STUDY ON THE ASSOCIATION OF THE MANAGEMENT OF DIFFERENCES IN MULTI-CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: AN EXAMPLE FROM THE TEXTILE SECTOR

Abstract

Culture is described as one of the most important elements that defines the facts and formation of a human life. Working together with people from different cultures is inevitable in the business world. Adjusting to this multi-culture also has an affect on the productivity of employees coming from different cultures. Starting from this thought, the intention of this study is to manifest the association between the attitudes encountered by the employees in an enterprise in view of their cultural differences and their performance. In line with the objective of this study, a survey has been carried out with the blue-color workers employed in manufacturing workshops in the textile sector in Istanbul which also included questions regarding the regional cultures of the employees. The findings of the study showed that there was a positive significant association between the employees' attitudes towards cultural differences and the employees' performance. Furthermore, the differences between employees from different cultures were also examined by means of difference analyzes and analyzed by means of difference tests.

Keywords: culture, cultural difference, performance, textile sector

Aral Noyan*

lectiō socialis

*Asst. Prof. Dr. Aral Noyan, İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University Voccational School, Department of Public Relations

ÇOK KÜLTÜRLÜ ÖRGÜTLERDE KÜLTÜREL FARKLILIKLARIN YÖNETİMİNİN ÇALIŞANLARIN PERFORMANSI İLE İLİŞKİSİ ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA: TEKSTİL SEKTÖRÜ ÖRNEĞİ

Öz

Kültür bir insanın hayatına dair olgu ve oluşumları şekillendiren en önemli unsurlardan birisi olarak ifade edilmektedir. Farklı kültürlerden gelen kişilerin bir arada çalışması iş dünyası için kaçınılmazdır. Bu çok kültürlü düzende farklı kültürlerden gelen çalışanların uyumu çalışanların verimliliğini de etkilemektedir. Bu düşünceden yola çıkılarak yapılan bu araştırmada çalışanların kültürel farklılıklarına karşı işletme içerisinde karşılaştıkları tutumlar ile performansları arasındaki ilişki ortaya konulmaktadır. Araştırmanın amacına uygun olarak İstanbul'da tekstil sektöründeki üretim atölyelerinde istihdam edilmiş mavi yakalı çalışanlar üzerinde çalışanların bölgesel kültürlerinin de sorulduğu bir araştırma yapılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda elde edilen bulgular, çalışanların kültürel farklılıklarına karşı işletme içerisindeki tutumları ile çalışanların performansları arasında pozitif anlamlı bir ilişki içerisinde olduğunu göstermiştir. Bununla beraber farklı kültürlerden gelen çalışanların aralarındaki farklılıklar da fark analizleriyle incelenmiş ve fark testleriyle analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: kültür, kültürel farklılık, performans, tekstil sektörü

Aral Noyan*

lectiō socialis

* Yrd. Doç. Dr. Aral Noyan, İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl Üniversitesi Meslek Yüksel Okulu, Halkla İlişkiler Bölümü

Introduction

The multicultural world brought by globalization has become an important part of our daily life. Multiculturalism is not limited to people migrating to other countries. It can also include people who migrate from other cities in order to achieve better living conditions and so become a part of metropolitan cities. This is also valid for enterprises. Businesses which only employed employees who had the culture of the same city have transformed into multicultural structures due to this reason. Therefore, the management of cultural differences has become increasingly important for businesses (Podsiadlowski, Gröschke, Kogler, Springer and van der Zee, 2013: 159; Barutçugil, 2011: 218; Dilek and Topaloglu, 2017: 97-98). Cultural differences need to be managed well in order for businesses to achieve their common goals. It is important that workers from different cultures are well organized in order to sustain the productivity of the business (Popescu, Borca, Fistis and Draghici, 2014: 526; Matveev and Miltev, 2004: 105). Although cultural diversity is associated with foreign workers, people from different cultural groups of the same country often encounter problems arising from cultural differences. Employees from different cultures need to adapt to the new culture while preserving their own cultural characteristics (Kayalar and Aytar, 2012: 51). In this study, which was designed with this thought in mind, a study was carried out with blue collar workers employed in the manufacturing workshops of textile enterprises operating in various districts of Istanbul. This city hosts the most crowded and culturally diverse population of our country hence making it an excellent sample in which to examine the association between the attitude of the employees in businesses towards different cultures and the performance of the employees.

