



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Echoes of Home, Hearts Abroad Family, Emotion, and Experience in the Expatriate Adaptation Journey to Achieve Excellence Performance in Indonesia

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In an increasingly globalized world, the effectiveness of expatriates is pivotal to organizational success, yet many expatriates struggle with cultural adaptation, resulting in diminished performance or early return. This study examines the roles of emotional intelligence, international experience, and family support in enhancing expatriate performance, with cross-cultural adaptation as a mediating factor. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with partial least squares (PLS) on data from 154 expatriates working in Indonesia, our findings reveal that emotional intelligence significantly influences both cross-cultural adaptation and expatriate performance, suggesting that emotionally intelligent individuals are better equipped to handle cultural challenges. Furthermore, international experience positively affects cross-cultural adaptation but lacks a direct impact on performance, underscoring adaptation as a critical pathway through which experience translates into effectiveness. Contrary to conventional assumptions, family support does not show a significant effect on either adaptation or performance, challenging its traditional role in expatriate success models. The results position cross-cultural adaptation as a crucial mediator that converts emotional intelligence and international experience into high performance, reframing adaptation from a mere adjustment process to a strategic enabler of expatriate effectiveness. These insights carry important implications for global talent management, emphasizing the need for organizations to prioritize adaptive skills in expatriate selection and training, and to re-evaluate support structures beyond family-based frameworks. This study advances expatriate literature by establishing cross-cultural adaptation as a pivotal mediator, providing actionable recommendations for enhancing expatriate success in complex cultural landscapes.

INTRODUCTION

In an era of unprecedented global integration, organizations are increasingly reliant on expatriates to spearhead their international operations, transfer knowledge across borders, and build strategic bridges between headquarters and diverse local markets. The role of expatriates is far from simple because it demands not only technical expertise but also an ability to navigate the cultural, social, and emotional complexities of a foreign environment. Yet, despite extensive investments in expatriate programs, failure rates remain high, with many expatriates struggling to meet performance

expectations or facing premature return due to cultural misalignment (Black & Gregersen, 1991a; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). This persistent challenge underscores a crucial question for global human resource management: what factors truly enable expatriates to excel in cross-cultural contexts, and how can organizations leverage these insights to enhance expatriate effectiveness?

Existing literature highlights emotional intelligence and international experience as key determinants of expatriate success. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to perceive, manage, and regulate one's own emotions and empathize with others, has been shown to facilitate adaptability and interpersonal effectiveness in cross-cultural interactions (Ang & Inkpen, 2008; Qomariyah et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2020). Expatriates with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle cultural conflicts, manage stress, and foster positive working relationships, making them more likely to succeed in foreign assignments (Weerasinghe et al., 2021; Han et al., 2022). Similarly, international experience is often seen as a foundational asset, equipping expatriates with cultural sensitivity and an adaptive mindset that enhances their ability to operate in diverse settings (Geil & Greenwald, 2020; Setti et al., 2022). However, research also suggests that international experience alone may be insufficient to guarantee success, as its effectiveness depends on the expatriate's ability to actively adapt to the host culture (Brockner et al., 2006; Caldwell et al., 2024; Zhu et al., 2015). The influence of family support is also frequently emphasized in expatriate literature. Family support is presumed to provide expatriates with emotional stability and a sense of continuity, which can help them cope with the challenges of relocation (Lämsä et al., 2017; Shah et al., 2022). Nevertheless, recent studies have raised questions about the adequacy of family support alone in influencing professional performance, indicating that while it contributes to well-being, it may not directly translate into enhanced work effectiveness (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Haslberger et al., 2014; Haslberger & Brewster, 2008). This finding suggests that traditional expatriate models may overestimate the role of family support and invites a reassessment of how organizations approach expatriate well-being and performance enhancement.

An emerging perspective in expatriate research identifies cross-cultural adaptation as a central mediating mechanism that links emotional intelligence, international experience, and family support to expatriate performance. Cross-cultural adaptation is defined as the ability to adjust one's behaviour and perspectives to align with the cultural norms and expectations of the host country, allowing for smoother social integration and more effective professional interactions (Ward et al., 2001). Despite its importance, cross-cultural adaptation is often treated as an individual characteristic rather than a strategic factor that can convert personal attributes into measurable performance outcomes. The limited understanding of cross-cultural adaptation as a mediator represents a critical gap in the literature, especially given its potential to reshape how organizations approach expatriate selection, training, and support.

This study addresses this gap by investigating how cross-cultural adaptation mediates the relationships between emotional intelligence, international experience, family support, and expatriate performance. By focusing on the mediating role of adaptation, this research moves beyond traditional direct-effect models to offer a more nuanced understanding of expatriate success. We propose that cross-cultural adaptation acts as the transformative mechanism that enables expatriates to channel their emotional intelligence and international experience into effective performance. Additionally, by re-examining the influence of family support, this study seeks to challenge existing assumptions and provide evidence-based insights that can refine organizational expatriate management practices.

