

The Mediating Effect of Democratic Leadership on the Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Work Effectiveness of Punong Barangay

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the correlation between cultural intelligence and the leadership effectiveness of Punong Barangay in the barangay local government, and the mediating role of democratic leadership. The research objective was to measure the cultural intelligence levels, democratic leadership levels, and effective leadership levels, and determine the relationship between them. The survey of the 300 barangay constituents was done with a stratified random sampling method and a questionnaire of the 5-point Likert type. The data obtained was analyzed by both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings showed a significant effect of cultural intelligence on the effectiveness of leadership, and the mediator of the relationship is democratic leadership. The results indicate that barangay leaders perform better when they embrace various cultural practices and beliefs of their constituents. The research concluded that effective leadership requires both the engagement of the constituents and cultural intelligence, and suggests that future leaders should embrace a democratic style of leadership to sustain the effectiveness of leadership.

Keywords: Punong Barangay (PB), Cultural Intelligence, Democratic Leadership, Leadership Effectiveness, Mediation Analysis

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of the Punong Barangay (PB) significantly influenced the general living standards of the barangay inhabitants. So, measuring their leadership will guarantee the provision, reception, and pleasure of the barangay citizens with proper, timely, and instantaneous basic services. Similarly, it is only possible to achieve development in communities if barangay officials, especially the PB, perform their vital duties and responsibilities (Valdez, 2024). Section 389 of the Republic Act No. 7160 contains the main roles and duties of the Punong Barangay that administers the barangay, the smallest political unit in the Philippines. The effectiveness of the barangay heads in performing their functions and responsibilities is, however, challenged by different factors, such as confusion on the position and functions of the heads, the financial constraints, lack of experience and skills, and adapting to modern technology (Morales, 2022). These are some of the huge elements that prevent the efficient, timely, and timely delivery of the basic services to the barangay constituents (Valdez, 2024).

The success of the Punong Barangay as a leader directly determines the general welfare of the community, given that it is important in empowering the barangay local government unit (Arcadia Alice T. Ordoñez, 2022). Therefore, it is vital to judge the level of performance of the Punong Barangay because it shows the services offered to the community (Aquino et al., 2017). Moreover, effective leadership ensures that policies and laws are well interpreted and well translated into actions that will favor the constituents (Ismail, 2017). This paper seeks to provide insights, analysis, and recommendations on how the personality, mindsets, attributes, and capabilities of the Punong Barangay affect their leadership performance and effectiveness in offering right and appropriate basic services to the community at the right time. Moreover, the study can also be used to shed more light on how the barangay leaders can successfully address various cultural dynamics in a community, which in turn results in better governance practices.

Cultural Intelligence and leadership effectiveness are entrenched in a relationship with democratic leadership being the mediating factor in the running or management of particular organizations. The democratic leadership style may influence the organizational performance and employee satisfaction in either a positive or a negative way, and Cultural Intelligence is the factor that barangay or municipal leaders can apply in order to understand what approach to employ in accordance with the cultural diversity of the locality (Aldhaheri, 2017). Also, the locale setting may contribute to the influence of the impact of leadership style on leadership effectiveness. Especially, the barangays are a unique environment, which requires one to know the cultural values and beliefs of the community to lead them (Menguin, 2010).

Leadership is an essential factor to ensure the success of the organization that is desired (Hawkes, 2020). Community progress and development are achieved through effective leadership by the Punong Barangay. Furthermore, it is needed and helpful, since it not only frees the subordinates but also motivates them and offers them a conducive working atmosphere that ultimately results in the overall positive performance of the organization (Lena G. Karauri*, 2024). The quality and effectiveness of a leader determine the performance of the organization (Nandasinghe, 2020).

The previous studies on leadership effectiveness present important knowledge that can be applied to enhance the perspectives of leadership development, organizational planning, policy enforcement, and cultural relations with the aim of achieving a better and culturally aware leadership in multicultural and diverse settings (Kapur, 2020). Earlier research also prompts leaders to become more deliberate about transforming their styles and improving their cultural intelligence in order to deliver greater results (Juliet Bourke, PhD, and Andrea Titus, March 06, 2020). Along with the positive implications of the research on leadership effectiveness, the present study will be useful to the Punong Barangay in the locality in the future, as it suggests the critical interactions of cultural intelligence and leadership effectiveness, where democratic leadership plays the mediating role.

