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TITLE A Cross-Cultural Investigation of Academic Leaders' Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness in Taiwan and the United States

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OBJECTIVE This study explores if any relationship exists between individuals' emotional intelligence and effective leadership in educational institutions in Taiwan and the United States.

METHODOLOGY

A convenience sample of 50 academic leaders (principals, presidents and deans) in the United States (mostly in Southern Texas) and 50 in Taiwan were selected. Sixty-six percent of the Taiwan leaders and 56 percent of the US leaders were male. Thirty-two percent of the Taiwan sample was aged 46-55, while 58 percent of the US sample was aged 36-45. Chi-square analysis showed no significant differences between the samples by gender and age distribution or by educational level, organizational position, school levels, or years of supervising. Respondents completed the Leadership Practices Inventory (using a five-point Likert response scale) and the Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP: Nelson and Low, 1999) in either English or Chinese.

KEY FINDINGS

Overall emotional intelligence (EI) was significantly correlated with Model, Enable and Encourage for both samples, while Inspire and Challenge was also significantly correlated with the Taiwan academic leader sample. Of the 13 EI variables, eight were significantly correlated with overall LPI scores for the US sample and 10 were significantly correlated for the Taiwan sample; generally indicating that as one's overall leadership behavior increased there was an increasing tendency of being more emotionally intelligent.

In the US sample, Model was significantly correlated with six of the EI dimensions, while Inspire was correlated with two, Challenge with one, Enable and Encourage each with six dimensions. In the Taiwan sample, Model was significantly correlated with seven of the EI dimensions, while Inspire was correlated with four, Challenge with five, Enable with nine and Encourage with 10 dimensions. For academic leaders in the US there were moderately strong positive relationships found between overall leadership effectiveness and overall emotional intelligence as well as overall EI skill areas; the same was true for academic leaders in Taiwan, with slightly more positive relationships found. However, ANOVA revealed no significant differences between leaders in the two countries in terms of EI. ANOVA did show that US leaders reported engaging significantly more frequently in the leadership practices (overall LPI) than their Taiwanese counterparts.

Taiwanese leaders reported higher scores on Model, but lower scores on Inspire and Challenge than their US counterparts, with no significant differences between the two cultures on Enable and Encourage.

The author concludes: "results of correlation analyses demonstrated a major degree of uniformity across the two cultures with regard to the significant relationships between overall emotional intelligence and specific areas of leadership practices" (p. 167) but suggests that "key

transformational leadership behaviors are universal; however, the application of these behaviors appear to have national differences in it” (p. 184). She suggests that EI may “serve as a (sic) underlying competency of leadership practices for the samples of both Taiwanese and U.S. academic leaders” (pp. 184-85). “Emotional intelligence was proved to be an underlying competency of leadership effectiveness for academic leaders from both cultures in the study. In order to lead effectively, high emotional intelligence is required to leverage a sense of self awareness, to manage their own emotions and those of others, and to lead in accordance with the cultural expectations of their organizations” (p. 186).