The Concept of Culture

The word culture is derived from the word "colere", which is a Latin word for origin. This word means to process land and deal with land. However, in the general sense, it is believed that culture expresses "people-created" values with the steering of environmental factors. In other words, whatever nature gives to humans, humans transform it into their own culture. (Skierlo, 2007: 14, Hofstede, 1984: 22, Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 2000: 24). Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 4-6) define culture as cognitive programming for people to think, feel and react accordingly. Durkheim, on the other hand, accepts everything that creates pressure on a person as a "social phenomenon" and indicates that these social phenomena are effective in forming the culture of the relevant society (Akın, 2007: 20-21). There are many elements that form culture. These include common historical backgrounds, self-specificity, social systems, cultural education, traditions, language, faith systems, values and attitudes, culture specific rules and laws, presumptions about the future and behavior forms manifested by norms (Kayalar and Aytar, 2011 : 50-51; Turan 2005: 25, Yeşil, 2009: 107-112). All of these elements evolve according to their experiences over time, and when they experience interactions, culture brings new rules for self-preservation or is assimilated by losing its self-values in the face of the dominant culture.

Cultural Diversity and the Management of Cultural Diversity

One of the most important problems that arise in a business is the problem of coping with cultural diversity and cultural differences created by this diversity. According to Thomas and Inkson (2004), "Groups do not begin to function instantaneously". Tuckman (2001) explains that groups can develop using a five step process named "forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning" (Flaherty, 2008: 192). In the past efforts were made to resolve this problem with the employment of workers originating only in a certain region or culture. Nowadays, organizations are expected to cope with this problem by developing a common strategy for different cultures. The development of an institutional language that is specific to an organization can be considered as an example

of such a strategy strategies. The ability of a business to understand employees coming from different cultures helps solve many problems more easily (Kirkman, Lowe & Gibson, 2006: 296; Tukiainen, 2015: 70-71; Joshi & Roh, 2009: 601-602). Cultural differences arising from cultural diversity cannot be ignored in an enterprise and trying to eliminate differences can only harm the operation. Since the mismanagement of differences also means a financial loss for the business, the management process of differences should be assessed well in the planning process to be profitable for the enterprise (Sürgevil, 2008: 113). Some researchers point out that the aim of cultural diversity management is to eliminate the negative effects of cultural differences from employees and encourage them to use all their skills in accordance with the goals and objectives of the organization (Barutçugil 2011: 202-203; Dilek ve Topaloğlu, 2017: 4).

In situations where cultural diversity is not sufficiently perceived or it is ignored, there is always the risk that people from different cultures oppress each other and, therefore, the organization is managed by a dominant culture. In such a case, the representatives of the dominant culture interpret those from another culture according to their own values, and as a result of these misinterpretations, they approach those from different cultures with prejudice. In fact, this can advance to a further level and be manifested as aggressive behavior towards those from different cultures (Balogun, Jarzabkowski and Vaara, 2011: 767). The fact that cultural harmony has been established puts great pressure on the managers of the enterprises to achieve the objectives of the business (van Marrewijk, 2010: 369-370).

The Association of Cultural Diversity, Cultural Differences and Work Performance

Katzenbach and Smith (2015: 5-14) describe a real working team as a group of people with a high level of ability to solve problems, communicate and understand each other, work for a common goal and have high performance.

A high performing team is separated from others by their ability to change, to grasp goals well, and to show superiority in problem solving. In multicultural teams, the situation is slightly different. In multicultural teams, the confusion that cultural differences bring about causes a lack of understanding, which leads to poor performance. In general, it is expected that the problems that arise in an enterprise will be solved by the management. However, when the issues are created by cultural differences, the situation becomes more complicated (Tomohiko, Soyeon and Yuhee, 2017:157-158). The most important management problems that have to be overcome in multicultural teams can be listed as understanding the geographical and regional differences and eliminating the frustration of the workers, ensure coordination, strengthen communication and teach people how to be a good team (Marquardt and Horvath, 2001:52; Mateev and Nelson, 2004: 255-256). Because of these possible difficulties, cultural differences cause decrease in performance while those who cannot achieve cultural adjustment easily quit their jobs.