Theoretical Review

The Contingency Model: A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness

The model stated that the intellectual and task-relevant skills of the leader and the skills and motivation of the members all affect the performance of the group. The general performance of the subordinate or constituents is in the capability of the leader to present himself or herself in the organization. Anthony Solomon (2017) discovered in his study that cultural intelligence has a considerable influence on the effective leadership of the PB, where metacognition and motivational factors were identified as important antecedents of exemplary constituents' performance and involvement in the community. The Integrated Multi-Style Model of Hede (2001) indicates that the effectiveness arises due to leader-manager behavior on different dimensions, which needs empirical exploration of different patterns of style, and comparison between the effectiveness of different combinations. Leadership effectiveness is seen in an organization when the leader can make the best out of his/her subordinates.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The research is based on the Transformational Leadership Theory of Bass and Riggio (2006), which holds that leaders are expected to do more and serve as role models for subordinates. Leaders provoke and motivate the followers to perform exemplary. This theory highlights the role of the leaders in the general welfare of their subordinates and supports them to excel in all aspects. The leaders present themselves as mentors and advisors, as well as fulfilling the needs of their employees (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). The theory motivates leaders to consider their subordinates more and to ensure that there is always good relations in the organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR EACH VARIABLE

Democratic Leadership

Democratic Leadership is a kind of leadership style that lays stress on teamwork and mutual decision-making. It will engage team members in decision-making process as it will instill a sense of ownership and accountability. This is typified by open communication and equal distribution of power whereby collective

input is held above unilateral decisions (Imran, 2025). It can result in more innovation, job satisfaction, and more team morale.

Cultural Intelligence

Cultural Intelligence denotes the skills of a person/leader to relate and work in different cultures (Dura et al., 2021). First, the abbreviation CQ, and Cultural Intelligence, are the terms that Ang and Dyne (2008) come up with as the research-grounded approach to the measurement and prediction of the intercultural performance. CQ plays a significant role in the Leadership of the Punong Barangay, considering that they lead with ease to the multicultural sectors that are present in the community. The study of Caterina and Diletta (2018) defines Cultural Intelligence as a construct, which describes the capacity of an individual to operate and cope well in culturally diverse environments, and they conceptualize cultural intelligence as an aggregate multidimensional construct. This research was conducted to test the quality of score interpretation of the Italian version of the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS). The CQS will assess the capacity of an individual to comprehend, behave, and orient well in a culturally diverse environment (Gozzoli and Gazzaroli, 2018).

Leadership Effectiveness

The leadership effectiveness is defined as the level to which the actions, behaviors, and decisions of the leader help to achieve organizational goals and objectives and have a positive effect on the well-being of followers and overall organizational operations (Deleña, Niasas, and Saguban, 2025). It includes the capacity of a leader to be able to motivate, influence, and guide persons and teams in a manner that desired results are attained. The article by (Lu, Swaab, and Galinsky, 2022) indicates that leaders are instrumental in guiding people to realize common objectives that will ensure a high performance in the long term.

The study proposes a number of null hypotheses to test the relationship among variables like cultural intelligence, democratic leadership, and leadership effectiveness of the Punong Barangay.

H0₁: There is no significant direct effect of cultural intelligence on the leadership effectiveness of the Punong Barangay.

H0₂: Cultural intelligence does not significantly influence the level of democratic leadership of the Punong Barangay.

H0₃: Democratic leadership does not significantly affect the effectiveness of the Punong Barangay.

H0₄: Democratic leadership does not mediate the relationship between cultural intelligence and Punong Barangay leadership effectiveness.

Research Framework

The conceptual framework of the study, as shown in Figure 1, illustrates the following paths to achieving PB effectiveness. **Cultural intelligence** as the independent variable, **leadership effectiveness** as the dependent variable, and **democratic leadership** style as the mediator of the relationship. These variables will be used to determine how effective are the Punong barangay as perceived by the constituents in the barangay.

