

Group 1: **Intercultural Intelligence and International Assignment Effectiveness: A Conceptual Model and Preliminary Findings** *Kwanghyun Kim, Bradley L. Kirkman, and Gilad Chen*

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The Conceptual Model from Kim et.al aims to provide a theoretical framework that illustrates how Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Cultural distance relate/affect expatriate adjustment and performance in their roles in the new host countries.

These relationships are worth exploring as **Ineffective International Assignment leads to:**

Individual-level (expatriates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of managerial self-confidence • Psychological stress for the expatriate and their families • Poor job performance and career advancement
Organizational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wasteful expenditure related to expatriation and repatriation • Create strain on relationships with various stakeholders (i.e., local staff, customers, suppliers, government) • Potential damage to organizational Reputation inflicted by less competent managers

CQ and Cultural distance are defined as:

1. **Cultural Intelligence (CQ)** - Capability to adapt to new cultural contexts. CQ has four factors:
 - a. Metacognitive: Ability to recognize and understand expectations for cultural situations.
 - b. Cognitive: One's cultural knowledge about economic, legal, social aspects.
 - c. Motivational: An individual's drive to adapt to cultural situations.
 - d. Behavioral: One's ability to utilize culturally sensitive communication and behavior.
2. **Cultural Distance**- The degree to which shared norms and values differ from one country to another. The study uses Hofstede's (1980, 2001) cultural value dimensions which include:
 - a. Individualism-collectivism: relative societal emphasis on social ties and group affiliation compared to oneself
 - b. Power distance: the extent of society's acceptance of unequal distribution of power in institutions and organizations
 - c. Uncertainty Avoidance: degree of avoidance of uncertain and ambiguous situations in society
 - d. Masculinity-Femininity: indicates the dominant value in society between:
 - i. Masculinity - traits of assertiveness, materialism, not caring for others, or quality of life
 - ii. Femininity - traits of caring for others and quality of life

Expatriate Adjustment consists of three dimensions:

1. Work adjustment - meeting job responsibilities and performance expectations
2. Interaction adjustment - e.g. socializing and speaking with host country nationals
3. General adjustment - adjusting to housing, food, shopping, and other aspects of the foreign culture

- I. **CQ is positively related to expatriate performance.** The table below explains how a higher level of CQ relates to one's performance:

CQ Factors:	Relation on Expatriate Performance
Metacognitive & Cognitive CQ	Influences how an expatriate handles tasks that require high levels of culture-related cognitive processing and knowledge about different cultures
Motivational CQ	Influences one's self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation in cross-cultural settings. Can enhance the strength of an individual's persistent effort (self-efficacy) toward a task
Behavioral CQ	Influence expatriates' ability to increase their knowledge about culturally acceptable norms and behaviors from their local coworkers

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- II. **CQ is positively related to expatriate adjustment:** Expatriates with higher CQ have been found to adjust better to the new work and nonwork environments as they are likely to gain more appropriate emotional, informational and instrumental support through interactions with the host country nationals.
- III. **Expatriate adjustment is positively related to performance:** A successful cross-cultural adjustment by an expatriate will reduce stress and strain. The energy spent on daily activities will reduce its impact on their performance. They will be able to focus more on their job tasks. So an effective expatriate adjustment will have a positive impact related to their performance.
- IV. **The relationship between CQ and expatriate performance is mediated by cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates:** A smooth transition across work assignments is critical. Even if the task is the same from home country to host country, the work-role in the latter may be unfamiliar due to the different cultural contexts. Thus, even if a person has a good CQ, if they fail to adjust effectively to their new cultural environment, it is likely to have a negative effect on their performance.
- V. **Cultural distance will positively moderate the relationship between CQ and cross-cultural adjustment. The higher the cultural distance between two countries, the relationship between CQ and adjustment increases.** The cultural difference between the two countries can be measured through the Hofstede cultural value dimensions. For someone doing an international assignment, the bigger the cultural distance is, the more critical CQ becomes. Understanding the cultural distances will allow higher chances of adjustment and, for instance, a better performance.
- VI. **CQ's Relationship to Other Personality Traits:** Although CQ is similar to related Individual Differences (such as openness to experience, extroversion, self-efficacy, self-monitoring, EQ), these differences do not consider cross-cultural contexts. Extroversion, while similar to Motivational CQ as both are related to the willingness to interact with people, without any cultural sensitivity might be considered rude.
- VII. **CQ's Predictive Validity over Other Personality Traits:** Although CQ and other personality traits have a positive correlation, CQ has a direct impact on a person's ability to adjust to and perform well in a new cultural environment. Whereas the effects of other personality traits and EQ are more indirect.
- VIII. **The Preliminary Study:** A study was conducted to confirm the validity of CQ consisting of 442 undergraduate students at a US university. The participants were asked to rate themselves on CQ, big five personality traits, and EQ. In addition, 242 friends of the participants volunteered to fill in a matching survey. The results of the study showed that the correlation between CQ and EQ was higher relative to the correlation between the five personality traits and CQ. They also indicated that CQ is positively related to yet distinct from EQ.
- IX. **Implications for Research and Practice:** A person with higher EQ may not be better at interacting with people from a different cultural context if they lack cultural knowledge, motivation, and behavior. Their ability to interact with people is directly linked to their performance in an international assignment.
- X. **Limitations and Future Research:** The model in the study had certain limitations that open avenues for future research.
 - The model focused on expatriate performance but there are other factors that impact the effectiveness of an international assignment including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and premature return intention.
 - Expatriate performance was considered as a single construct of overall performance whereas in reality, it is a multidimensional construct.
 - Adjustment may be impacted if the person has a spouse and/or children and the distance causes psychological strain.