The Study

The Objective and Scope of the Study

This study has been conducted to determine the association between the employees' cultural adaptations and their performances. Although there are many studies regarding the association between the differences of foreigners originating from the cultural values systems and their performances, there are very few studies about the association between cultural adaptation and performance of employees from various regional subcultures in our country. During the preparatory phase of the study, it was determined that one of the most preferred sectors to work for newcomers who come to Istanbul were the textile workshops. Therefore, this business has been used. The study was conducted among blue-collar workers employed in the manufacturing workshops of small and medium-scale textile enterprises operating in Istanbul.

Data Collection Method

A questionnaire was used as a data collection method in the study. The research was carried out in textile workshops operating in Istanbul with the easy sampling method. 306 returns were obtained from 350 survey forms distributed in the survey, however 263 out of these surveys were accepted as valid. According to these results, the rate of responding to the questionnaires was approximately 88%. In the study, the individual work performance scale consisting of 18 expressions and 3 sub-dimensions developed by Koopmans, Coffeng, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, Boot, de Vet and der Berk (2014) was used for the measurement of employee performance. One-dimensional and 10 expression employee cultural values scale developed by van Knippenberg (2000) was used to determine the organization's perceptions of its employees' cultural values. In the demographic information part of the study, the employees were asked about their gender, age group, marital status, region where they got their education, working time in the sector and their positions in the workplace.

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypothesis of the research for the study model shown in Figure 1 is as follows.

H_1: There is an association between the perceptions of employees' attitudes toward their cultural values systems in the enterprise and their performance.

H_2: The perceptions of employees regarding the attitude they encounter in the enterprise towards their cultural values systems are significantly different depending on the regions they come from.

H_3: Employees' performance differs significantly according to the region they come from.

Reliability and Validity Analyses of the Scales

The results of the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Barlett tests conducted to determine the suitability of the explanations used in the survey for factor analysis were found to be statistically significant.
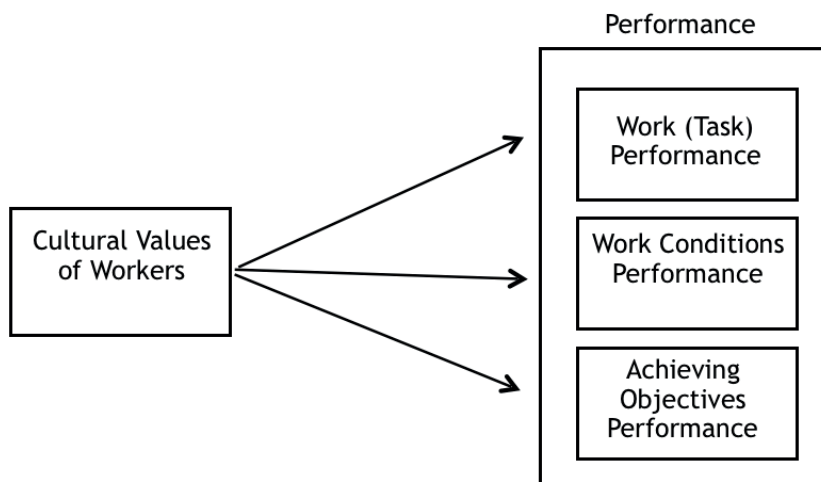
Study Model

Figure 1: Study Model

Table 1: KMO and Barlet Test Results

Variable	KMO Ratio	Chi-Square Değeri	Barlett Testi
Cultural Values System	0,743	614,054	Significant (p<0,01)
Task Performance	0,801	291,591	Significant (p<0,01)
Working Conditions	0,809	627,348	Significant (p<0,01)
Achieving Objectives	0,799	708,311	Significant (p<0,01)
Performance	0,813	998,233	Significant (p<0,01)

As a result of varimax rotations, it was determined that the factors were distributed according to the dimensions indicated on the scales. According to this result in expressions with factor loadings with more than one factor; if the factor loadings between the two expressions are greater than 0,10, then the expression is evaluated as having a high factor load. Factor loads of all expressions were found to be over 0.50. According to the results of the factor analysis, the expressions forming the scales were suitable for evaluation. However, since all the factor loads were above 0.50, structure validity was obtained at the same time.