The implications of this study extend beyond theoretical advancement, offering practical guidance for global organizations. If adaptation indeed plays a pivotal role in driving performance, multinational firms must prioritize adaptive competencies in both selection and training processes, viewing them as core elements of expatriate readiness rather than peripheral skills. Moreover, this study's findings on family support invite a broader rethinking of expatriate well-being strategies, suggesting that organizations should develop a more comprehensive support framework that includes professional resources such as cultural coaching, mentorship, and mental health services. By integrating cross-cultural adaptation as a strategic factor in expatriate performance, this study addresses a critical gap in the literature and provides actionable insights for enhancing expatriate effectiveness in an increasingly complex global landscape.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

International Human Resources Management

International Human Resource Management (IHRM) is a critical field within the broader discipline of Human Resource Management (HRM), focusing on the unique challenges and opportunities associated with managing human resources in a global context (Delery & Roumpi, 2017; Horak et al., 2019; C. J. Zhu et al., 2013). IHRM theory encompasses a broad range of concepts and frameworks that guide the management of human resources in multinational corporations (MNCs), with particular relevance to expatriates (De Cieri et al., 2007; Fan et al., 2016; López-Duarte et al., 2020). Expatriates, employees who are sent by their organizations to work in foreign countries, play a pivotal role in facilitating knowledge transfer, cross-cultural collaboration, and organizational effectiveness in global contexts (Cooke et al., 2019; Primecz, 2020). Theoretical perspectives within IHRM offer valuable insights into the complexities of expatriate management, addressing various aspects such as selection, training, compensation, and repatriation (Sukalova et al., 2022; Welch & Björkman, 2015). One key theoretical framework in IHRM is the Cross-Cultural Adjustment Model, which emphasizes the importance of facilitating expatriates' adaptation to the host country's culture and work environment (Kour & Jyoti, 2022; Mahmud et al., 2020). This model posits that expatriate success and performance are contingent upon their ability to navigate cross-cultural challenges, develop cultural intelligence, and establish effective working relationships with local colleagues and stakeholders (Nolan & Liang, 2022). By understanding the factors influencing expatriate adjustment, MNCs can design supportive HRM practices and interventions to enhance expatriate performance and satisfaction during international assignments (Collings & Isichei, 2018; Zhu et al., 2018).

Emotional Intelligence and Cross Cultural Adaptation

Emotional intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation are two critical factors influencing individual and organizational success in multicultural environments (Liao et al., 2021). This hypothesis is grounded in the premise that individuals who possess higher levels of emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate the challenges of cross-cultural adaptation. Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as the ability to perceive and influence the emotions of others (Huang et al., 2022; Zhuang et al., 2022). Individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to demonstrate adaptability, empathy, and interpersonal skills, which are essential for successful cross-cultural interactions (Geil & Greenwald, 2020; Harrison & Shaffer, 2016; Solomon & Steyn, 2017). Previous research by Earley & Ang, (2003) found a positive association between emotional intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment among expatriates, suggesting that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better able to cope with the stressors and challenges of living and working in foreign cultures. Similarly, studies by Matsumoto & Hwang, (2013) and Goleman, (1995) have highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in facilitating effective communication, conflict resolution, and relationship building across cultural boundaries. Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1a: There is a significant impact between emotional intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation.

Emotional Intelligence and Expatriate Performance

Emotional intelligence and expatriate performance are critical factors influencing success in international assignments, particularly in culturally diverse settings. Research suggests that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle the challenges associated with working in foreign environments (Alghorbany & Hamzah, 2020; Earley & Ang, 2003; Goleman, 1995). Emotional intelligence, which includes the ability to recognize, understand, and regulate one's emotions and to empathize with others, plays a key role in facilitating effective adaptation in cross-cultural environments (Liao et al., 2021; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013). Individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to demonstrate adaptability, resilience, and interpersonal skills, which are essential for managing work-related stress and maintaining performance abroad (Geil & Greenwald, 2020; Harrison & Shaffer, 2016). Previous research has shown that emotional intelligence contributes to better relationship-building, conflict management, and effective communication, which directly enhance expatriate performance (Solomon & Steyn, 2017; Zhuang et al., 2022). Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1b: There is a significant impact between emotional intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation.

