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Expatriates Job Satisfaction and Performance: Examining the Effects of Emotional & Cultural Intelligence, Cross-cultural Adoptability & Competency and Interpersonal Social Network

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Abstract

Key words:

Expatriate job satisfaction, cultural intelligence, cross-cultural adaptability, cross-cultural competence, emotional intelligence, international assignments

Globalization and internationalization of businesses have increased the cultural diversity of the workforce. To perform effectively, expatriate employees must possess skills and personality traits that enable them to adapt to a new cultural environment. The purpose of the present study was to examine the influence of the personal level factors of an expatriate employee, including emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, cross-cultural adaptability, cross-cultural competence, and interpersonal social network, on job satisfaction and job performance. This information was collected from 238 Saudi Arabian expatriate workers in various industries. The results indicate a positive correlation between cultural intelligence, cross-cultural adaptability, interpersonal social network and expatriate employee job satisfaction. However, no significant correlation was found between emotional intelligence, cross-cultural competence, and job satisfaction. In addition, the mediating role of job satisfaction between various personal level factors and job performance was evaluated, and it was determined that job satisfaction positively mediated all relationships. As the role of emotional and cultural intelligence in cross-cultural adjustment has not been studied extensively, particularly in Saudi Arabia, this study makes a significant contribution to the literature. In addition, the interpersonal social network of an expatriate has not been previously linked to job satisfaction and performance in cross-cultural environments.

1. Introduction

In the last few decades, interconnectedness and interdependence among people have significantly increased due to globalization. Additionally, the job market has changed as companies and businesses become increasingly international, requiring employees to interact, communicate, and collaborate with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Chang, Yuan, & Chuang, 2013). Apart from this, sometimes employees must also migrate to a new place with a new culture. Under such circumstances, it is extremely important that the transferred employee, also termed as an expatriate, adapt to the new culture and function there effectively (Kai Liao et al., 2021). An expatriate's personality traits and capabilities are key to attaining that. Openness, flexibility, and tolerance of diverse cultures are important. By working in new cultures on international assignments, the expatriates' adaptive capabilities enhance over time, making them more culturally flexible (Arokiasamy & Kim, 2020). Moving to a new place with unfamiliar cultural practices can affect an expatriate's job-related outcomes, such as job satisfaction and performance. However, with the right capabilities, the negative emotions associated with the move can be eliminated and may even lead to more positive job-related outcomes. In this regard, abilities such as emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, cross-cultural adaptability, cross-cultural competence, and an individual's interpersonal social network can be crucial. Expatriates who like meeting new people and experiencing new cultures and who have the ability and intelligence to adapt to the new culture and its norms will likely enjoy the entire experience of an international assignment, which can also improve their job performance.

Consequently, this study aims to examine the factors mentioned above and their impact on the job satisfaction and performance of expatriate employees working in various sectors in Saudi Arabia. As the role of emotional and cultural intelligence in cross-cultural adaptation has not been studied extensively, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge. In addition, the interpersonal social network of an expatriate has not been previously linked to job satisfaction and performance in cross-cultural environments.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is "the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). They also defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Emotional intelligence consists of the ability to understand and express one's own emotions, the ability to identify and understand the emotions of others (sensitivity to the emotions and feelings of others), and the regulation of one's own emotions, which allows one to remain calm and recover from a stressful situation more quickly, and the ability to use emotions constructively and productively (Chew et al., 2021). The people in a workplace interact with one another, and each individual comes up with their level of emotional intelligence. Dealing with customers, reporting to supervisors, and maintaining communication and relationships with colleagues can emotionally affect a person. In this scenario, employees' emotional intelligence is key in defining the inter-relationships of people working in an organization, determining its culture, and how the organization is perceived outside (Makkar & Basu, 2019). People with high emotional intelligence are typically optimistic, meaning they do not always blame the organization or other people around them for any inconveniences or frustrations. Instead, they attempt to comprehend the situation better and work towards a solution. According to research, emotional intelligence in a person benefits his or her relationships and has professional ramifications, such as enhancing job satisfaction and performance (Kotsou et al., 2019; Meisler, 2014; Sy, Tram, & O'hara, 2006). Emotional intelligence plays an important role in an expatriate's adjustment to a new environment in the host country. Expatriates with high emotional intelligence can quickly assess the emotional cues of culturally different people, which helps them easily adjust to new work settings (Koveshnikov, Wechtler, & Dejoux, 2014). Therefore, high emotional intelligence assists expatriates in coping with uncertainties in a new work environment, allowing them to focus more on their work and, as a result, to be more satisfied and perform better (Arokiasamy & Kim, 2020; Suleman et al., 2020; Wong & Law, 2017). Consequently, given the preceding discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Emotional intelligence is positively associated with the job satisfaction of expatriate employees.