The Cronbach Alpha values of the scales were found to be 0.844 for the Cultural Values System, 0.796 for the Task Dimension, 0.866 for the Working Conditions Dimension, 0.812 for the Objective Achievement Dimension and 0.851 for the Performance Dimension. (Table 2).

Analysis and Findings

The frequency distributions of the sample group of the study are as follows. 62% of the respondents were women, 54% were in the 20-30 age group of, 70% were married, 38% were primary school graduates, 41% had 6-9 years of work experience and 50% were unskilled workers (Table 4).

Table 2: Reliability Analysis Results of Scales and Explained Variance Scales

Variable	Number of expressio	Cronbach Alpha Value	Explained Variance Percentage
Cultural Values System	10	0,844	53,009%
Task Performance	5	0,796	56,321%
Working Conditions	8	0,866	61,164%
Achieving Objectives	5	0,812	62,506%
Performance	18	0,851	68,404%

Table 4: Gender, age, marital status, work experience and positions of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Women	163	%62
Men	100	%38
Age Group	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
20-30	141	% 54
31-40	64	% 24
41-50	49	% 8,5
51 and over	9	% 3,5
Marital Status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Married	184	70%
Single	79	30%
Education	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Literate	18	7%
Primary School	101	38%
Secondary School	91	35%
High School	51	19%
University	2	1%
Sectoral Work Experience	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Less than 1 year	42	3%
1-5 Years	167	35%
6-9 Years	51	41%
10 Years and over	3	21%
Position	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Novice / Worker	134	50%
Experienced Worker	101	39%
Supervisor / Group Manager	28	11%

Table 5 is comprised of the distributions regarding the origin of the sample group.

Table 5: Regional groups of the participants

Region	Frequency	Percentage
Mediterranean	8	% 3
Eastern Anatolia	53	% 20
Southeast Anatolia	46	% 18
Aegean	11	% 4
Central Anatolia	87	% 33
Black Sea	39	% 15
Marmara	19	% 7

As can be seen in the table above, the largest group in the sample group participating in the study constitutes participants from the Central Anatolian Region with 33%.

Pearson and Sperman correlation analyzes were performed to determine the association between the value criterion and other dimensions in the study model. Cohen's (1988) "in terms of correlation coefficient for social sciences 0,10- 0,29 indicates a low association while 0,30 -0,49 indicates a medium association and 0,50 -1,00 indicates a strong association" was used to evaluate the association between the two variables. (Altuntaş 2014: 11; Deniz and Noyan, 2014: 930). According to this, it was determined that there is a moderate association between the cultural values system of employees and their performances (R = 0,446 P <0,05), (Table 6).

Table 6: Correlation Analysis Findings Related to the Lower Dimensions of the Study Model

No:	Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1	Cultural Values Sys. Al.	1				
2	Task Performance	0,404	1			
3	Working Conditions	0,399	0,815	1		
4	Achieving Objectives	0,401	0,787	0,867	1	
5	Performance	**0,446**	0,793	0,809	0,782	1

As can be seen from the table above, H1 hypothesis of our study is supported.

Differences analyses were carried out to test the other hypotheses of the study, namely H2: The perceptions of employees regarding the attitude they encounter in the enterprise towards their cultural values systems are significantly different depending on the regions they come from and H3: the performance of the employees differ significantly according to the regions where they come from. The Kruskal Wallis H Test was used to determine the difference because the participants originated from more than two regions. The confidence interval was determined as 95% and the significance level was determined as p <0,05 in all analysis studies. Since the sample size of the study group was over 30 people, U and Z values were used to explain the analyses and significance value results (Büyüköztürk, 2016).