International Experience and Cross Cultural Adaptation

International experience is often considered a significant predictor of individuals' ability to adapt to diverse cultural environments (Setti et al., 2022). The hypothesis is grounded in the premise that individuals with greater exposure to diverse cultural contexts develop higher levels of cross-cultural competence and adaptability. International experience provides individuals with opportunities to encounter new cultural norms, values, and practices, facilitating the development of cultural awareness, empathy, and flexibility (Nolan & Liang, 2022). As individuals navigate various cultural settings, they acquire skills and knowledge that enhance their ability to adapt to new cultural environments effectively. This exposure fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural differences, which is critical to successful adaptation. Research conducted by Tung, (2016) and Froese & Peltokorpi, (2011) supports this, showing that previous international experience helps expatriates develop important coping mechanisms and cultural competencies that facilitate a smoother transition into the host culture. A positive international attitude reflects expatriates' openness and willingness to engage with different cultures (Setti et al., 2022). Shaffer et al., (2012) found that expats who have lived or worked abroad and actively participate in cultural events will be exposed to diverse cultural practices and social norms. This exposure fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural differences, which is critical to successful adaptation. Individuals who have lived, worked, or studied abroad tend to demonstrate greater cultural sensitivity, communication skills, and adaptability compared to those with limited international exposure (Breitenmoser et al., 2018; Brewster et al., 2021; Shaffer et al., 2012). Moreover, research by McNulty & Selmer, (2017) and Selmer et al., (2007) suggests that individuals with extensive international experience exhibit higher levels of adjustment and satisfaction in multicultural environments. Additionally, Mello et al., (2023) and Cerdin & Le Pargneux, (2014) emphasize that international experience contributes to the development of global competence, which is essential for effective cross-cultural adaptation. Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2a: There is a significant impact between international experience and cross-cultural adaptation.

International Experience and Expatriate Performance

International experience plays a crucial role in preparing individuals for success in expatriate roles by providing them with first-hand exposure to diverse cultural environments. Individuals with prior international experience tend to have a greater understanding of cultural norms, expectations, and communication styles, which enhances their adaptability and effectiveness in foreign assignments (Ren et al., 2021; Takeuchi, 2010; Takeuchi & Chen, 2013). International experience also allows individuals to develop skills in managing cultural differences, thereby reducing the cultural shock often associated with expatriate assignments (Hadeed & Henry-Campbell, 2021; Lee & Sukoco, 2010). Research suggests that expatriates with prior international experience are more likely to perform well in foreign environments, as they are equipped with the skills necessary for effective problem-solving, stress management, and relationship-building across cultures (Huang et al., 2022; Kraimer et al., 2001). Furthermore, these individuals are often better prepared to overcome challenges related to cultural misunderstandings and are more effective in achieving organizational goals in a multicultural context (Bader et al., 2021; Cerimagic, 2011). Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2b: There is a significant impact between emotional intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation.

Family and Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Cross-cultural adaptation is a complex process influenced by various factors, including family dynamics (Bhatti et al., 2013). The hypothesis is based on the idea that family plays a significant role in individuals' adaptation to new cultural contexts. Family support, including emotional, practical, and informational support, provides a buffer against the stressors and challenges associated with cross-cultural transitions (Triandis & Brislin, 1983). Additionally, family cohesion and communication patterns can influence individuals' sense of belonging and cultural identity,

facilitating their adjustment to new cultural norms and values (Shockley et al., 2017). Previous studies by Ward & Kennedy, (2001) and Bhugra & Becker, (2005) have found a positive association between family support and cross-cultural adaptation. Individuals who perceive higher levels of support from their family members tend to exhibit greater resilience, confidence, and satisfaction in their adaptation process. Moreover, research by Lazarova et al., (2015), Ozer & Schwartz, (2021), and Schwartz et al., (2010) suggests that family cohesion and communication play crucial roles in shaping individuals' cultural competence and intercultural relationships. Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3a: There is a significant impact between family and cross-cultural adaptation.

Family and Expatriate Performance

Family support is a critical factor in the success of expatriates, as it directly influences their emotional stability and adaptability during international assignments. Expatriates with strong family support systems are generally more resilient and better equipped to handle the challenges of living and working in a foreign environment (Takeuchi, 2010; Lazarova et al., 2010). The presence of family support alleviates stress and provides expatriates with a sense of security, which positively impacts their well-being and, consequently, their job performance (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001; Caligiuri et al., 1998). Previous studies have highlighted that expatriates who feel supported by their families tend to adapt more effectively to cultural differences and experience less cultural shock, which is essential for maintaining high performance levels in their roles (Black & Stephens, 1989; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). Furthermore, family support has been shown to enhance expatriate satisfaction, reduce turnover intentions, and improve their ability to focus on work responsibilities, which ultimately contributes to overall performance (Harvey, 1997; Haslberger & Brewster, 2008). Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3b: There is a significant impact between emotional intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation.

Cross-Cultural Adaptation and Expatriate Performance

Expatriate assignments often require individuals to adapt to new cultural environments, which can significantly impact their performance in international roles (Wiernik et al., 2019). The hypothesis is grounded in the notion that successful cross-cultural adaptation enhances individuals' ability to function effectively in diverse cultural contexts, leading to improved performance outcomes in international roles. Cross-cultural adaptation equips expatriates with the cultural awareness, communication skills, and behavioural flexibility necessary to navigate cultural differences, build relationships, and achieve organizational objectives in global settings. As a result, expatriates who demonstrate higher levels of cross-cultural adaptation are expected to exhibit superior job performance, task accomplishment, and overall effectiveness in their international assignments. Previous studies by Takeuchi et al., (2008) and Selmer et al., (2007) have found a positive association between cross-cultural adaptation and expatriate performance. Expatriates who successfully adapt to their host culture tend to demonstrate higher levels of job satisfaction, interpersonal effectiveness, and job performance compared to those who struggle with cultural adjustment. Moreover, research by Black & Gregersen, (1991b) suggests that cross-cultural adaptation is a significant predictor of expatriate success and retention in international assignments. Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 4: There is a significant impact between cross-cultural adaptation and expatriate performance.