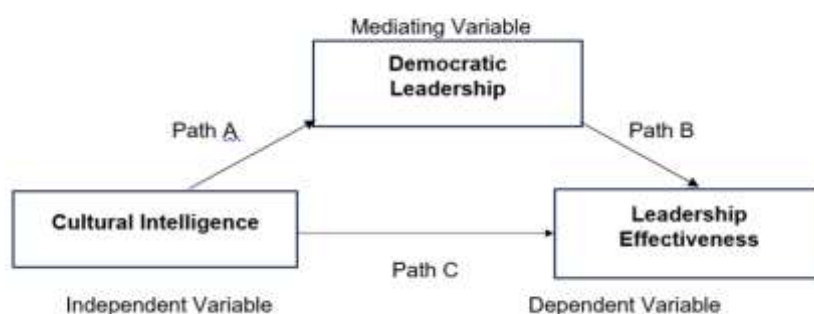


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the methodologies and processes that will be utilized in the study. This section outlines the research design, the study’s geographical scope, the research respondents, the research instruments, the data collection methods, and the statistical tools.

Research Respondent

In this research, the total of 300 respondents of the study were randomly selected barangay constituents in the nineteen (19) barangays of the municipality. The randomly selected barangay constituents shall be eighteen (18) years old and above, with a duration of residency of at least one (1) year, and registered voters in the barangay. Those eighteen (18) years old and below, with less than a year of residency, and who are not registered voters were excluded from participating in the study. Based on the data provided by the National Statistics Office (NSO), the Municipality of Santo Tomas, Province of Davao del Norte, has a total population of One Hundred Twenty-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Sixty-Seven (128,667) with the distribution rate of population per brangay presented below:

BARANGAY	POPULATION PERCENTAGE (2020)	POPULATION (2020)
BALAGUNAN	4.84%	6,230
BOBONGON	5.44%	7,000
CASIG-ANG	2.15%	2,768
ESPERANZA	2.37%	3,052
KIMAMON	5.61%	7,220
KINAMAYAN	4.31%	5,551
LA LIBERTAD	4.53%	5,831
LUNGA-OG	2.85%	3,662
MAGWAWA	1.28%	1,644
NEW KATIPUNAN	5.41%	6,955
SAN MIGUEL	2.56%	3,300
NEW VISAYAS	2.99%	3,848
PANTARON	2.43%	3,127
SALVACION	3.77%	4,845
SAN JOSE	2.75%	3,541
SAN VICENTE	1.99%	2,555
TALOMO	3.48%	4,473
TIBAL-OG	37.66%	48,459
TULALIAN	3.58%	4,606
TOTAL	100%	128,667

Additionally, with the data presented above, the researcher randomly selected three hundred (300) barangay constituents (respondents) in every barangay, with the quantity proportionate to the percentage of the population in the year 2020, as presented below:

Name of Barangay	% of distribution per 2020 PSA Census	No. of Respondents
Tulalian	4%	12
Tibal-og	37%	111
Talomo	4%	12
San Vicente	2%	6

San Miguel	3%	9
San Jose	3%	9
Salvacion	4%	12
Pantaron	2%	6
New Visayas	3%	9
New Katipunan	5%	15
Magwawa	1%	3
Lunga-og	3%	9
La Libertad	5%	15
Kinamayan	4%	12
Kimamon	6%	18
Esperanza	2%	6
Casig-ang	2%	6
Bobongon	5%	15
Balagunan	5%	15
TOTAL	100%	300

The respondents' participation is voluntary. They will be free to refuse and have no compensation or benefit to which the respondents are entitled. Additionally, they may withdraw their consent at any time and shall not continue to participate without incurring any penalty. They cannot be denied legal rights and procedures due to their participation in this scientific inquiry.

The respondents in this study will be selected using a stratified random sampling technique. This technique applies to several collection methods in which the sample respondents are chosen by chance, yet should have a defined selection probability (Lavrakas, 2008). Through this technique, samples were taken from the population of the nineteen (19) barangays in the municipality, specifically from the constituents of each barangay.

The study will be conducted in the nineteen (19) barangays, namely: Tibal-og, New Katipunan, Kimamon, Pantaron, Lunga-og, Talomo, San Jose, Magwawa, New Visayas, Bobongon, Balagunan, Tulalian, Kinamayan, San Miguel, La Libertad, Casig-ang, Salvacion, San Vicente, and Esperanza, all under the Municipality of Santo Tomas, Province of Davao del Norte. A 1st class municipality in the 2nd District of the Province of Davao del Norte in Region XI, Philippines. Santo Tomas is approximately 63 kilometers from Buhangin, Davao City. The Municipality of Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte, is a progressive and economically thriving area, with a total population of 128,667 people, according to the 2020 census.

