Arbitration exists in every sphere. Concepts of rationality, such as intelligence in problem-solving, avoidance of emotional behaviors, and intellectual independence, embody rational activities.

### **2.4. Organizational sense of belonging**

Organizational culture must be intentionally crafted to enhance employees' sense of belonging to the organization. The more cultured an organization is, the more familiar employees are with its goals. They embrace the organizational values and feel dedicated and committed to them. In such a situation, employee satisfaction, despite strong management, has improved the employees' morale, motivation, and interest in organizational performance and its effectiveness (Ali Ahmadi, 2004, p. 87).

### **2.5. Organizational insight**

Insight encompasses knowledge, vision, intelligence, courage, and certainty. Insight involves the application of reasoning for guiding humans and benefiting from its enlightenment. The Holy Quran, by enlightening the hearts and minds, reveals those who fail to utilize this insight as truly blind. The Lord says, "Do they not travel through the land, so that they may have hearts to understand and ears to hear?" (Quran: ANAAM:122) Therefore, the eyes are not blind, but the hearts that are in the chest are blind. In fact, insight and foresight are like inner lights that guide a person through life, helping them distinguish between truth and falsehood, enabling them to rectify information and data, and allowing them to voice opinions and make decisions. It is said that Imam Ali, may peace be upon him, lacked insight and foresight, rendering his decisions and opinions invalid and insignificant.

Concepts related to organizational insight, such as understanding the organization's goals and requirements, conducting organizational analysis, legal awareness, and knowledge of competitors, reflect a proper understanding of the true and false aspects, the validity and strength of the core values that reveal the truth within the organization. In organizations with a strong culture, employees are aligned with their values and organizational goals. Organizational affiliation can be defined as the connection and attachment of individuals to the organization, characterized by feelings of engagement, loyalty, and belief in organizational values.

In organizational affiliation, there are three stages: accepting, replicating, and internalizing. Concepts related to organizational affiliation, accreditation, credibility, reputation, values, and norms represent a sense of belonging to the organization.

### **2.6. Transformationalist perspective**

Today, the most important factor in successful business management is being considered. Organizations and individuals within them should adopt a positive attitude towards change to sustain their competitive edge in today's dynamic markets. Neglecting to monitor a dynamic process can be quite expensive. The adoption of a futuristic approach is the only way to seize the future, whether as an individual or as an organization. Organizational change is an activity or effort planned throughout

the organization, managed by top management, aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and health of the organization through planned change initiatives in the organization's processes, utilizing behavioral sciences (Rahimi et al., 2010, p. 164). The concept of transformation (inspiration, vision creation, insight-based decision-making, qualitative, deserving) reflects the adoption of a futuristic approach to protect the organization from future uncertainty in the competitive environment.

### **2.7. Employee orientation**

Human resources are undoubtedly the most noble, important, and valuable factor among the various sources and resources of the organization. The role of human resources in organizing affairs within an organization is crucial. Committed personnel, through their own behavior and by making correct and timely decisions, can prevent material losses and contribute to creating value and wealth for the organization. Obviously, the level of employee satisfaction is directly related to their productivity and, consequently, the productivity of the organization. Therefore, having employee satisfaction is a key factor in the success of the organization and should be given special attention to the leaders of the organization. The concept of employee empathy (emotional support, equity in evaluating, paying attention to employee welfare, equal access to facilities, and focusing on human resources) reflects the value and importance of an organization's employees for that organization because they are employees who create value and wealth for the organization. And management support for these employees increases their efficiency and productivity.

### **2.8. Commitment Orientation**

Commitment in the word means the covenant (Jafari Langroudi, 1988, p. 166). Commitment is a legal relationship whereby a person is required to transfer, surrender, or perform something else, whether it raises the relationship of reason or an obligation or obligation (Katouzian, 1997, p. 108). The presence of human resources committed to the organization in each organization while reducing absenteeism, delay, and displacement will significantly increase the organization's performance, enhance employee mental vitality and better manifestation of the organization's supreme goals and achieve individual goals.

Several studies have also shown that organizational commitment has positive outcomes such as job satisfaction, presence, transactional organizational behavior, job performance and has a negative relationship with the desire to leave a job (Emami, 2008). The concept of compliance (promotion of accountability, commitment to organizational interests, understanding of obligations, and development of commitment and accountability) represents a commitment and commitment to the organization. A commitment to the cultural-oriented leadership, which has a commitment and a sense of responsibility, is the ratio of its own aspirations and the organization.