The Mediating Role of Cross-Cultural Adaptation in the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, International Experience, Family, and Expatriate Performance

Cross-cultural adaptation is a crucial mediator in enhancing expatriate performance, as it reflects the extent to which individuals adjust to the cultural and social environment of their host country. Emotional intelligence, international experience, and family support are key factors that contribute to this adaptation process, ultimately influencing expatriate performance outcomes (Black & Gregersen, 1991b; Ward & Kennedy, 2001). Research suggests that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better able to manage cultural differences, navigate social interactions, and regulate

emotions, all of which facilitate effective cross-cultural adaptation (Earley & Ang, 2003; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013). Similarly, expatriates with prior international experience are more familiar with cultural variations and have developed adaptive skills that ease their integration into new environments (Lee & Sukoco, 2010; Takeuchi, 2010). Additionally, strong family support provides emotional stability and encouragement, helping expatriates cope with cultural challenges and reducing stress, which aids in their adaptation (Bailey & Dragoni, 2013; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Effective cross-cultural adaptation enables expatriates to better understand and integrate into the host culture, which directly impacts their job performance by improving communication, reducing misunderstandings, and enhancing job satisfaction (Harrison & Shaffer, 2016; Varma et al., 2020). Therefore, cross-cultural adaptation serves as a bridge through which emotional intelligence, international experience, and family support can positively influence expatriate performance. Based on this understanding, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 5: Cross-cultural adaptation mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and expatriate performance.

Hypothesis 6: Cross-cultural adaptation mediates the relationship between international experience and expatriate performance.

Hypothesis 7: Cross-cultural adaptation mediates the relationship between family support and expatriate performance.

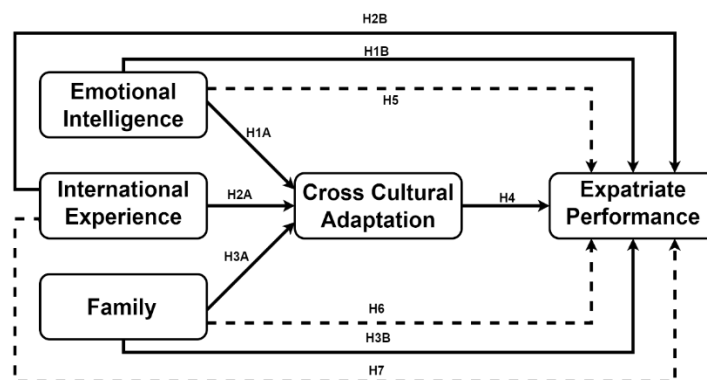


Figure 1 Research model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research adopts a quantitative explanatory design to explore and analyse complex relationships between multiple variables. This approach is chosen to efficiently handle complex models with multiple constructs and indicators, making it suitable for this study's objective to test and validate a theoretical model seeks to provide empirical evidence regarding the impact of emotional intelligence, international experience, and family toward cross-cultural adaptation on expatriate performance.

Sampling and Data Collection

We are using the inverse square root method is a statistical approach used to determine the sample size needed for a PLS-SEM study to determine the sample size required for detecting a path coefficient of 0.2 at a 5% significance level, the sample size needed is approximately 97 respondents. Total of 175 questionnaires via the online Google Form questionnaire have been distributed. Within 1 month there were 168 questionnaires that had been filled out by expatriates. After data processing and modification, the number of respondents used for analysis was 154.

Research Procedure and Ethical Consideration

The questionnaire instrument is carefully selected based on objective consideration from many literatures to bring a comprehensive point of view. It was created with Google Form and spread via social media such as email and WhatsApp. In distributing questionnaires online, we also pay attention to ethical practices such as: (i) informed consent about research dynamics (ii) confidentiality of participant information (iii) The research was conducted with integrity and transparency, and potential conflicts of interest were disclosed and managed appropriately (iv) The

findings of the research were reported accurately and objectively, without misrepresentation or selective reporting.

Statistical Analysis

The data are analysed using the PLS-SEM through SmartPLS software. In general, data analysis is divided into 3 parts, namely (i) evaluation of the outer model measurement model (convergent and discriminant validity also internal reliability) (ii) evaluation of the structural model of the inner model (multicollinearity and hypothesis testing) (iii) evaluation of the goodness and suitability of the model (SRMR and GoF index).