H2: Job satisfaction of expatriate employees positively mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance.

2.2 Cultural Intelligence

Cultural intelligence is an individual's ability to adapt and adjust to culturally diverse conditions (Chen, Liu, & Portnoy, 2012). It includes an individual's characteristics and skills, which enable them to process, function in, and engage in new and different cultural contexts (MacNab, 2012). According to Ang et al. (2007), cultural intelligence "is a non-culture-specific capability that enables the accurate interpretation of unfamiliar cultural settings for effective adaptation across cultures." Cultural intelligence is essential when employees interact with peers and coworkers from diverse cultural backgrounds or work in cross-cultural settings. The four components of cultural intelligence are metacognitive cultural intelligence (awareness), cognitive, cultural intelligence (knowledge), motivational cultural intelligence (self-efficacy), and behavioral cultural intelligence (behaviors) (Ang et al., 2007; Chew et al., 2021; Nam & Park, 2019). Metacognitive cultural intelligence is referred to as the "processes involving conscious efforts to acquire and understand unfamiliar cultural contexts before and during culturally diverse interactions, which leads individuals to question and reflect on their cultural assumptions and consequently adjust their cultural knowledge" (Chew et al., 2021). Cognitive cultural intelligence is the "the level of cultural knowledge (e.g., structures of norms, conventions) and understanding of cultural differences (e.g., knowledge of oneself as embedded in the cultural context) acquired to help adjustment" (Chew et al., 2021). Motivational cultural intelligence is "the capacity to show interest and confidence in cross-cultural effectiveness which channels an individual's energy toward learning about and functioning in novel cultural settings" (Chew et al., 2021). Behavioral cultural intelligence is "the ability to exhibit situationally appropriate verbal and nonverbal behaviors" (Chew et al., 2021). A person with cultural intelligence has the cognitive capacity to adapt their cultural coding to a foreign culture, i.e., they have 'cross-cultural code-switching' skills (Molinsky, 2007). Past research has demonstrated that a person's cultural intelligence positively influences work-related outcomes such as international adjustment success, performance, and job satisfaction in multicultural settings (Huff, Song, & Gresch, 2014; Nam & Park, 2019; Rockstuhl et al., 2015; Wu & Ang, 2011). Therefore, based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is proposed,

H3: Cultural intelligence is positively associated with the job satisfaction of expatriate employees.

H4: Job satisfaction of expatriate employees positively mediates the relationship between cultural intelligence and job performance.

2.3 Cross-cultural Adaptability

Cross-cultural adaptability is essentially the process by which an individual's skills and behaviors are enhanced and upgraded so that their original "repertoire" of skills is expanded, allowing them to behave appropriately according to the norms of the new cultural context (Chatterjee, Chaudhuri, & Vrontis, 2022; Kai Liao et al., 2021; Lee Olson & Kroeger, 2001). Cross-cultural adaptability is an important concept in the context of an individual's communication and interaction with people from multiple cultural backgrounds or the individual's successful adjustment and growth in a new cultural setting involving uncertainty, as well as different values, customs, and traditions (Chang, Yuan, & Chuang, 2013). The reservoir of knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through cross-cultural adaptability can effectively lead to successful adjustment in various cultural contexts (Chatterjee et al., 2021). This skill enables an expatriate employee to comprehend and capitalize on the cognitive and behavioral responses of the host country's citizens (Hollebeek, 2011). The cross-cultural adaptability of expatriate employees can be enhanced if they manage their emotions and adapt them when communicating with host employees in a new cultural setting (Kai Liao et al., 2021). Previous research has demonstrated a positive relationship between cross-cultural adaptability and work-related outcomes, including expatriate adjustment to a new work environment, job performance, and job satisfaction (Araujo & Taylor, 2012; Lee, 2018; Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2017; Setti, Sommovigo, & Argentero, 2022). Consequently, based on the preceding discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Cross-cultural adaptability is positively associated with the job satisfaction of expatriate employees.