Materials and Instrument

The study adopted downloadable questionnaires from web sources to measure the variables. The instrument for Cultural Intelligence is from the study of The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS): A Contribution to the Italian Validation by Gozzoli & Gazzaroli (2018). The tool of measurement of leadership effectiveness is a

study by Lacerda (2015), entitled "Understanding Leadership Effectiveness in Organizational Settings: An Integrative Approach". The democratic Leadership instrument is the research of Haryanto et al. (2022), which was titled Enhancing the Employee Engagement in Indonesian Logistics and Forwarders Industry: The Moderating Role of Democratic Leadership Style.

The tool of democratic leadership style was taken in the works by Haryanto et al. (2022) under the title Enhancing Employee Engagement in the Indonesian Logistics and Forwarders Industry: The Moderating Role of Democratic Leadership Style. It entails three (3) indicators namely; Decision-making, Motivating and Barangay Constituents Interaction. Its reliability will be put to the test through pilot testing. The Cronbach alpha of this instrument is 0.942. With this, the internal consistency will be defined as excellent.

The journal article to which the Cultural Intelligence instrument belongs is The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS): A Contribution to the Italian Validation by Gozzali and Gazzaroli (2018). This tool consists of four domains, including metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ. Its reliability will be put to the test through pilot testing. The Cronbach alpha of the instrument is 0.951. This will make the internal consistency to be termed as excellent.

The tool to measure leadership performance is from the research by Lacerda (2015), titled, Understanding Leadership Effectiveness in Organizational Settings: An Integrative Approach. This tool is made up of five indicators, namely: communication competence, relationship proximity, coaching behavior, vision articulation and realization, and leadership effectiveness. To test its reliability, pilot testing would be done. This instrument will have Cronbach's alpha of 0.970, representing good internal consistency.

The research employed a scale to assess the extent of culture, workplace dynamics, and employee performance. This scale spans from low (1.0 - 1.79) to exceptionally high (4.20 - 5.00), with corresponding descriptions and interpretations for each category. A score falling within the high range signifies that these characteristics are consistently observed and displayed, while a score in the low range indicates that they are never evident. The intermediate ranges represent the degrees of frequency and significance of these attributes.

In addition to testing the survey research tool for content validity, validation procedures were carried out. The research committee proposed and recommended modifications to the instrument. After incorporating the committee's suggestions, the instrument underwent validation by five experts, including an external evaluator from an institution outside the University of Mindanao. According to the feedback, the overall average validation rating was 4.20, falling within the very good to excellent range. Therefore, the contextualized instrument successfully passed both the reliability test and the validation process. This indicates that the findings presented in this paper are both trustworthy and credible.

Design and Procedure

The study utilized quantitative non-experimental research that will entail descriptive correlational research and the analysis of mediation. Mediating variables refer to behavioral, psychological, or social constructs through which one variable transmits its effect to another. One research tool that can be used to explain a process or a mechanism through which a variable has an influence on another variable is the use of mediation. Additionally, the study examines how one variable affects another through mechanisms. Mediating factors often encompass aspects that bridge the impact of an independent variable (X) on a dependent variable (Y). As noted by MacKinnon (2012), mediation analysis assists researchers in unraveling the process by which a predictor variable (X) influences an outcome variable (Y) by introducing a mediator variable (M). In this research, the model will be employed to investigate the relationship between cultural intelligence (X) and leadership effectiveness (Y) through the employment of a democratic leadership style (M).

The chosen research designs can best address the particular goal set by this research. The major reason why the research designs fit the study is that they are focused on researching the mediating role of democratic leadership on the relationship between cultural intelligence and leadership effectiveness. Because the study is expected to test mediation, the statistical tools and techniques to be used must be appropriate to test mediating effects. This usually entails the aspect of mediation analyses to determine the strength and significance of the

mediating role of democratic Leadership.

The research was conducted in the second quarter of 2025, when the researcher followed the normal procedures that are set by the government agencies in data collection to the letter. In order to commence the research, permission was obtained from the Municipal Local Government Operations Officer (MLGOO) of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Municipality of Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte. It is upon the DILG approval that the researcher will be able to start the process of data collection in the nineteen barangays of the municipality. Subsequently, the collected data will be meticulously tallied, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted in alignment with the study's objectives and purpose.