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Convergent validity was evaluated by examining the factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and outer loading for each indicator in the measurement model. The results in figure 2 indicate that all factor loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.60, ranging from 0.606 – 0.851. Additionally, the AVE values in Table 3 for each construct exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.50, ranging from 0.455 – 0.629. Furthermore, all constructs in Table 3 demonstrated satisfactory composite reliability values above 0.70, ranging from 0.867 – 0.931. When the AVE value is less than 0.5, but the composite reliability (ρ_c) is 0.7, then convergent validity is still valid (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). These findings provide strong support for the convergent validity of the measurement model, indicating that each latent construct adequately captures the variance shared by its respective indicators.

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), which compares the average correlation between constructs (heterotrait correlations) to the average correlation between indicators of the same construct (monotrait correlations). The results of the HTMT analysis in Table 2 indicate that all HTMT ratios were below the recommended threshold of 0.90, ranging from 0.133 – 0.869, providing strong evidence of discriminant validity. These findings suggest that the constructs in the measurement model are distinct from one another, as they exhibit stronger correlations with their own indicators than with indicators of other constructs.

Reliability was assessed through the examination of Cronbach's alpha coefficients and composite reliability values for each latent construct. The results in Table 3 indicate that all constructs achieved satisfactory levels of internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.60, ranging from 0.822 – 0.917. Moreover, composite reliability values for each construct surpassed the threshold of 0.70, ranging from 0.867 – 0.931. These findings indicate that the measurement model exhibits high levels of reliability, suggesting that the latent constructs are reliably measured by their respective indicators.

In summary, the results of the confirmatory factor analysis provide strong evidence of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability within the measurement model. These findings support the robustness and validity of the measurement model, affirming its suitability for subsequent structural equation modelling analyses and hypothesis testing.

Table 1 Items, means (M), standard deviations (SD), Cronbach's alphas (α), and factor loadings

Items	M	SD	Min	Max	α	Factor Loadings	
						1	2
Emotional Intelligence					0.826		
EI 1	3.825	0.838	1	5		0.269	Dropped
EI 2	4.130	0.851	1	5		0.410	Dropped
EI 3	3.981	0.716	2	5		0.510	Dropped
EI 4	3.935	0.811	1	5		0.537	Dropped
EI 5	3.968	0.848	2	5		0.612	0.606
EI 6	4.247	0.638	2	5		0.615	0.646
EI 7	4.318	0.671	2	5		0.679	0.748
EI 8	4.045	0.824	1	5		0.720	0.730
EI 9	4.078	0.670	2	5		0.692	0.750
EI 10	3.935	0.709	2	5		0.671	0.742

Items	M	SD	Min	Max	α	Factor Loadings	
						1	2
EI 11	4.084	0.829	1	5		0.591	Dropped
EI 12	4.104	0.713	2	5		0.559	Dropped
EI 13	4.253	0.598	2	5		0.471	Dropped
EI 14	3.805	0.806	2	5		0.614	0.674
International Experience					0.822		
IE 1	3.838	0.997	1	5		0.723	0.759
IE 2	3.526	1.076	1	5		0.719	0.755
IE 3	3.597	0.990	1	5		0.828	0.848
IE 4	4.097	0.851	1	5		0.675	0.684
IE 5	4.390	0.648	2	5		0.582	Dropped
IE 6	4.162	0.751	2	5		0.724	0.713
Family					0.917		
FY 1	3.792	0.753	2	5		0.662	0.792
FY 2	3.864	0.822	2	5		0.622	0.755
FY 3	3.805	0.822	1	5		0.743	0.838
FY 4	3.864	0.790	2	5		0.674	0.808
FY 5	3.571	0.911	1	5		0.600	0.618
FY 6	3.864	0.814	2	5		0.627	0.819
FY 7	3.760	0.830	1	5		0.676	0.851
FY 8	3.825	0.774	3	5		0.633	0.838
FY 9	3.364	1.086	1	5		0.586	Dropped
FY 10	3.195	1.168	1	5		0.571	Dropped
Cross Cultural Adaptation					0.850		
AD 1	4.143	0.639	3	5		0.718	0.723
AD 2	4.117	0.644	2	5		0.682	0.679
AD 3	4.234	0.579	2	5		0.736	0.735
AD 4	4.331	0.535	3	5		0.668	0.660
AD 5	4.201	0.638	2	5		0.638	0.629
AD 6	4.214	0.624	2	5		0.645	0.650
AD 7	3.877	0.816	1	5		0.626	0.628
AD 8	4.013	0.773	2	5		0.654	0.657
AD 9	4.117	0.634	2	5		0.694	0.698
Expatriate Performance					0.873		
EP 1	4	0.747	2	5		0.655	0.657
EP 2	4.032	0.649	2	5		0.720	0.719
EP 3	3.539	0.823	1	5		0.621	0.621
EP 4	4.078	0.564	3	5		0.764	0.766
EP 5	4.071	0.713	2	5		0.798	0.799
EP 6	3.987	0.764	1	5		0.654	0.653

Items	M	SD	Min	Max	α	Factor Loadings	
						1	2
EP 7	4.013	0.773	2	5		0.711	0.709
EP 8	4.240	0.593	3	5		0.680	0.680
EP 9	4.201	0.648	2	5		0.725	0.723