H6: Job satisfaction of expatriate employees positively mediates the relationship between cross-cultural adaptability and job performance.

2.4 Cross-cultural Competency

Cross-cultural competence is "the capacity of an individual to interact successfully with people in an international environment" (Bartel-Radic & Giannelloni, 2017; Chatterjee, Chaudhuri, & Vrontis, 2022). It includes behavioral competencies like general self-efficacy, relational skills, and non-ethnocentrism, allowing an expatriate to work efficiently with people from different cultural backgrounds in case of an international assignment (Wu & Bodigerel-Koehler, 2013). Cultural competency enables individuals to manage both themselves and relationships and business demands in culturally diverse environments (Caligiuri et al., 2019). The relational skill of an expatriate enables them to build long-lasting relationships, interact effectively with colleagues and peers from the host culture, and recognize culturally specific conversation patterns, such as jokes, proverbs, songs, folklore, etc. The general self-efficacy of an expatriate is the confidence in one's ability to effectively manage uncertainties and stressors and psychologically adapt when responding to host members in a cross-cultural setting. Non-ethnocentrism is the belief that an expatriate's

culture, beliefs, norms, and traditions are not superior to those of other cultures and behaviors. Non-ethnocentrism makes it easier for expatriates to adapt to their new environment because it facilitates better communication and interaction with peers ([Kai Liao et al., 2021](#); [Wu & Bodigerel-Koehler, 2013](#)). Previous research indicates that expatriates with greater cross-cultural competence can accomplish and complete their assignments in an international setting more effectively, resulting in improved performance. Therefore, previous research indicates that cross-cultural competence is positively associated with the job satisfaction and performance of an expatriate employee ([Jung et al., 2021](#); [Kai Liao et al., 2021](#); [Rose et al., 2010](#); [Wang et al., 2014](#)). Therefore, based on the preceding discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: Cross-cultural competency is positively associated with the job satisfaction of expatriate employees.

H8: Job satisfaction of expatriate employees positively mediates the relationship between cross-cultural competency and job performance.

2.5 Interpersonal Social Network

The social network theory is based on transmitting knowledge and information through interpersonal and social contacts ([Zhou, Wu, & Luo, 2007](#)). The individuals are at the center of building and maintaining this network. Personal and social connections and contacts are channels by which the most useful information is exchanged. "Social networks are widely described as a web of connections and relationships to seek favors in personal actions" ([Do, Nguyen, & Shipton, 2023](#)). However, the potential of having social networks in terms of cross-cultural context has not been studied much ([Boso, Story, & Cadogan, 2013](#)). [Boso, Story, and Cadogan \(2013\)](#) investigated the impact of social networks on the overall performance of a company. A person's interpersonal social network also plays an important role in transmitting useful information, such as emerging opportunities in foreign markets, cultural knowledge, and developing new skills ([Do, Nguyen, & Shipton, 2023](#); [Tang, 2011](#)). An expatriate can find adjusting to a new cultural environment in an international assignment a lot easier if they have a wider social network, including people from diverse cultures ([Tanaka et al., 1997](#)). Social support from family members, friends, colleagues in the host country, supervisors, and other expatriates from the home country and other countries can play a vital role in the adjustment and the overall improvement of an expatriate's experience in the workplace ([Stroppa & Spieß, 2010](#)).