According to the results of the Kruskall Wallis H Test used to compare the perceptions of the attitudes that the employees encountered regarding their own cultural values system within the enterprise according to the regions that they originated from there is a significant difference in the cultural adaptation score average in terms of the culture group (X^2:6,995; p>0,05). According to the results of Mann Whitney U test which was used to determine the difference, this difference is valid for the Aegean culture and Eastern Anatolian culture and Central Anatolian culture. The results indicate that the perception of individuals with an Aegean culture regarding attitudes about their own cultural systems is significantly more compared to the other cultures. The culture group with the lowest cultural perception average was the Central Anatolian culture group (Table 7). According to this result, the study hypothesis of H2 was supported.

Table 7: Comparison of the scale of cultural values system according to regions

Scale	Culture Group	N	$\bar{\chi}$	X²	P	Difference
Perception of cultural values system	A. Mediterranean	8	274,21	7,984	**0,05**	**C>B, B>E**
	B. Eastern Anatolia	53	253,17			
	C. Aegean	46	249,71			
	D. Southeast Anatolia	11	272,22			
	E.Central Anatolia	87	271,13			
	F.Black Sea	39	254,38			
	G.Marmara	19	259,92			

As a result of the Kruskall Wallis H Test which was carried out to compare the performance of employees according to regions, it was determined that the performance score averages indicated no significant difference based on the region of origin (X²:11,982; p>0,05). This result did not support hypothesis H3 of the study (Table 8).

Table 8: Comparison of the performance scale according to regions

Scale	Culture Group	N	$\bar{\chi}$	X²	P	Difference
Performance	A. Mediterranean	8	245,09	4,851	0,801	-
	B. Eastern Anatolia	53	236,27			
	C. Aegean	46	264,64			
	D. Southeast Anatolia	11	297,42			
	E.Central Anatolia	87	224,26			
	F.Black Sea	39	241,91			
	G.Marmara	19	251,13			

Conclusion and Recommendations

In line with the objective of this study, the perceptions of the employees regarding the attitudes they encounter within the enterprise in terms of their cultural values systems and its association with their performance are also in harmony with the reference. Accordingly, employees are striving to achieve higher performance in a business that perceives their cultural differences. Other hypotheses of the study show that regional differences cause

differences in perception of these attitudes even when cultural differences are understood within the enterprise. Accordingly, a difference was found between three regions in this study. However, no significant association was found between performance and culture group, which is another hypothesis of the study. This shows that the prejudices about the work performances of people coming from certain regions which are frequently encountered in society, are not very accurate.

It is expected that this study will be a pioneer for similar research in the future, as the study is one of the few carried out in our country in this area. Since the study was a pioneering research, it was carried out only in one line of business. However, the fact that similar studies are carried out in different lines of business and even going beyond regions and carried out on a province basis, is important in terms of determining who can work harmoniously in the design of multicultural teams composed of people from different cultures.

REFERENCES

Akın, E. (2007), Sosyolojik Düşüncenin Mekanizmaları, Kazancı Kitap, ss:20-21

Altuntaş G. (2014), "Girişimcilik ve Stratejik Yönetim İlişkisi: Bir Stratejik Girişimcilik Modeli Testi", Research Journal of Business And Management", İstanbul s:12

Balogun, J., Jarzabkowski, P., ve Vaara, E. (2011). Selling, resistance and reconciliation: A critical discursive approach to subsidiary role evolution in MNEs. Journal of International Business Studies, 42(6), 765-786.

Barutçugil, İ. (2011. Kültürler Arası Farklılıkların Yönetimi. İstanbul, Kariyer Yayıncılık.

Büyüköztürk, Ş.(2016). Sosyal Bilimler İçin Veri Analizi El Kitabı, 22. Baskı, Pegem Akademi Yayınevi, Ankara

Deniz N. & Noyan, A. (2014). "Yabancı Çalışanların Bulundukları Örgüte Uyumları ile Kültürel Deneyimlerinin İlişkisine Yönelik Bir Araştırma, 2. Örgütsel Davranış Kongresi Bildiri Kitabı, ss:925-932

Dilek Kulakoğlu, N. & Topaloğlu, C (2017). "Kültürel Farklılıkların Yönetimi Sürecinde Kültürel Zekanın Etkinliği" Anatolia: Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi, Cilt 28, sayı 1, Bahar: 96-109.