Table 2 Heterotrait-monotrait ratio output

	Cross Cultural Adaptation	Emotional Intelligence	Expatriate Performance	Family	International Experience
Cross Cultural Adaptation					
Emotional Intelligence	0.737				
Expatriate Performance	0.869	0.821			
Family	0.230	0.160	0.133		
International Experience	0.639	0.515	0.529	0.244	

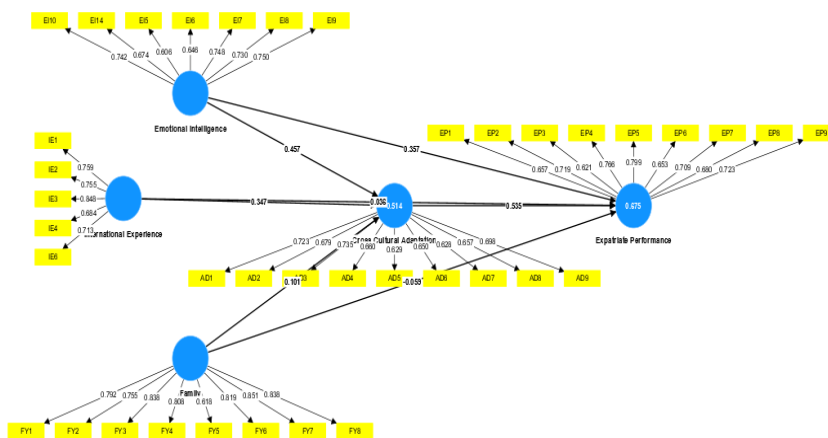


Figure 2 Partial least squares outputs

Table 3 Validity and reliability test output

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Emotional Intelligence	0.826	0.831	0.871	0.492
International Experience	0.822	0.852	0.867	0.568
Family	0.917	0.949	0.931	0.629
Cross Cultural Adaptation	0.850	0.855	0.882	0.455
Expatriate Performance	0.873	0.880	0.898	0.497

The SEM analysis results in Table 4 reveal significant insights into the relationships between emotional intelligence, international experience, family support, cross-cultural adaptation, and expatriate performance. Emotional intelligence showed a statistically significant positive effect on expatriate performance ($\beta = 0.357, T = 5.462, p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 1 and indicating that expatriates with higher emotional intelligence tend to perform better in their roles. Additionally, emotional intelligence was found to have a significant positive effect on cross-cultural adaptation (β

= 0.457, $T = 7.293$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2 and suggesting that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to adapt to different cultural environments. International experience was also shown to have a statistically significant positive effect on cross-cultural adaptation ($\beta = 0.347$, $T = 5.530$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 3. This finding highlights that expatriates with prior international experience are more successful in adjusting to new cultural contexts. However, Hypothesis 4 was rejected, as international experience did not show a significant direct effect on expatriate performance ($\beta = 0.036$, $T = 0.579$, $p = 0.563$). This result implies that while international experience aids in cultural adaptation, it does not directly impact expatriate job performance. Family support, on the other hand, did not have a significant effect on either cross-cultural adaptation or expatriate performance. Hypothesis 5 was rejected, as family support showed no statistically significant effect on cross-cultural adaptation ($\beta = 0.101$, $T = 1.649$, $p = 0.099$), suggesting that family support alone may not enhance an expatriate's ability to adapt culturally. Similarly, Hypothesis 6 was rejected, as family support did not significantly affect expatriate performance ($\beta = -0.059$, $T = 0.989$, $p = 0.323$), indicating that family support does not directly influence job performance. Finally, Hypothesis 7 was supported, with cross-cultural adaptation showing a statistically significant positive effect on expatriate performance ($\beta = 0.535$, $T = 7.598$, $p < 0.001$). This result emphasizes the critical role of cross-cultural adaptation in enhancing expatriate performance, highlighting that successful cultural adaptation is a key factor in expatriate success.

Table 4 Path Coefficient

Variable	β	T Statistic	P Value	Explanation	Decision
Emotional Intelligence -> Cross Cultural Adaptation	0.457	7.293	0.000	Significant, positive	Accepted
Emotional Intelligence -> Expatriate Performance	0.357	5.462	0.000	Significant, positive	Accepted
International Experience -> Cross Cultural Adaptation	0.347	5.530	0.000	Significant, positive	Accepted
International Experience -> Expatriate Performance	0.036	0.579	0.563	Not Significant, positive	Rejected
Family -> Cross Cultural Adaptation	0.101	1.649	0.099	Not Significant, positive	Rejected
Family -> Expatriate Performance	-0.059	0.989	0.323	Not Significant, negative	Rejected
Cross Cultural Adaptation -> Expatriate Performance	0.535	7.598	0.000	Significant, positive	Accepted