Moreover, the use of online social networking platforms, such as support groups focusing on the adjustment of expatriates in the host country, aids in the overall adjustment and has positive effects on the workplace ([Croucher, 2011](#)). Social support protects against the stresses and uncertainty associated with relocating to a new environment and reduces feelings of isolation and alienation. Through encouragement, social support also contributes to improved self-esteem. Through social support, an expatriate feels cared for, that assistance is readily available, and that

they are accepted and welcomed in the new environment. All of these emotions contribute to the job satisfaction of an expatriate (Li, Wang, & Rothstein, 2010; Wang & Sangalang, 2005). In light of the preceding discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H9: Interpersonal social network is positively associated with job satisfaction of expatriate employees.

H10: Job satisfaction of expatriate employees positively mediates the relationship between interpersonal social networks and job performance.

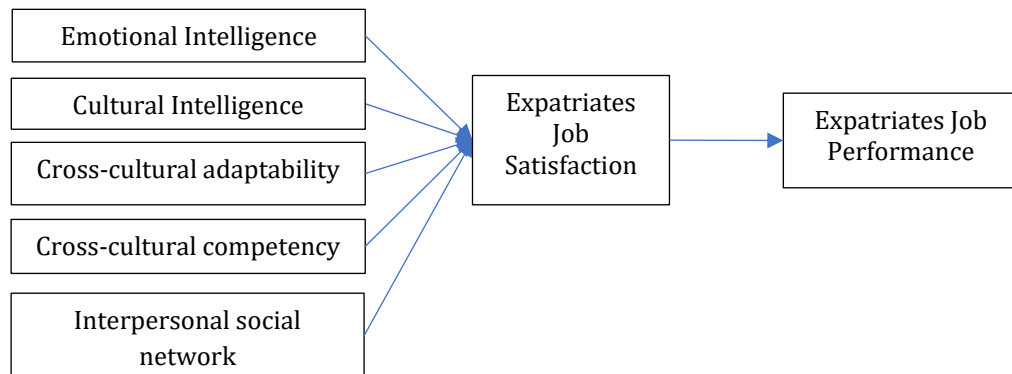


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the Study

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Instrument

The study variables were measured with the help of existing validated measurement questionnaires. The scale for the emotional intelligence variable was adapted from the study of Wong and Law (2017). The scale for the cultural intelligence variable was adapted from Ang and Van Dyne's (2015) study. The scale for the cross-cultural adaptability variable was developed per Kelley and Meyers's (1992) recommendations. Cross-cultural competence was measured by adapting the instrument developed by Kai Liao et al. (2021). The interpersonal social network scale was developed using Do, Nguyen, and Shipton's (2023) suggestions. The expatriate's job satisfaction variable was measured by adapting the tool from Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979). The expatriate's job performance variable was measured by adapting the tool from Kai Liao et al. (2021). All the variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The corresponding measurement items/statements for each variable, along with their source, are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Measurement Tools

Items	References
Emotional Intelligence	Wong and Law (2017)
Self-emotional appraisal	
I have a good sense of why I often have certain feelings.	
I always know whether or not I am happy.	
I have a good understanding of my own emotions.	
I understand what I feel.	

Other's emotional appraisal	
I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior.	
I am a good observer of others' emotions.	
I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.	
I have a good understanding of the emotions of the people around me.	
Use of emotion	
I always tell myself I am a competent person.	
I would always encourage myself to try my best.	
I am a self-motivated person.	
I always set goals and try my best to achieve them.	
Regulation of emotion	
I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	
I am quite capable of controlling my emotions.	
I have good control over my own emotions.	
I can control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.	
Cultural Intelligence	
Metacognitive	
I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.	
I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.	
I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.	
I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds.	
Cognitive	
I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.	
I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.	
I know other languages' rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar).	
I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.	
I know the marriage systems of other cultures.	
I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.	
Motivational	
I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a new culture.	
I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	
I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.	
I am confident that I can get accustomed (get used) to the shopping conditions in a different culture.	
I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.	
Behavioral	
I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.	

