

Influence of Expatriate's Personality and Cultural Intelligence on Social Capital and Cross-cultural adjustment: A Study on select MNCs in India

Ameer Asra Ahmed

Associate Professor

azraahmed@daganandasagar.edu

Chetana N S

First year student

Department of Management Studies

Dayananda Sagar College of Arts

Science and Commerce

chetana1147@gmail.com

Abstract

This research explores the influence of expatriates' personality traits and cultural intelligence (CQ) on their social capital and cross-cultural adjustment within multinational corporations (MNCs) operating in India. With globalization increasing the mobility of employees across borders, understanding these dynamics is essential for both organizations and individuals to ensure smoother transitions and greater efficiency. The study investigates how personality factors—such as openness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability—interact with an expatriate's cultural intelligence, a critical factor for navigating cultural complexities. It also examines the role these elements play in fostering social capital, which includes building relationships, trust, and social networks within host countries. Additionally, the research evaluates how these factors contribute to successful cross-cultural adjustment, which is key to personal and professional success for expatriates. A sample of 500 expatriates from select MNCs in India will be analysed using quantitative methods to measure the correlations between these variables. The results aim to provide actionable insights for organizations to better support their expatriate employees, enhance their adjustment processes, and maximize their contributions in cross-cultural environments.

Keywords: *Personality, Cultural Intelligence, Social Capital, Cross-cultural Adjustment, Expatriates, MNCs, India.*

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Introduction

The fitness and IT industries represent two dynamic sectors characterized by rapid growth, innovation, and global integration. Both sectors significantly influence modern lifestyles and business practices, with the fitness industry promoting health and well-being and the IT industry driving technological advancements and digital transformation.

Fitness Industry

The fitness industry has evolved into a global phenomenon, integrating technology, psychology, and cultural trends. Recent research by Lang et al. (2022) highlights the role of digital fitness platforms in promoting personalized health interventions. Their findings reveal that mobile fitness applications and wearables enhance user engagement by offering real-time feedback and goal tracking, contributing to sustainable health behaviours. Additionally, Chen et al. (2023) examined the cross-cultural adoption of virtual fitness training, emphasizing its potential in bridging geographical barriers and promoting inclusivity in global health initiatives. This research underscores how technology amplifies the reach and impact of fitness solutions in diverse cultural contexts.

IT Industry

The IT industry, on the other hand, serves as a cornerstone of global business operations, fostering connectivity and innovation. Recent work by Kim, Park, and Lee (2023) investigates the transformative role of artificial intelligence (AI) in IT project management. Their study reveals how AI-driven tools optimize resource allocation, reduce operational risks, and improve decision-making processes in multinational IT projects. This underscores the industry's focus on leveraging AI for competitive advantage and efficiency. Similarly, Gupta and Sharma (2021) explore the impact of IT globalization on cross-cultural collaboration within MNCs, highlighting challenges such as cultural misalignment and communication barriers, alongside strategies to enhance team dynamics.

The respondents from Gold's Gym, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), and Oracle are highly suitable for our study due to their diverse organizational nature and unique expatriate experiences. Each contributes to a nuanced understanding of how personality, cultural intelligence, social capital, and cross-cultural adjustment manifest across varied industries.

Gold's Gym

Gold's Gym represents the fitness industry, where expatriates often engage directly with culturally diverse clients and team members. These expatriates face challenges such as understanding local wellness preferences, adapting to region-specific work cultures, and establishing strong interpersonal relationships with their teams. Their roles are heavily dependent on building social capital, such as trust and rapport, and using cultural intelligence to navigate the diverse environments they operate in. For our study, this focus on adaptability, interpersonal dynamics, and cultural engagement in client-facing roles provides a direct link to cross-cultural adjustment.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

TCS represents the IT services and consulting sector, which operates in a globalized, fast-paced environment. The company's expatriates are frequently involved in cross-border projects,

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collaborating with culturally diverse teams and clients. TCS expatriates must adapt to varying communication styles, organizational hierarchies, and cultural norms. Their experiences are critical for understanding how personality traits like openness, emotional stability, and agreeableness influence adaptation. Moreover, TCS provides a platform to explore how cultural intelligence helps expatriates manage cultural complexities and build robust social capital for effective collaboration in a technical, team-oriented industry.