Table 5 Mediation Effects

Construct	β	T Statistic	P Value	Explanation	Decision
Emotional Intelligence → Cross Cultural Adaptation → Expatriate Performance	0.244	5.689	0.000	Significant, positive	Accepted (partial mediation)
International Experience → Cross Cultural Adaptation → Expatriate Performance	0.185	4.126	0.000	Significant, positive	Accepted (full mediation)
Family → Cross Cultural Adaptation → Expatriate Performance	0.054	1.595	0.111	Not Significant, positive	Rejected

The mediation analysis results in Table 5 provide insights into the indirect effects of emotional intelligence, international experience, and family support on expatriate performance, mediated by cross-cultural adaptation. The analysis shows that cross-cultural adaptation partially mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and expatriate performance, with a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.244$, $T = 5.689$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that while emotional intelligence directly influences expatriate performance, a portion of its effect is channeled through the expatriate's ability to adapt culturally, thereby enhancing overall job effectiveness. For international experience, cross-cultural adaptation serves as a full mediator in its relationship with expatriate performance ($\beta = 0.185$, $T = 4.126$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that international experience does not directly affect performance but does so entirely through the expatriate's ability to adapt to the host culture. This mediation supports the importance of cross-cultural adaptation as a key mechanism through which international experience can positively impact performance in expatriate roles. In contrast, family support does not significantly affect expatriate performance via cross-cultural adaptation ($\beta = 0.054$, $T = 1.595$, $p = 0.111$), as the mediation effect is not statistically significant. This result suggests that family support does not substantially contribute to expatriate performance through the pathway of cross-cultural adaptation, indicating that other factors may be necessary for family support to impact performance outcomes.

Table 6 Goodness-of-fit index

Construct	R-Square	AVE	GoF = $\sqrt{AVE \times R^2}$
Emotional Intelligence		0.492	-
International Experience		0.568	-
Family		0.629	-
Cross Cultural Adaptation	0.514	0.455	-
Expatriate Performance	0.675	0.497	-
Average	0.595	0.528	0.560
SRMR = 0.074			

Assessment of Goodness of Fit uses 2 components: the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and the Goodness of Fit (GoF) Index. The SRMR analysis in Table 5 yielded a value of 0.077. Based on established guidelines, an SRMR value below 0.08 is indicative of a good model fit (Hair et al., 2021). In this study, the obtained SRMR value of 0.074 falls below this threshold, indicating a satisfactory fit between the observed data and the proposed measurement model. Similarly, the GoF index in Table 6 value of 0.560 suggests a good overall fit of the model to the data.

Overall, the attainment of satisfactory goodness of fit statistics underscores the robustness of the structural equation model and strengthens the validity of the study's conclusions. By providing evidence of a good fit between the hypothesized model and the observed data, the goodness of fit assessment enhances the overall quality and credibility of the research findings, thereby contributing to the advancement of knowledge within the field.

DISCUSSIONS

As global business landscapes become more interwoven, the success of expatriates hinges not only on technical prowess but on their capacity to adapt, connect, and perform in culturally complex environments. This study illuminates the nuanced dynamics that shape expatriate success, highlighting that emotional intelligence, international experience, and family support are valuable but require the crucial catalyst of cross-cultural adaptation to unlock their full potential. Our findings underscore that while emotional intelligence and international experience set the stage for success, cross-cultural adaptation enables expatriates to thrive and sustain high performance in foreign roles.

The significant positive impact of emotional intelligence on both cross-cultural adaptation and expatriate performance reveals the strategic value of "cultural competence" as a cornerstone of global readiness. Emotional intelligence equips expatriates to navigate unfamiliar social landscapes, manage stress, and foster empathy, thereby aligning with recent insights in leadership and performance theory (Earley & Ang 2003; Goleman, 1995). This finding suggests a paradigm shift in expatriate selection criteria, urging organizations to value emotional acumen as highly as technical expertise. It also challenges us to rethink global leadership preparation—prioritizing emotional intelligence development as an integral aspect of pre-deployment training could fundamentally elevate expatriate effectiveness.

Interestingly, international experience alone was insufficient to drive expatriate performance, with cross-cultural adaptation fully mediating its impact. This highlights a critical insight: prior exposure to different cultures does not inherently translate to performance unless it is coupled with active adaptation skills. This underscores the limitations of experiential learning without structured adaptation support, suggesting that global firms should provide cultural coaching and mentorship to enable expatriates to actively apply past international exposure to their current assignments. These findings emphasize that adaptation is not automatic; it requires intentional support and skill-building to truly convert experience into high performance.

The finding that family support did not significantly influence either adaptation or performance offers a new perspective on the role of family in expatriate success. Traditional expatriate models have often highlighted family as a vital support system; however, our results suggest that family presence, while emotionally beneficial, does not necessarily enhance an expatriate's professional effectiveness. This may signal that organizations need to go beyond family support and focus on creating a community or network of support tailored to the unique pressures of expatriation, including peer networks, mental health resources, and continuous professional guidance. This shift could redefine the support paradigm for expatriates, emphasizing organizational responsibility in holistic well-being rather than a reliance on familial support alone.