The following statistical tools were used in the computation of data and testing the mean and standard deviation, was used to describe the level of democratic leadership style, Cultural Intelligence, and leadership effectiveness of the Punong Barangay. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r), was utilized to determine the significant relationship between Cultural Intelligence and leadership effectiveness, democratic leadership and leadership effectiveness, and Cultural Intelligence and democratic leadership. Furthermore, Sobel-Z test examined the mediating effect of democratic leadership on the relationship between cultural intelligence and leadership effectiveness of the barangay heads.

The research involved ethical considerations that were carefully addressed following the guidelines established by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) under Protocol No. UMERC-2025-178, issued on May 10, 2025. These ethical concerns primarily arose from the study's approach, which raised issues related to the right to conduct the research, confidentiality, and anonymity. To ensure participation, the researcher allowed barangay constituents of the nineteen barangays of the municipality to join the study freely without fearing repercussions, penalties, or loss of benefits. Privacy and confidentiality were prioritized, with strict compliance with the Data Privacy Act in place to safeguard respondents' personal information.

Consent was obtained from the organization and individual participants, ensuring that jargon was avoided for clarity. Recruiting participants, collecting data, and administering questionnaires were carefully structured to respect respondents' involvement. While the study presented risks and solely focused on perceptions towards the effectiveness of the punong barangay, its outcomes were anticipated to significantly impact the welfare of the barangay constituents. The research strictly adhered to ethical standards, steering clear of practices like plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, conflicts of interest, or deception to guarantee that all data and findings were authentically gathered and accurately represented. Approval was sought from the concerned authority, and pilot testing was conducted to ensure alignment with the research objectives.

The rights were outlined, with the researcher as the corresponding author and the adviser as the co-author. Publication would depend on the agreement of the first author. Additionally, the research adhered to storage guidelines set by UMERC to uphold standards in its ethical conduct.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the results related to the connection between Cultural Intelligence and leadership effectiveness. It also examines how democratic leadership style affects or mediates the relationship. Moreover, the researcher will discuss whether the findings achieved the objectives and goals of the research.

Cultural Intelligence

The constituents of the barangays freely expressed a realistic assessment as to the cultural intelligence of the Punong Barangay in the Municipality of Santo Tomas, Province of Davao del Norte. Table 1 shows the level of cultural intelligence of the Punong Barangay in the Municipality of Santo Tomas, Province of Davao del Norte. The scores across the four indicators of cultural intelligence range from 4.37 to 4.41, with a mean of 4.38 and a standard deviation of 0.63. The overall total score was significantly marked as very high. Observantly, the statistics show that respondents or constituents across all nineteen (19) barangays of the Municipality of Santo Tomas, Province of Davao del Norte witnessed the manifestation of cultural intelligence of their Punong Barangay.

Moreover, the metacognitive cultural intelligence garnered the highest score of 4.41, which was described as very high, indicating that the Punong Barangay is often conscious of their interactions with constituents, preserving the traditions and cultures of the community. On the other hand, two (2) indicators, namely motivational cultural intelligence and behavioral cultural intelligence, got the lowest scores of 4.37, though both indicators were labeled as very high. This also indicates that the constituents observed that the Punong Barangay enjoys the interactions with those constituents from the different cultures. The same as the Punong Barangay adjusts his/her behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.

Table 1 Level of Cultural Intelligence

Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Metacognitive Cultural Intelligence	0.70	4.41	Very High
Cognitive Cultural Intelligence	0.69	4.38	Very High
Motivational Cultural Intelligence	0.70	4.37	Very High
Behavioral Cultural Intelligence	0.67	4.37	Very High
Overall	0.63	4.38	Very High

The research outcomes, as shown through the statistics labeled as very high, generally indicate that the Punog Barangay, across all barangays in the Municipality of Santo Tomas, demonstrates a high level of cultural intelligence in dealing with constituents from different cultures. The statistical results indicate that the constituents observed the happiness and willingness of the Punong Barangay to accommodate all the issues and concerns of constituents from various cultural communities.

With all aspects assessed, the Punong Barangay's consciousness in dealing with the different cultures of constituents (Metacognitive Cultural Intelligence) received the highest score of 4.41. This statistic suggests that Punong Barangays were often observed to be respectful and adaptable to the distinct cultures and traditions of their constituents. Additionally, respecting the cultures and traditions of the constituents encourages unity and establishes good relationships in the barangay.