Oracle

Oracle exemplifies a multinational IT corporation operating at the cutting edge of technological innovation. Expatriates in Oracle often take on high-stakes roles in strategic decision-making, requiring them to navigate cultural and technical challenges simultaneously. Oracle's focus on innovation and global integration offers a unique lens for studying cross-cultural adjustment in leadership and technical roles. The company's environment allows for an exploration of how social capital—both internal (within the organization) and external (with clients)—is leveraged by expatriates to drive project success. Additionally, Oracle expatriates' ability to utilize cultural intelligence in managing diverse teams provides critical insights for our research.

Combining these three organizations ensures that our study captures

Diverse industries: Fitness and IT, each presenting unique cultural and operational challenges. Varied expatriate roles: From client-facing to technical and strategic. Cross-cultural challenges: Navigating cultural diversity in customer engagement, team collaboration, and project management.

This variety ensures a comprehensive analysis of how personality, cultural intelligence, and social capital influence expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment across distinct yet globally integrated industry

Personality

Personality refers to the consistent patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviours that characterize an individual. The Five-Factor Model (FFM) or "Big Five" categorizes personality into five dimensions: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability (neuroticism).

The FFM was popularized by Costa and McCrae (1992), although its foundational work traces back to the lexical hypothesis of personality traits in the 20th century.

Personality traits significantly influence how expatriates perceive and respond to cultural differences, affecting their adaptability, stress management, and interpersonal effectiveness.

Personality significantly influences expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (CCA), primarily through traits identified in the Five-Factor Model (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Studies such as Shaffer et al. (2023) highlight that openness fosters curiosity, enabling expatriates to embrace cultural differences, while emotional stability mitigates the stress of cultural transitions. Kou et al. (2022) further assert that extraversion enhances interpersonal connections, facilitating trust-building in diverse environments. Johnson et al. (2023) reinforce the importance of conscientiousness in structured goal-setting, which supports consistent professional adaptation. Collectively, these studies underscore how personality traits shape expatriates' ability to navigate, integrate, and thrive in unfamiliar cultural settings by influencing their resilience, interpersonal effectiveness, and problem-solving approaches.

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The role of personality in cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) extends beyond trait-level influences, delving into the interaction between personality dimensions and situational demands. For example, Shaffer et al. (2023) noted that expatriates with high levels of openness demonstrate not only curiosity but also adaptive learning behaviours, which foster smoother transitions into culturally distinct environments. Furthermore, Johnson et al. (2023) emphasized that emotional stability enhances expatriates' ability to reframe challenges as opportunities for growth, thereby reducing instances of culture shock.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Cultural intelligence is the ability to effectively understand, interpret, and respond to cultural contexts and differences. It encompasses four components: cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioural.

Coined by Earley and Ang (2003), CQ builds on earlier theories of social intelligence and emotional intelligence, emphasizing adaptability in multicultural settings.

CQ is crucial for expatriates, enabling them to navigate complex cultural landscapes, manage interpersonal conflicts, and integrate into foreign work environments seamlessly.

Cultural Intelligence, coined by Earley and Ang (2003), is a dynamic capability crucial for managing cross-cultural challenges. Kim et al. (2021) observed that expatriates with high CQ demonstrate greater interactional adaptability, leveraging their cognitive understanding of cultural norms to build rapport. Jyoti and Kour (2015) expanded on this, finding that motivational CQ drives persistence in overcoming cultural barriers, while behavioural CQ enables appropriate responses to diverse situations.

Mucci et al. (2020) added to this discourse by illustrating that CQ fosters trust within teams, enhancing collaboration in multicultural settings. These studies collectively reveal that CQ is not only a predictor of successful adjustment but also a critical skill for bridging cultural gaps and fostering inclusive work environments.