Flaherty, J. E. (2008), Handbook of Cultural Intelligence (ed. Song A. & van Dyne L.), Chapter 12, The Effecets Of Cultural Intelligence on Team Member Acceptance and Integration in Multinational Teams, 192-205, Routledge, NY,

Joshi, A. & Roh, H. (2009) 'The Role of Context in Work Team Diversity Research: A Meta-analytic Review', *Academy of Management Journal* 52(3): 599–627.

Hampden-Turner, C. & Trompenaars, F. (2000), Building Cross-cultural Competence, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, USA

Hofstede G. (1984) "Culture's Cosequences: Comparing Values Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations, Sage Publications, Londra, pp:18-20

Hofstede G., Hofstede, G. & Minkov, M. (2010) Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind, Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival, 3rd Edition, McGraw-Hill Books, ABD

Kayalar M & Aytar, O. (2012). Küresel İş Dünyasında Kültürel Farklıkların Yönetimi: Türk Girişimciliği, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Vizyoner Dergisi, C. 4 S. 7 s. 47-64

Katzenbach, J. R. & Smith D. K. (2015). The wisdom of teams: Creating the high-performance organization. Harvard Business Review Press.

Kirkman, B. L., Lowe, K. B., & Gibson, C. B. (2006). A quarter century of culture's consequences: A review of empirical research incorporating Hofstede's cultural values

framework. Journal of international business studies, 37(3), pp: 285-320.

Koopmans, L., Coffeng, J. K., Bernaards, C. M., Boot, C. R., Hildebrandt, V. H., de Vet, H. C., & van der Beek, A. J. (2014). Responsiveness of the individual work performance questionnaire. BMC public health, 14(1), 513.

Matveev, A. V. & Milter, R. G. (2004). The value of intercultural competence for performance of multicultural teams. Team Performance Management: An International Journal, 10(5/6), 104-111.

Matveev, A. V. & Nelson, P. E. (2004). Cross cultural communication competence and multicultural team performance: Perceptions of American and Russian managers. International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 4(2), 253-270.

Podsiadlowski, A., Gröschke, D., Kogler, M., Springer, C., & Van Der Zee, K. (2013). Managing a culturally diverse workforce: Diversity perspectives in organizations. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 37(2), 159-175.

Popescu, A. D., Borca, C., Fistis, G., & Draghici, A. (2014). Cultural diversity and differences in cross-cultural project teams. Procedia Technology, 16, 525-531.

Skierlo A. (2007), Avoiding Cultural Shock, VDM Verlag Müller e.K. Saarbrücken, Germany, 2007

Sürgevil, O. (2008). Farklılık Kavramına ve Farklılıkların Yönetimine Temel Oluşturan Sosyo-Psikolojik Kuramlar ve Yaklaşımlar. Balıkesir Üniversitesi SBE Dergisi, C. 11, ss:111-124

Thomas, D.C. & Inkson, K. (2004). Cultural Intelligence: People Skills For Global Business: San Farncisco, CA, Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Tomohiko T., Soyeon K., & Yuhee J, (2017) "Top management team diversity and firm performance: exploring a function of age", Team Performance Management: An International Journal, Vol. 23 Issue: 3/4,

pp.156-170

Tuckman, B. W. (2001). Developmental Sequence in Small Groups. Group Facilitation: A Research and Application Journal, 3, 66-81

Tukiainen, S. (2015). Sensemaking of managing cultural differences in a Finnish-Polish project. Scandinavian Journal of Management, 31(1), pp: 69-83.

Turan, Ş. (2005). Türk Kültür Tarihi, Türk Kültüründen Türkiye Kültürüne ve Evrenselliğe, Bilgi Yayınevi, İstanbul

van Knippenberg, D. (2000). Work motivation and performance: A social identity perspective. Applied psychology, 49(3), 357-371.

van Marrewijk, A. (2010). Situational construction of Dutch–Indian cultural differences in global IT projects. Scandinavian Journal of Management, 26(4), 368-380.

Yeşil S. (2009), Kültürel Farklılıkların Yönetimi ve Kültürel Zeka KMU İİBF Dergisi Yıl:11 Sayı: 16, Haziran 2009