The central role of cross-cultural adaptation as a mediator elevates it from a mere personal adjustment factor to a strategic lever in expatriate success. Our findings affirm that adaptation is not an auxiliary process but a core mechanism that translates personal qualities and experiences into tangible performance outcomes. This aligns with theories of cultural intelligence, which propose that adaptability is foundational to cross-cultural success (Black et al. 1991; Shaffer & Harrison 2001). For multinational corporations, this implies that adaptation training is not an optional add-on but a mission-critical investment. Companies should explore immersive training, real-time cultural feedback mechanisms, and adaptive skill-building to equip expatriates with the tools they need to bridge cultural gaps effectively.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

Theoretical Implications

The results of this study propose some theoretical implications: (i) Enriched understanding of expatriate success factors because the first finding, which establishes the positive and significant

relationship between cultural intelligence, emotional intelligence, international experience, family adjustment, and cross-cultural training with cross-cultural adaptation, enriches theoretical frameworks within IHRM. It expands traditional perspectives by emphasizing the importance of socio-emotional competencies and familial support in expatriate success. This holistic understanding contributes to the evolution of IHRM theories, recognizing the multifaceted nature of expatriate adjustment and the need for comprehensive selection and support strategies. (ii) Validation of expatriate performance and retention models because the second finding, indicating that cross-cultural adaptation positively correlates with expatriate performance and intention to stay, validates existing models within IHRM. This aligns with theories such as the Expatriate Adjustment Model and the Socialization Model, which posit that successful adaptation leads to improved job performance and higher retention rates. The confirmation of these relationships strengthens the theoretical foundation of IHRM, providing empirical evidence to support the importance of expatriate adjustment in achieving organizational objectives.

Practical Implications

The results of this study propose some practical implications: (i) Refinement of expatriate selection and preparation processes because organizations can use the identified predictors of cross-cultural adaptation to refine their expatriate selection and preparation processes. By assessing emotional intelligence, international experience, and family adjustment during the selection phase, organizations can identify candidates who are better suited for international assignments. Additionally, tailored pre-departure training programs can be developed to enhance cross-cultural competencies and prepare expatriates for the challenges they may encounter. (ii) Enhanced support for expatriate adjustment because recognizing the critical role of cross-cultural adaptation in expatriate success, organizations can implement support mechanisms to facilitate adjustment. This may include mentorship programs, cultural assimilation initiatives, and family support services aimed at addressing the needs of expatriates and their families. By providing comprehensive support throughout the assignment, organizations can increase expatriate satisfaction, performance, and intention to stay, thereby maximizing the return on investment in international assignments. (iii) Integration of cross-cultural adaptation into performance management and retention strategies because organizations can integrate measures of cross-cultural adaptation into performance management and retention strategies. By evaluating expatriate performance through the lens of cross-cultural adaptation, organizations can gain insights into the effectiveness of their expatriate programs and identify areas for improvement. Additionally, recognizing cross-cultural adaptation as a key determinant of intention to stay, organizations can implement targeted retention initiatives to promote expatriate satisfaction and long-term commitment to the organization.

In conclusion, the two findings contribute to a deeper understanding of expatriate success within the context of IHRM. By enriching theoretical frameworks and informing practical applications, these findings support the development of more effective expatriate management strategies, ultimately enhancing organizational effectiveness in the global marketplace.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Limitations

The study's findings may be limited in their generalizability due to the focus on a specific context, namely expatriates in Indonesia. Cultural, economic, and organizational factors unique to Indonesia may influence the dynamics of cross-cultural adaptation, expatriate performance, and intention to stay in ways that differ from other countries. Future research should aim to replicate the study in diverse cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of the findings. The study's cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of the relationships between variables at a single point in time. As a result, it is unable to establish causality or capture the dynamic nature of expatriate adjustment processes over time. Longitudinal studies tracking expatriates' experiences from pre-departure to post-assignment could provide deeper insights into the factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation, expatriate performance, and intention to stay. The reliance on self-report measures for data collection may introduce common method bias and social desirability bias, potentially inflating the relationships between variables. Future research could incorporate multi-source assessments, such as supervisor ratings or objective performance metrics, to validate the findings and minimize bias.

Recommendations

Researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal studies to capture the dynamic nature of expatriate adjustment processes. By following expatriates from pre-departure orientation to post-assignment repatriation, researchers can examine how cross-cultural adaptation evolves over time and its impact on expatriate performance and intention to stay. Employing a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or observations can provide a more holistic understanding of expatriate experiences. Qualitative data can offer rich insights into the subjective experiences of expatriates, complementing quantitative findings and enriching the interpretation of results. Organizations could benefit from intervention studies that test the effectiveness of targeted interventions, such as cultural training programs or family support initiatives, in facilitating cross-cultural adaptation and improving expatriate outcomes. By partnering with organizations to implement and evaluate interventions, researchers can bridge the gap between theory and practice in expatriate management.

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