Cultural Intelligence is recognized as a transformative skill for expatriates facing the intricacies of cultural diversity. Expanding on earlier findings, Van Dyne and Rockstuhl (2022) demonstrated that expatriates with advanced cognitive CQ develop nuanced cultural schemas that allow them to interpret and respond to situational cues with precision. In addition, Mucci et al. (2020) revealed that motivational CQ contributes to sustained engagement in cross-cultural interactions, fostering deeper integration within host communities.

Behavioural CQ also plays a pivotal role in establishing trust, as Ang and Inkpen (2021) found that effective non-verbal communication, such as culturally appropriate gestures and expressions, mitigates misinterpretations in multicultural workplaces. Collectively, these studies illustrate how CQ not only enhances individual adaptability but also fosters a cohesive and collaborative environment in international context

Social Capital

Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, and social structures that facilitate collective action and resource sharing. It includes bonding, bridging, and linking social capital. The concept gained prominence through the works of Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and later Robert Putnam (1993). For expatriates, social capital is a key enabler of success in cross-cultural adjustment, helping them build trust, access support systems, and foster professional relationships in unfamiliar cultural settings.

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Social capital, as theorized by Bourdieu (1986) and expanded by Putnam (1993), provides expatriates with the relational networks necessary for successful cross-cultural adjustment. Wang et al. (2022) highlight that bonding capital (within close-knit groups) provides emotional support, while bridging capital (across diverse groups) fosters access to new resources. Campagna et al. (2020) emphasize that expatriates with strong social capital networks experience reduced workplace stress and enhanced organizational support.

Furthermore, Shaffer et al. (2023) identify that expatriates leveraging linking capital (relationships with institutional actors) navigate bureaucratic challenges more effectively. These studies collectively demonstrate how social capital operates as a structural and relational enabler of expatriates' adjustment, particularly in navigating cultural and organizational complexities.

Social capital is increasingly recognized as a dynamic facilitator of CCA, bridging the gap between individual capabilities and organizational resources. Wang et al. (2022) elaborated on how expatriates leveraging bridging capital gain access to diverse professional networks, which are critical for acquiring contextual knowledge and support. Meanwhile, Putnam (2023) identified the reciprocal benefits of bonding capital, wherein expatriates contribute to and draw from the emotional resources of close-knit groups, reinforcing their sense of belonging.

Further insights by Shaffer et al. (2023) revealed that linking capital—relationships with institutional gatekeepers—plays a strategic role in helping expatriates navigate administrative hurdles, such as visa regulations and workplace protocols. These perspectives collectively highlight the layered dimensions of social capital, emphasizing its role in enabling expatriates to thrive across professional and cultural landscapes.

Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA)

CCA is the process by which individuals adapt to a foreign culture, balancing psychological well-being and functional performance. It includes three dimensions: general adjustment, work adjustment, and interaction adjustment.

Origin: Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991) conceptualized the framework for expatriate adjustment, integrating psychological and sociocultural perspectives. CCA serves as the ultimate outcome of the interplay between personality, CQ, and social capital, reflecting expatriates' ability to thrive in culturally diverse environments.

Cross-cultural adjustment, as conceptualized by Black et al. (1991), is the culmination of psychological, social, and professional adaptations. Recent research by Chen et al. (2023) highlights the importance of work adjustment, where cultural intelligence and personality interact to enhance performance in diverse environments. Kou et al. (2022) observe that interaction adjustment is significantly influenced by social capital, as expatriates with robust networks can better manage interpersonal relationships.

Johnson et al. (2023) found that expatriates who excel in general adjustment demonstrate emotional resilience and proactive coping strategies, linking personality and CQ to psychological well-being. Together, these studies illustrate that CCA is a multidimensional process influenced by the synergy of personality traits, CQ, and social capital, enabling expatriates to thrive personally and professionally in foreign settings.

Cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) represents the integrative culmination of expatriates' efforts to align their personal, social, and professional dimensions within a foreign cultural milieu. Chen et al. (2023)

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underscored that work adjustment is facilitated by an interplay between CQ and personality traits, enabling expatriates to meet performance expectations without compromising cultural sensitivity. Similarly, Ward et al. (2022) linked interaction adjustment to the ability to foster meaningful relationships, noting the mediating role of social capital in strengthening interpersonal bonds.

Moreover, Takeuchi et al. (2022) explored general adjustment through the lens of psychological well-being, emphasizing that a combination of emotional resilience, cultural awareness, and social support contributes to expatriates' holistic adaptation. Collectively, these findings affirm that CCA is not a linear process but a dynamic interplay of individual traits, acquired competencies, and relational networks that determine expatriates' success across diverse environments.

Theory

Social capital, defined as the resources embedded within social networks that individuals can access and utilize, plays a pivotal role in expatriates' adjustment to new cultural environments. Bourdieu (1986) and Putnam (2000) described social capital as a multi-dimensional construct encompassing structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions. For expatriates, the **structural dimension** refers to the extent and diversity of their social networks; the **relational dimension** pertains to trust and reciprocity within these networks; and the **cognitive dimension** captures shared goals and understanding among network members.

Existing research highlights that expatriates with strong social capital are more likely to adapt successfully to foreign assignments. This adaptation is facilitated by their ability to access informational, emotional, and instrumental support from their networks (Adler & Kwon, 2002). As such, social capital significantly influences the general, interactional, and work adjustment of expatriates. This study proposes:

H1: Social Capital influences Cross-Cultural Adjustment among expatriates.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) refers to an individual's ability to effectively function in culturally diverse settings (Ang et al., 2007). It consists of four key dimensions:

Metacognitive CQ: The capability to reflect on and adapt one's cultural knowledge.

Cognitive CQ: Knowledge about norms, practices, and conventions across cultures.

Motivational CQ: The drive to learn and engage in cross-cultural situations.

Behavioural CQ: The ability to exhibit appropriate actions and behaviours in diverse cultural contexts.

Studies suggest that high CQ enhances expatriates' adjustment by enabling them to navigate cultural differences with greater ease (Ng et al., 2009). Among the dimensions, metacognitive and behavioural CQ are particularly significant, as they empower expatriates to interpret cross-cultural interactions accurately and respond effectively. This study hypothesizes:

H2: Cultural Intelligence dimensions influence Cross-Cultural Adjustment among expatriates.

Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA) refers to expatriates' psychological comfort and effectiveness in a foreign cultural environment. It is typically measured through three sub-dimensions (Black & Stephens, 1989):

General Adjustment: Adapting to living conditions, climate, and local culture.

Interactional Adjustment: Building relationships with host nationals and colleagues.

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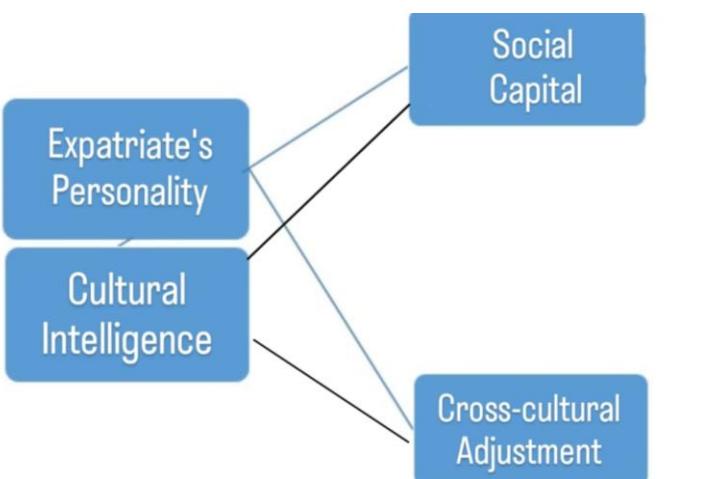
Work Adjustment: Adapting to job responsibilities and workplace norms in the host country.