In addition, other indicators also received very high scores, which generally suggests that Punong Barangay has exceptionally demonstrated cultural intelligence in their respective barangays, which will serve as the key to an improved governance, participative governance, and a form of government adaptive to cross-cultural diversity. Garnering high scores for cultural intelligence revealed that Punong Barangay can effectively execute or perform their duties and functions even in the face of cross-cultural diversity (Mammadov & Wald, 2025).

Leadership Effectiveness

The results in Table 2 show the mean level of leadership effectiveness of the Punong Barangay, with an overall mean of 4.40, described as very high, and a standard deviation of 0.62. It reveals that Punong Barangay consistently demonstrates most of the indicators of leadership effectiveness, including Communication Competence, Relationship Proximity, Coaching Behavior, Vision Articulation & Realization, and Leadership Effectiveness, as assessed by the barangay constituents (respondents).

Table 2 Level of Leadership Effectiveness

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Communication Competence	0.66	4.50	Very High

Relationship Proximity	0.84	4.47	Very High
Coaching Behavior	0.63	4.12	High
Vision Articulation & Realization	0.69	4.45	Very High
Leadership Effectiveness	0.69	4.47	Very High
Overall	0.62	4.40	Very High

All indicators of leadership effectiveness received a computed mean score from highest to lowest, as follows: 4.50 or very high for communication competence, 4.47 or very high for relationship proximity, 4.47 or very high for leadership effectiveness, 4.45 or very high for vision articulation and realization, and 4.12 or high for coaching behavior.

Based on the results, the overall level of leadership effectiveness manifested by the Punong Barangay was very high, which means that constituents (respondents or assessors) consistently observed in the community that their barangay head persistently performs or demonstrates all areas or indicators (communication competence, relationship proximity, leadership effectiveness, vision articulation and realization, and coaching behavior) of the variable.

Furthermore, among the assessed indicators, the coaching behavior of the Punong Barangay received the lowest score of 4.12 from the constituents (respondents or assessors), although it was described overall as high. The most concerning issue that dragged it to the lowest score of 4.12, respondents observed the inability of the Punong Barangay to solicit feedback from the constituents in any form of interaction.

Democratic Leadership

Table 3 presents the results on the level of democratic Leadership practiced by Punong Barangays. The scores across the three indicators ranged from 4.38 to 4.53, with an overall mean of 4.46 and a standard deviation of 0.66, which is described as Very High.

Table 3 Level of Democratic Leadership

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Decision Making	0.69	4.38	Very High
Constituents Interaction	0.72	4.53	Very High
Motivating	0.71	4.49	Very High
Overall	0.66	4.46	Very High

These results have revealed that Punong Barangays are always very high in terms of democratic leadership, and the interaction of the constituents is the highest (M = 4.53). This implies that they give much priority to active participation in the community, open communication, and that the interests of the constituents are heard. The least and yet very high indicator is Decision Making (M = 4.38), which shows that although the Punong Barangays engage their constituents, there is a minimal focus on not being entirely shared in the decision-making.

The implication of these findings is that Punong Barangays mostly use participatory and people-oriented Leadership, which increases collaboration and inclusiveness. This is because their talent in motivating and communicating well makes their relationships with their constituents stronger. Nevertheless, the relatively weaker score in decision-making is a sign that there are additional avenues that can be used to institutionalize

more participatory decision-making. This would enhance inclusiveness in the governance and make sure that constituents can also be more active in the development of barangay policies and initiatives.

Significance of the Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness

Table 4 depicts the relevance of the correlation involving cultural intelligence and leadership effectiveness of Punong Barangays. The findings show a very strong positive relationship ($r = .863$, $p < 0.05$). Of all sub-dimensions, Cognitive Cultural had the most significant correlation ($r = .827$) whereas Motivational Cultural Intelligence had the lowest yet significant relationship ($r = .809$).

Table 4 Significance of the Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness of Barangay Heads

Cultural Intelligence	Leadership Effectiveness					
	Communication Competence	Relationship Proximity	Coaching Behavior	Vision Articulation & Realization	Leadership Effectiveness	Overall
Metacognitive Cultural Intelligence	.768** .000	.581** .000	.611** .000	.672** .000	.732** .000	.754** .000
Cognitive Cultural Intelligence	.823** .000	.612** .000	.695** .000	.759** .000	.806** .000	.827** .000
Motivational Cultural Intelligence	.808** .000	.592** .000	.656** .000	.765** .000	.791** .000	.809** .000
Behavioral Cultural Intelligence	.790** .000	.598** .000	.658** .000	.759** .000	.755** .000	.797** .000
Overall	.864** .000	.645** .000	.709** .000	.800** .000	.835** .000	.863** .000

The results indicate that Punong Barangays that have cultural intelligence are better leaders. The correlation is very high and indicates that the capacity to reflect, comprehend, and adjust to various cultural situations are very important in improving communication, relationship building, vision articulation, and overall leadership performance.