### **2.9. Employees Emotional support**

The purpose of social support is to enhance the capability and quality of communication with others, providing resources when needed. Social support is a reciprocal form of assistance that fosters self-esteem, a sense of belonging, and personal growth. In all these instances, it provides individuals with the opportunity for self-actualization and development (Behrouzi et al., 2012). In summary, it can be argued that social protection entails the sense that an individual is interested in others, that others value them, and that they belong to a social network (Riahi et al., 2010). Emotional support refers to situations that make people feel protected. Such support is often in the form of encouragement and helps to enhance the sense of value in people. Concepts related to providing emotional support to employees, such as promoting goodwill, empathy, effective social interactions, and respecting staff,

reflect the level of organizational support for employees and the perceived sense of support from the organization.

### **2.10. Cultural Intelligence**

The meanings of intelligence in different cultures are diverse. In general, intelligence can be defined from the perspective of Wechsler as the whole or an individual's capacity for purposeful activity, rational thinking, and efficient interaction with the environment (Atkinson et al., 1998). Intelligence is a mental capability that includes diverse abilities such as reasoning, planning, problem-solving, abstract thinking, language use, and learning (Perloff et al., 1996, p. 51). Frankovsky (2006) states, "When studying intelligence, behavioral intent is crucial." Therefore, instead of focusing on intelligence, we must analyze intelligent behavior. The basis for intelligent behavior must be a form of knowledge and information, in the broadest sense, that has been acquired formally and informally. Another aspect of clever intelligence and behavior involves finding solutions, answers, and problem-solving capabilities (Haghighatian et al., 2014). Earley & Ang (2003) defined cultural intelligence as the ability to learn new patterns in cultural interactions and to provide appropriate behavioral responses to these patterns. Individuals with high cultural intelligence comprehend cultural boundaries and recognize how these boundaries can influence our behavior and that of others. They can use this understanding to adapt their thinking and responses in various situations. Moreover, in crucial circumstances, they can effectively diminish these barriers and align them with their organization's objectives (Askari Vaziri et al., 2012).

Cultural intelligence reflects an individual's adaptability in various organizational situations. It is measured by indicators such as understanding cultural disparities, adaptation and tolerance towards differences, recognition of cultural connections, cultural comprehension, support for cultural approaches, and the openness of leaders to cultural behaviors.

### **3. Concluding Remarks and Future Perspective**

The present study aimed to examine the model of a cultural-oriented leadership style. The ten main concepts have been approved, in which the results of each one is compared with other models, and leadership styles are presented. Concepts related to organizational culture include "Managing the cultural heritage of the organization," "moral and spiritualization of the workplace," and "managing organizational values and beliefs." Knowledge management concepts include "knowledge management," "openness," and "dynamism." Concepts of innovation support innovative capacity and ability. Human utilization of knowledge and technology is aligned with principles like "personal creativity" and "growth" in transformational leadership. This approach also encompasses the idea of "encouraging mental stimulation" to support innovation.

Concepts of rationality encompass rational activities, such as intelligence in problem-solving, avoidance of emotional behaviors, and intellectual autonomy, as indicated by the findings of this research. The concept of "rationality" in culturally-oriented leadership aligns with the concept of "mental stimulation" in Moheren and Bourne's (1997) transformational leadership. Organizational membership implies a sense of belonging to the organization. According to the findings of this research, it includes accreditation to the organization, attachment to credibility and organizational reputation, and adherence to organizational values and norms. The concept of "sense of perception and appreciation" in Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003) aligns with the notion of organizational membership in the culturally-oriented leadership style. Concepts of organizational insight involve the



accurate discernment between falsehood and truth, as well as the courage and resilience needed for the truth to prevail within the organization. According to the findings of this research, it provides insight into the organization's goals, a proper understanding of the organization's requirements, organizational analysis, legal awareness, and awareness of competitors. The concept of "insight" in the fundamental traits of servant leadership (Russell & Stone, 2002, p. 3) also corresponds to the concept of "trying and realizing the realization of the environment" in charismatic leadership (Tittmore, 2003) with the concept of "organizational insight."