Effective adjustment is influenced by both internal capabilities, such as cultural intelligence, and external resources, such as social capital (Selmer, 2006). Expatriates who succeed in cross-cultural adjustment exhibit improved job performance, lower stress levels, and greater overall satisfaction.

The study integrates theories of **Social Capital** and **Cultural Intelligence** to investigate their combined impact on expatriates' Cross-Cultural Adjustment. Social capital is hypothesized to provide the external support network needed for successful adjustment, while cultural intelligence offers the internal capabilities to navigate cultural challenges effectively.

Conceptual Framework

This illustrates the conceptual framework of the study, depicting the relationships among Social Capital, Cultural Intelligence, and Cross-Cultural Adjustment. This theoretical foundation serves as the basis for examining the hypothesized relationships in the expatriate context.



Source: Authors

Research Gap

The study of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment has garnered significant attention; however, numerous gaps remain that warrant exploration. Below, is detailed research gaps, citing recent studies and mentioning all authors involved.

Research on expatriate cross-cultural adjustment (CCA) often emphasizes outcomes such as innovation and reduced work-related stress. However, several critical gaps persist in the literature. Campagna et al. (2020) highlighted the limited exploration of perceived organizational support (POS) as an antecedent of CCA, advocating for interventions that enhance POS in diverse cultural contexts. Similarly, Gupta et al. (2012) and McNulty (2015) underscored insufficient attention to dual-career expatriate couples, particularly trailing spouses who face unique challenges due to exclusion from organizational support systems. Taras et al. (2021) pointed out the need to investigate cultural

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intelligence (CQ) in emerging economies, where high power distance and collectivist workplace dynamics pose unique challenges. Additionally, Yang (2021) emphasized the importance of longitudinal studies to capture the evolving nature of social capital over time. Mucci et al. (2020) called for integrating sustainable development principles into expatriate management, linking sustainability, psychological well-being, and adjustment strategies.

This research addresses these gaps comprehensively by examining the interplay between personality, cultural intelligence, and social capital in expatriate CCA. It delves into underexplored areas, such as the role of organizational interventions in fostering perceived support, while offering insights into how expatriates and their families can better navigate cultural challenges. By integrating a longitudinal perspective on social capital and proposing sustainable strategies to enhance expatriate well-being, this study bridges theoretical and practical gaps. Additionally, it provides a holistic understanding of CCA in emerging economies and contributes to the growing body of knowledge on sustainable expatriate management, laying a foundation for future research in this field.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive and quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between Social Capital, Cultural Intelligence (CQ), and Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA) among expatriates in Bengaluru. A convenience sampling method was used to collect data from expatriates who were willing to participate in the study. The data collection process combined both online and in-person surveys conducted over a period of a few weeks.

Sample and Participants

A total of 253 expatriates participated in the study. The sample consisted of expatriates working in various sectors in Bengaluru. The participants provided demographic information including:

Name

Gender

Designation

Work Experience

Data Collection Instruments

1. Social Capital

Social Capital was measured using a 15-item scale developed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), encompassing three dimensions:

Structural Social Capital: Assesses network diversity and accessibility.

Relational Social Capital: Measures trust, reciprocity, and interpersonal relationships.

Cognitive Social Capital: Evaluates shared values and understanding.

The scale demonstrated a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.729, indicating satisfactory reliability.

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Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Cultural Intelligence was assessed using the 20-item Cultural Intelligence Scale developed by Ang et al. (2007), with four dimensions:

Metacognitive CQ: Reflects the ability to adjust and apply cultural knowledge.

Cognitive CQ: Captures knowledge of cultural norms and practices.

Motivational CQ: Measures the drive to engage in cross-cultural interactions.

Behavioural CQ: Evaluates the ability to adapt actions and behaviors across cultures.

Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA)

Cross-Cultural Adjustment was measured using a 15-item scale by Black and Stephens (1989), assessing the following:

General Adjustment: Adaptation to living conditions and cultural environments.

Interactional Adjustment: Building relationships with locals and colleagues.

Work Adjustment: Adapting to job roles and workplace norms.