Ang and
Van Dyne
(2015)

I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.		
I change my verbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.		
I use pauses and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.		
I vary my speaking rate (speed) when a cross-cultural situation requires it.		
Cross Cultural Adaptability		
Emotional Resilience		
I have ways to deal with the stresses of new situations.		
I feel confident in my ability to cope with life, no matter where I am		
Flexibility/Openness		
I like being with all kinds of people.	Developed based on Kelley and Meyers (1992) .	
When I meet people who are different from me, I am interested in learning more about them.		
Perceptual Acuity		
I try to understand people's thoughts and feelings when I talk to them.		
I can perceive how people feel, even if they are different from me.		
Personal Autonomy		
I believe that all people, of whatever race, are equally valuable.		
My value system is based on my beliefs, not on conforming to other people's standards.		
Cross Cultural Competency		
Relational Skills		
I always react quickly when my partner needs me.	Kai Liao et al. (2021)	
I always give my partner clear and full information.		
Finding the right person in the organization is not difficult for my partners.		
I inform my partners in time in case of problems.		
I systematically keep information on my most important partners.		
I organize collective activities for and with my partner.		
My organization promotes informal contact between my employees and those of my partner.		
General Self-efficacy		
When I make my plans, I am certain I can make them work.		
If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.		
When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.		
When I decide to do something, I work on it.		
Failure just makes me try harder.		
I am a self-reliant person.		
Non-ethnocentrism		
Generally, I am comfortable interacting with people from different cultures.		

I like to get involved in group discussions with others from different cultures.	
I do not fear speaking up in a conversation with someone from a different culture.	
Ordinarily, I am very calm and relaxed in conversations with someone from a different culture.	
While conversing with someone from a different culture, I feel very relaxed.	
I face the prospect of interacting with people from different cultures with confidence.	
I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	
Interpersonal Social Network	
I have regular contact with business people in another sector	Based on Do, Nguyen, and Shipton (2023)
I have regular contact with bank officials, including formal creditors	
I have regular contact with bank officials, including non-formal creditors.	
I have regular contact with politicians.	
I have regular contact with civil servants.	
Expatriate Job Satisfaction	
All in all, I am satisfied with the physical work conditions of my job.	Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979)
My job provides me the freedom to choose my method of working.	
All in all, I am satisfied with my coworkers.	
Overall, I am satisfied with the recognition I get for my work.	
All in all, I am satisfied with my immediate boss.	
All in all, I am satisfied with the amount of responsibility I am given.	
All in all, I am satisfied with my pay/salary.	
Overall, I am satisfied with the opportunity to use my ability.	
Overall, I am satisfied with my relationship with management and coworkers.	
All in all, I am satisfied with the opportunity for promotion.	
All in all, I am satisfied with the attention paid to the suggestions I make	
All in all, I am satisfied with the hours of work.	
All in all, I am satisfied with the amount of variety in my work.	
All in all, I am satisfied with the job security.	
I am satisfied with my job as a whole.	
Expatriate Job Performance	
My overall performance during my assignment is good.	Kai Liao et al. (2021)
I have a good ability to get along with others.	
I can complete my tasks on time.	
I have a good quality of performance.	
I have good achievements in my work goals.	
I maintain good relationships with my coworkers.	
I maintain good relationships with the social environment."	

3.2 Target Population and Sampling Technique

The data for the present study were collected from expatriates working in various sectors in Saudi Arabia, including education, hotel, construction, manufacturing, and oil and gas. A convenience sampling technique was used to collect data as the population list could not be drawn (i.e., an unknown population frame).

3.3 Data Collection Method

The data was collected through a self-administered survey distributed among the expatriates working in various sectors in Saudi Arabia. The data was collected by taking prior consent from the participants. 238 completed questionnaires were received and used in the analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

This study's collected data was analyzed using SPSS and AMOS. Cronbach's alpha was utilized for the reliability testing. In addition, Amos was used to test the measurement model and structural model of the study. The evaluation of the measurement model comprises a confirmatory factor analysis that evaluates the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments. Checking the reliability with Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and factor loadings. Following Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria, the discriminant validity is examined by comparing the square root of AVE of each construct with their respective correlations with each of the other constructs in the study. The evaluation of a structural model includes a path analysis using a regression model to test both direct and indirect effects.