Concepts of transformationalism indicate a futuristic approach to protect the organization from future uncertainty in the competitive environment. According to the findings of this research, it involves inspiration, creating a vision, making decisions based on insight, and qualitative, deserving selection. The concept of "organizational change" and "landscape design" in leadership is evolving (Anderson, Fornell & Lehman, 1994: 53). Additionally, the concept of "creating a vision" in Transformational Leadership style by Tichy and Diwana (1986) aligns with the cultural-oriented leadership style. Employee-related concepts highlight the significance and value of an organization's workforce. Employees play a crucial role in creating value for the organization. Management support enhances their efficiency and productivity. According to the findings of this research, employee empathy includes emotional support, fair evaluation, attention to employee welfare, equal access to facilities, and a focus on human resources. Concepts of Employee Expectations and Employee Motivation can be found in Hersey & Blanchard (1977: 441), with an emphasis on human resources in Transitional Leadership by Schein (1985), incorporating the concept of human resource orientation in the culturally-oriented leadership style. Compliance implies dedication and loyalty to the organization. A commitment to culturally-oriented leadership, which entails a sense of responsibility and dedication, is the alignment of personal aspirations with those of the organization. Depending on the findings of this research, commitment includes promoting accountability, being committed to corporate interests, understanding obligations, and developing commitment and accountability. The concept of "Commitment and Compassion in Advancing Programs": Warren's Conductive Leadership. G. Nanus and Bur (1985), as well as the concept of "encouragement" in the leadership of the Three Thirds (Thornton, 1999), are consistent with the notion of commitment in the culturally-oriented leadership style. The concept of employee emotional support reflects the level of organizational support for employees and the sense of support that employees perceive from the organization. According to the findings of this research, providing emotional support to employees promotes goodwill, empathy, socialization, and respect for employees. The concept of "establishing emotional connections with individuals" in intelligent leadership (Sashkin, 1988), as well as transformational leadership, is an emotional aspect of leadership (Hughes, 2006) that aligns with the idea of providing emotional support for employees.

Concepts of cultural intelligence reflect an individual's level of adaptability in various behavioral situations within an organization. According to research on cultural intelligence, recognizing and adapting to cultural differences, being tolerant of diversity, considering cultural connections, understanding different cultures, and supporting cultural approaches justify being open in behavior. The results of this study established a qualitative model of a culture-oriented leadership style. After comparing this style with previous models and styles of leadership, including leadership philosophy, leadership models, and leadership styles, it was found that in some cases, the Cultural-Oriented Commons with Leadership, Transformational Leadership Style, Leadership of Three Thousand, Theory of Target Path, Charismatic Leadership, Servant Leadership, Spiritual Leadership, Reliable Leadership, Theory of Behavioral Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Knowledge Leadership, Three

Levels of Leadership, Value-Based Leadership, and models of leadership thinking frames share similarities. This indicates that the cultural-oriented leadership style provides a comprehensive review of leadership issues, highlighting the strength of this style.

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Considering the results and confirming the model a culturally-oriented cultural-oriented leadership style, it is recommended for leaders to:

- By addressing and managing organizational values, beliefs, cultural heritage, ethics, and spiritualization of the workplace, organizations can enhance their management practices and foster a cohesive organizational culture. Knowledge management involves openness, adaptability to change, fostering creativity, and supporting innovation within the organization, ultimately leading to the creation and utilization of knowledge. It is imperative that organizations deploy knowledge management managers.
- Organizations encourage employees to embrace the organization and adhere to its values and norms, emphasizing the credibility and reputation of the organization. This fosters a sense of belonging among employees, motivating them to strive towards organizational goals.
- Detecting the right from falsehood requires the power of the heart and insight that reveals the truth within the organization. Therefore, in order to understand organizational facts, organizations need to be aware of the organization's intentions, understand the organization's requirements and needs, have insight into organizational analysis, and possess sufficient knowledge of the law and their competitors.
- Change is a necessity in life and will propel organizations towards a future free from the risks and uncertainties of the environment. Therefore, organizations are institutionalized with a proper approach to creating a vision, making decisions based on insight, providing inspirational motivation, ensuring quality inspiration, and fostering desirability to facilitate smooth movement.
- Human resources are the most crucial pillar of an organization as they generate value for the organization. Therefore, it is recommended that organizations ensure fair treatment of employees, equitable distribution of workload, pay attention to employee well-being, protect them from emotional strain, and consider human resources as valuable assets of the organization.

- Commitment to the organization fosters the growth of both the organization and its members. To uphold this commitment, organizations must be responsive to employees, promote accountability, enhance dedication to organizational goals, and cultivate a culture of commitment and accountability within the organization. Touch
- When the organization is well-motivated and empathetic, and people are treated with good communication, employees feel honored and respected. In such an environment, employees understand the organization's support and appreciate the support staff. It is suggested that managers pay attention to providing emotional support to employees.
- Having high cultural intelligence reduces malicious conflicts. Therefore, organizations should be mindful of cultural diversity and variations, and be adaptable and attentive to cultural connections. They should support cultural approaches, foster cultural understanding, and promote openness in behavior to enhance individuals' adaptability in various organizational contexts.

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