This finding suggests that effective leadership in local governance is an issue that is highly propelled by cultural proficiency. Culturally intelligent leaders can manage diversity in a sensitive way and this enhances their leadership process to be inclusive and effective. This, in a real sense, means that there will be an increase in service delivery and trust among constituents.

Significance of the Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Democratic Leadership

Table 5 shows that there exists a correlation between cultural intelligence and democratic Leadership. The results indicate that the degree of positive correlation ($r = .872$, $p < 0.05$) is very strong. The sub-dimension Cognitive Cultural Intelligence proved to have the highest correlation ($r = .855$), and the Behavioral Cultural Intelligence was the weakest but still very high ($r = .776$).

Table 5 Significance of the Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Democratic Leadership of Barangay Heads

Cultural Intelligence		Democratic Leadership			
		Decision Making	Constituents Interaction	Motivating	Overall
Metacognitive Cultural Intelligence		.641**	.788**	.795**	.798**
		.000	.000	.000	.000
Cognitive Cultural Intelligence		.713**	.840**	.830**	.855**
		.000	.000	.000	.000
Motivational Cultural Intelligence		.670**	.783**	.756**	.792**
		.000	.000	.000	.000
Behavioral Cultural Intelligence		.684**	.756**	.727**	.776**
		.000	.000	.000	.000
Overall		.733**	.857**	.842**	.872**
		.000	.000	.000	.000

The findings also show that the Punong Barangays that possess greater cultural intelligence are also more predisposed to embrace democratic leadership practices. Their knowledge and awareness of cultural differences help improve their preference to promote engagement, inspire constituents, and have an open communication system.

This correlation means that cultural intelligence enhances democratic disposition in governance thus making sure that not only do Punong Barangays learn about cultural diversity, but they also translate cultural awareness into inclusive management practices.

Significance of the Relationship between Democratic Leadership and Leadership Effectiveness

Table 6 shows the importance of the correlation between democratic Leadership and leadership effectiveness. Findings indicate that the correlation is very high ($r = .880, p < 0.05$). There was the greatest correlation with Constituents Interaction ($r = .856$), and Motivating had the least though still significant correlation ($r = .809$).

Table 6 Significance of the Relationship between Democratic Leadership and Leadership Effectiveness of Barangay Heads

Democratic Leadership	Leadership Effectiveness					
	Communication Competence	Relationship Proximity	Coaching Behavior	Vision Articulation & Realization	Leadership Effectiveness	Overall
Decision Making	.786**	.632**	.667**	.726**	.720**	.792**
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Constituents Interaction	.866** .000	.649** .000	.668** .000	.809** .000	.823** .000	.856** .000
Motivating	.828** .000	.618** .000	.628** .000	.764** .000	.770** .000	.809** .000
Overall	.889** .000	.680** .000	.702** .000	.824** .000	.829** .000	.880** .000

The findings indicate that more democratic Punong Barangays are also effective in commanding their communities. Leaders who engage constituents in discussions, promote collaboration, and motivate them toward collective goals demonstrate higher effectiveness in communication, vision articulation, and execution of barangay responsibilities.

This means that through democratic Leadership, trust, participation and collaboration are built, hence increasing the effectiveness of leadership. It emphasizes the significance of participatory leadership styles in ensuring good governance at the barangay level.

Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables

Table 7 provides the regression analysis of the mediating effect of democratic Leadership in the relationship between cultural intelligence and leadership effectiveness. The findings have shown that cultural intelligence is a strong predictor of leadership effectiveness ($\beta=.863$, $p = 0.000$). When democratic Leadership is introduced as a mediator, the effect of cultural intelligence on leadership effectiveness decreases from $\beta = .863$ to $\beta = .398$, while democratic Leadership significantly predicts leadership effectiveness ($\beta = .533$, $p < 0.000$).