4. Analysis

The study's collected data was analyzed using SPSS and AMOS. First, the measurement instrument's quality was evaluated. Table 2 displays the reliability statistics for all study variables. The table reveals that the reliability statistics for all variables are greater than the threshold value, indicating that the variables are internally consistent and, therefore, reliable.

Table 2. Reliability of the Scale

Name of the Variable	Internal Consistency
Emotional Intelligence	0.874
Cultural Intelligence	0.766
Cross-cultural Adaptability	0.701
Cross-cultural Competence	0.713
Interpersonal Social Network	0.768
Expatriate Job Satisfaction	0.840
Expatriate Job Performance	0.831

The model fit indices for the study's measurement model are presented in Table 5. All fit indices fall within the acceptable ranges, indicating that the

measurement model is a good fit; thus, the study can move on to the structural model analysis.

Notes for the Model

Table 3. Computation of Degree of Freedom (Default Model)

No. of distinct sample moments	1029
No. of distinct parameters to be estimated	238
df(1029-238)	791

Table 4. Results (Default Model)

Minimum was achieved	Score obtained
χ^2	790
Df	254
Probability level	0.000

Table 5. Measurement Model Fit

Overall Model Measure	Overall Model Score	Acceptable Model Fit	Acceptable Baseline
CFI	0.91	Passed	≥ 0.90
AGFI	0.87	Passed	≥ 0.80
RMSEA	0.043	Passed	< 0.10
CMIN/df	2.34	Passed	< 3
TLI	0.92	Passed	≥ 0.89
IFI	0.93	Passed	≥ 0.90

The model fit indices for the study's structural model are presented in [Table 6](#). All of the fit indices for the structural model are within the suggested ranges, indicating that the structural model is well-fitting.

Table 6. Structural Model Fit

Overall Model Measure	Overall Model Score	Acceptable Model Fit	Acceptable Baseline
CFI	0.93	Passed	≥ 0.90
AGFI	0.89	Passed	≥ 0.80
RMSEA	0.024	Passed	< 0.10
CMIN/df	0.237	Passed	< 3
TLI	0.92	Passed	≥ 0.89
IFI	0.94	Passed	≥ 0.90

Following the evaluation of the structural model fit indices, the hypothesis testing phase of the analysis commenced. The direct and indirect relationships hypothesized in this study are summarized in [Table 7](#). The study fails to provide significant evidence for the relationship between emotional intelligence and expatriate job satisfaction, refuting the study's null hypothesis. Cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adaptability are found to have a positive and statistically significant relationship with the job satisfaction of expatriates, thus supporting Hypotheses 2 and 3 of the study. There is no correlation between cross-cultural competence and

expatriate job satisfaction, refuting hypothesis 4 of the study. It was discovered that interpersonal social network positively correlates with expatriate job satisfaction, which supports hypothesis 5 of the study. In addition, expatriate job satisfaction positively mediates the relationships between emotional intelligence and expatriate job performance, cultural intelligence and expatriate job performance, cross-cultural adaptability and expatriate job performance, cross-cultural competence and expatriate job performance, and interpersonal social network and expatriate job performance, which supports Hypotheses 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the study.

Table 7. Summary of Effects

Variables	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total Effects
Emotional Intelligence → Expatriate Job Satisfaction	0.348		
Cultural Intelligence → Expatriate Job Satisfaction	0.269		
Cross-cultural Adaptability → Expatriate Job Satisfaction	0.487		
Cross-cultural competency → Expatriate Job Satisfaction	0.314		
Interpersonal Social Network → Expatriate Job Satisfaction	0.367		
Expatriate Job Satisfaction → Expatriate Job Performance	0.488		
Emotional Intelligence → Expatriate Job Performance		0.497	
Cultural Intelligence → Expatriate Job Performance		0.364	
Cross-cultural Adaptability → Expatriate Job Performance		0.588	
Cross-cultural competency → Expatriate Job Performance		0.434	
Interpersonal social network → Expatriate Job Performance		0.547	

Table 8 below summarizes the acceptance/rejection status of all the study hypotheses following the results presented in Table 7 above.