Table 7 Regression analysis showing the influence of cultural intelligence in effectiveness as mediated by democratic Leadership

Step	Path	B	S.E.	β
1	c	.844	.029	.863***
2	a	.906	.029	.872***
3	b	.502	.048	.533***
4	c'	.389	.050	.398***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p = 0.000$

Table 8 presents the Sobel Test results. The calculated z-value is 9.85 with $p < 0.05$, indicating that democratic Leadership partially mediates the relationship between cultural intelligence and leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, the z-test result of 9.85 is higher than the standard confidence level of 1.96, which shows that it is statistically significant.

Table 8 Results of statistical analysis on the presence (or absence) of mediating effect

Combination of Variables	Sobel z	p-value	Mediation
Cultural intelligence → democratic leadership → effectiveness	9.851988	$p < 0.05$	Partial mediation

* $p < 0.05$

The mediation analysis reveals that although cultural intelligence has a direct effect on leadership effectiveness, not all of this effect is conveyed through democratic leadership. The partial mediation implies that higher cultural intelligence of Punong Barangays makes them effective leaders partially due to practicing of democratic Leadership, though the cultural intelligence still possesses a direct and significant impact on the leadership output.

Statistical result shows that both cultural intelligence and democratic Leadership are important in ensuring that effectiveness in leadership is achieved. Cultural intelligence gives the Punong Barangay the flexibility and sensitivity, whilst democratic Leadership converts these characteristics into a participatory style of leadership that transforms and empowers the constituents. The results highlight the significance of acquiring both competencies concurrently in order to be successful in barangay governance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's objectives, primarily to determine the mediating effect of democratic leadership on the relationship between cultural intelligence and leadership effectiveness, the study revealed that the mediating variable partially mediates the relationship. This simply means that, with the result of partial mediation, cultural intelligence, as the independent variable, has a direct relationship with the dependent variable, leadership effectiveness.

In the assessment of the level of cultural intelligence demonstrated by the Punong Barangay as perceived by the constituents, respondents confirmed that their barangay heads are always observed manifesting all of the indicators, like metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, behavioral CQ, and motivational CQ, while interacting with the constituents. Additionally, this study concluded that the Punong Barangay practiced the democratic style of leadership that significantly impacts leadership efficiency. As the study also concluded that Punong Barangay highly demonstrated communication competence, relationship proximity, coaching behavior, and vision articulation and realization, as testified by the barangay's constituents, which resulted in service delivery satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Additionally, this research exposed that there is really a significant relationship among variables: cultural intelligence, democratic leadership, and effectiveness of the barangay heads. This concluded that there is a vital interplay among variables in order for the PB to be effective in leadership.

The investigation conducted by Rodriguez (2025) proved the validity of the study results and findings and identified that participatory forms of leadership can have a significant positive influence on effective local governance. In addition, it was also pointed out that the appreciation and practice of different cultural values in a meaningful manner help in enhancing the success of the barangay head. The other study also indicated that effective leadership, in addition to community involvement, enhances the likelihood of realizing satisfactory basic service delivery in the barangay level (Valdez, 2024). In order to improve the effective leadership of the barangay head, Malajos (2025) suggested that he/she should always ensure that the barangay constituents are involved, particularly in the decision-making process.

After presenting all of the findings and conclusions, various recommendations were proposed, which include: promulgation of a continuous program for the capability building of the Punong Barangay focusing on participatory governance, shared decision making, and inclusivity. This will make the PB more effective and efficient in every facet of the local governance and especially in the barangay level. Enhancement of the coaching and mentoring ability of the PB is also recommended, as statistical results highlighted a very low performance of the PB in soliciting feedback from the constituents. This specific area of leadership must be considered while aiming to achieve and deliver satisfactory and efficient local governance.

Future scholars may utilize the results of this study, providing them with evidence-based ideas that truly possessing cultural intelligence and the implementation of a democratic style of leadership significantly impact the effectiveness of the Punong Barangay. This study further recommended that future researchers should explore more issues and concerns, as well as solutions, on the effectiveness not only for barangay leaders or heads but also for global leaders who are the key players in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Barangay constituents may consider this study as their guiding point in choosing their future competent leaders, while seeing the findings of this research that a leader who possesses cultural intelligence, at the same time practicing the democratic style of leadership, is more effective than those who are not. This study will serve as their tool to have a better community or society while carefully selecting competent, effective, and efficient future leaders.

Results of this study may provide insights to the future leaders about the significant impact of having cultural intelligence and practicing a shared style of leadership towards achieving the most relevant, competent, effective, and efficient local governance.

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