Table 8. Results of Analyses and Hypotheses

Hypotheses	P-value	t-value	Accept or Reject
H1 Emotional intelligence is positively and significantly associated with Expatriate Job Satisfaction.	0.121	1.02	Reject
H2 Cultural intelligence is positively and significantly associated with Expatriate Job Satisfaction.	0.025	2.31	Accept

H3	Cross-cultural adaptability is positively and significantly associated with Expatriate Job Satisfaction.	0.031	3.24	Accept
H4	Cross-cultural competence is positively and significantly associated with Expatriate Job Satisfaction.	0.137	1.25	Reject
H5	The interpersonal social network has a positive and significant relationship with Expatriate Job Satisfaction.	0.018	3.24	Accept
H6	Expatriate Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and Expatriate Job Performance.	0.029	3.29	Accept
H7	Expatriate Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between cultural intelligence and Expatriate Job performance.	0.034	2.58	Accept
H8	Expatriate Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between cross-cultural adaptability and Expatriate Job performance.	0.041	2.34	Accept
H9	Expatriate Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between cross-cultural competence and Expatriate Job performance.	0.039	3.87	Accept
H10	Expatriate Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between interpersonal social networks and Expatriate Job performance.	0.0324	4.58	Accept

p-value < 0.05 (Hair et al., 2007), t-value > 1.96 (Bhatti et al., 2015)

5. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the influence of personal level factors such as emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, cross-cultural adaptability, cross-cultural competence, and interpersonal social network on job satisfaction and job performance among expatriate employees. Data was collected from 238 expatriate Saudi Arabian workers in various industries to achieve this objective. The analysis revealed that an expatriate employee's emotional intelligence is not significantly related to job satisfaction. This indicates that awareness, recognition, and regulation of one's own emotions, as well as identification and comprehension of the emotions of others, do not necessarily result in job satisfaction for an expatriate employee. An expatriate employee may be adept at managing their own emotions and being sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others, but this does not imply that they enjoy working in a place with different cultural values and norms and with people from diverse backgrounds. This finding is inconsistent with the prior literature, which provides evidence of a positive association between emotional intelligence

and job satisfaction among expatriate employees; thus, it warrants further investigation. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that job satisfaction positively mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. This indicates that the emotional intelligence of expatriate employees improves their job performance if they are satisfied with the position. If expatriate employees keep their emotions in check and are sensitive to the emotions of others, they will perform better. Employees with high emotional intelligence adapt to new work environments more quickly than those with low emotional intelligence because they can control their emotions and prevent them from affecting their work performance. In addition, the study revealed that an expatriate employee's cultural intelligence positively correlates with job satisfaction. This result is consistent with previous research demonstrating a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and the adjustment, satisfaction, and performance of expatriate employees (Huff, Song, & Gresch, 2014; Nam & Park, 2019; Rockstuhl et al., 2015; Wu & Ang, 2011). This is because an expatriate employee with high cultural intelligence can quickly adapt to the norms of the new cultural environment. They can rapidly evaluate the dos and don'ts of the new culture in which they work and adapt their behavior accordingly. They are not rigid about their cultural background but attempt to comprehend and adapt to the new requirements. These skills facilitate their adaptation to new cultural environments, increasing job satisfaction. Furthermore, job satisfaction mediates the positive relationship between cultural intelligence and job performance. This indicates that expatriate employees with a high level of cultural intelligence are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, resulting in increased job performance. The cultural intelligence of expatriate employees enables them to quickly adapt to new cultural work environments, resulting in improved performance. In addition, cross-cultural adaptability was found to have a positive relationship with the job satisfaction of expatriate employees. This finding is consistent with prior research that has demonstrated a positive relationship between cross-cultural adaptability and work-related outcomes, such as job satisfaction and job performance (Araujo & Taylor, 2012; Lee, 2018; Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2017; Setti, Sommovigo, & Argentero, 2022). Cross-cultural adaptability is a collection of skills and abilities that enable a person to adjust to a new, unfamiliar environment. The skill set of an expatriate employee is enhanced by interaction and communication with culturally diverse individuals in various cultural contexts. With time and experience, these employees can seamlessly adapt to any new environment, and their cross-cultural adaptability skills enable them to behave appropriately according to the norms of any new cultural context. Therefore, expatriate employees with greater cross-cultural adaptability are more likely to be satisfied with their work in a different culture. In addition, the results indicate that job satisfaction positively mediates the connection between cross-cultural adaptability and job performance. This indicates that higher levels of cross-cultural adaptability lead to greater job satisfaction among expatriate employees, ultimately resulting in enhanced performance. In addition, the results revealed that cross-cultural competence is not significantly related to an expatriate

employee's job satisfaction. This result contradicts previous research that demonstrates a positive relationship between cross-cultural competence and job satisfaction (Jung et al., 2021; Kai Liao et al., 2021; Rose et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2014). This indicates that relational skills, general self-efficacy, and non-ethnocentrism may assist an expatriate employee in adjusting to a new cultural environment by fostering long-term friendships with culturally diverse peers, utilizing abilities to effectively deal with the uncertainties associated with a new cultural setting, and having a belief that the expatriate's own culture is not in any way superior to other cultures, but this does not necessarily translate into job success. This result is unexpected and will require further examination by future researchers. Aside from this, it was discovered that job satisfaction positively mediates the relationship between cross-cultural competence and job performance. Expatriate workers with higher cross-cultural competence and greater job satisfaction are likelier to perform better in a new cultural work environment. The interpersonal social network of an expatriate employees was found to have a positive association with their job satisfaction in a new cultural setting. This result is consistent with previous research that has examined the relationship between interpersonal social networks and job satisfaction (Li, Wang, & Rothstein, 2010; Wang & Sangalang, 2005). This is because an expatriate working in a new cultural setting needs peer, friend, colleague, and family support. Expatriates with a robust social network receive more support while adjusting to a new work environment, which not only facilitates their adjustment but also has implications for their job satisfaction. An individual's interpersonal social network plays a crucial role in transmitting useful information, such as emerging opportunities in foreign markets, knowledge of different cultures, and the development of new skills. Having social networks comprised of individuals from various cultures is extremely beneficial. Through social support, an expatriate feels cared for, that assistance is readily available, and that they are accepted and welcomed in the new environment. Together, these feelings contribute to an expatriate employee's job satisfaction. In addition, the results indicate that job satisfaction positively mediates the relationship between an expatriate employee's interpersonal social network and job performance. The more an expatriate feels supported and cared for by their social circle, the more satisfied they are with their job, leading to improved performance.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

This study provides various theoretical implications as the previous research about personal level factors related to expatriate employees' adjustment to new cultural work settings is limited. Moreover, the role of emotional and cultural intelligence in cross-cultural adjustment has not been studied much, especially in the context of Saudi Arabia. Also, an expatriate's interpersonal social network has not been linked with job satisfaction and performance in cross-cultural environments. The study also reveals some contradictory findings, which sparked the need for further investigation by future studies.

5.2. Practical Implications

The study offers numerous practical implications for organizations with a culturally diverse workforce that operates in multiple cultural contexts. The research investigates personal factors that facilitate expatriate employees' adaptation to a new cultural environment. Multinational organizations can consider these factors during the recruitment phase of their assessment process to find candidates with qualities such as emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, cross-cultural adaptability, cross-cultural competence, and interpersonal social network. These factors can be considered during assessments and interviews so that the organization can save substantial money if an unsuitable employee leaves the job and must be replaced.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

As with any other research, the present study has limitations that provide opportunities for future researchers. Quantitative and cross-sectional, the present study provides only a snapshot of the situation. Future studies can investigate the personal level factors of an expatriate employee that can lead to greater job satisfaction and performance by utilizing qualitative interview data, which allows for a deeper understanding and generates valuable insights. Future research can replicate this study in other contexts, allowing cross-national comparisons. Future research can also investigate other factors associated with the adjustment of expatriate employees to new cultural contexts. Future research can investigate the contradictory results reported in this study to provide additional insight.

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