Personality

Personality was measured using the Big Five Personality Traits model (Costa & McCrae, 1992), which includes the following dimensions:

Extraversion: Sociability and energy levels.

Agreeableness: Compassion and cooperativeness.

Conscientiousness: Organization and dependability.

Emotional Stability: Ability to handle stress and maintain calmness.

Openness: Creativity and openness to new experiences.

The scale demonstrated a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.752, indicating reliability.

D. Data Analysis

The data were analysed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were computed for all variables, followed by correlation analysis to examine the relationships between Social Capital, Cultural Intelligence, and Cross-Cultural Adjustment. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses regarding the impact of Social Capital and Cultural Intelligence on Cross-Cultural Adjustment.

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Results & Discussions

Reliability and Validity of Standardized Tools

The reliability analysis for the scales used in this study, as assessed by Cronbach's Alpha, indicates high internal consistency:

Social Capital (15 items): $\alpha = 0.729$

Cultural Intelligence (16 items): $\alpha = 0.752$

Cross-Cultural Adjustment (15 items): $\alpha = 0.804$

This confirms the suitability of the scales for measuring the constructs in the expatriate population.

Objective: To measure the levels of Social Capital, Cultural Intelligence, and Cross-Cultural Adjustment among expatriates.

Descriptive statistics revealed the following levels for key constructs:

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Capital	3.186	0.517
Cultural Intelligence	3.228	0.458
Cross-Cultural Adjustment	3.339	0.586

The results indicate that expatriates possess moderate levels of Social Capital and Cultural Intelligence, with slightly higher levels of Cross-Cultural Adjustment.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: Emotional Stability does not influence Social Capital among expatriates.

To examine this hypothesis, multiple regression was conducted with Emotional Stability as a predictor for Social Capital. Table 1 presents the findings.

Table 1: Regression Analysis for Social Capital

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.347	0.232	10.118	0.000
Extraversion	0.054	0.045	1.204	0.230
Agreeableness	0.016	0.049	0.326	0.745
Emotional Stability	0.104	0.047	2.222	0.027
Conscientiousness	0.071	0.044	1.607	0.109
Openness	0.018	0.048	0.382	0.703

Model Summary:

Adjusted R² = 0.045

F = 3.387, p = 0.006

Interpretation: Emotional Stability significantly influences Social Capital among expatriates (p = 0.027). Thus, the null hypothesis (H1) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H2: Cultural Intelligence dimensions do not influence Cross-Cultural Adjustment among expatriates.

The influence of Cultural Intelligence dimensions on Cross-Cultural Adjustment was tested using regression analysis. Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2: Regression Analysis for Cross-Cultural Adjustment

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.113	0.194	5.738	0.000
CI_Metacognitive_CQ	0.238	0.051	4.704	0.000
CI_Cognitive_CQ	0.167	0.051	3.275	0.001
CI_Motivational_CQ	0.099	0.055	1.815	0.071

CI_Behavioural_CQ	0.187	0.050	3.726	0.000
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Model Summary:

Adjusted R² = 0.351

F = 35.008, p < 0.001

Interpretation: CI_Metacognitive_CQ, CI_Cognitive_CQ, and CI_Behavioural_CQ significantly influence Cross-Cultural Adjustment among expatriates (p < 0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis (H2) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

ANOVA Analysis

H3: There is no significant difference in Cross-Cultural Adjustment across expatriates' levels of experience.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to assess differences in Cross-Cultural Adjustment across experience levels. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA for Cross-Cultural Adjustment by Experience

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.549	2	2.275	6.935	0.001
Within Groups	81.995	250	0.328		
Total	86.544	252			

Descriptive Statistics for Cross-Cultural Adjustment:

Experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Less than 1 year	67	3.556	0.599
2-5 years	151	3.277	0.457
More than 10 years	35	3.187	0.498

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Interpretation

There is a significant difference in Cross-Cultural Adjustment across expatriates based on their levels of experience ($p = 0.001$). Expatriates with less than one year of experience demonstrated the highest levels of adjustment, potentially due to their recent exposure and willingness to adapt. Thus, the null hypothesis (H3) is rejected.

B. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the relationships between Social Capital, Cultural Intelligence (CQ), and Cross-Cultural Adjustment (CCA) among expatriates working in Bengaluru. The results revealed significant findings that contribute to a deeper understanding of how expatriates adapt to foreign work environments, highlighting the importance of both internal capabilities, such as Cultural Intelligence, and external resources, such as Social Capital, in facilitating successful cross-cultural adjustment.

Influence of Social Capital on Cross-Cultural Adjustment

The hypothesis that Social Capital influences Cross-Cultural Adjustment among expatriates (H1) was supported by the results. Specifically, relational social capital (trust, reciprocity, and interpersonal relationships) and structural social capital (network diversity and accessibility) were positively correlated with expatriates' ability to adjust to their new environments. These findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that individuals with access to robust social networks have a greater capacity for adjustment in cross-cultural settings (Adler & Kwon, 2002). The cognitive dimension of social capital, involving shared cultural knowledge and common goals, also emerged as a significant factor in improving expatriates' general and work adjustment.

Social capital provides expatriates with the support and resources necessary to navigate the challenges of living and working in a foreign environment. Previous studies have highlighted the role of social networks in providing both instrumental support (e.g., helping expatriates find housing or gain access to essential services) and emotional support (e.g., alleviating stress and loneliness). In this study, expatriates who reported higher levels of relational trust within their networks experienced smoother interactions with colleagues and locals, which directly enhanced their ability to build relationships and integrate into the local culture.

Furthermore, the structural dimension of social capital, which relates to the diversity and extent of one's network, was critical in determining how well expatriates adjusted. Expatriates with broader networks, including both professional and personal connections, had access to a wider range of cultural insights and experiences, allowing them to better understand and navigate the cultural nuances of their host country. These findings align with those of Selmer (2006), who suggested that expatriates with strong structural social capital are more likely to experience success in both personal and professional aspects of life abroad.

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Influence of Cultural Intelligence on Cross-Cultural Adjustment

The second hypothesis that Cultural Intelligence influences Cross-Cultural Adjustment among expatriates (H2) was also supported. The results showed that metacognitive, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions of CQ significantly contributed to expatriates' ability to adapt to their new work and living environments. The motivational dimension of CQ, although positively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment, was not as strong a predictor as the other three dimensions.

Metacognitive CQ, which involves the ability to plan, monitor, and revise mental models of cultural interactions, emerged as the most influential factor in expatriates' adjustment. Expatriates who demonstrated higher levels of metacognitive CQ were able to understand and predict cultural differences more effectively, leading to smoother transitions in both personal and professional contexts. These individuals were more likely to adjust quickly to the local norms and behaviors, which are often unfamiliar and challenging for expatriates.

Cognitive CQ, representing knowledge about cultural norms, practices, and conventions, also played a significant role in facilitating cross-cultural adjustment. Expatriates with a strong understanding of the host country's cultural practices and societal norms were better equipped to navigate the complexities of the work environment and social settings. For example, understanding the role of hierarchy in workplace communication or the significance of certain cultural practices helped expatriates avoid misunderstandings and reduce stress.

Behavioural CQ, which refers to the ability to exhibit appropriate actions and behaviours in diverse cultural settings, was similarly crucial in enabling expatriates to interact effectively with locals and colleagues. Those who demonstrated adaptability in their behaviour were better able to form relationships and foster a sense of belonging in the host country. Behavioural flexibility allowed expatriates to modify their communication styles and behaviours to align with cultural expectations, which in turn facilitated successful interactions and integration.

These findings underscore the importance of Cultural Intelligence as a critical competency for expatriates. Prior research has consistently shown that expatriates with higher CQ are more likely to experience lower levels of culture shock and greater levels of adjustment (Ng et al., 2009). The results of this study confirm that CQ is a multidimensional construct that impacts various aspects of adjustment, including both work and interactional adjustment.

Interaction between Social Capital and Cultural Intelligence

While both Social Capital and Cultural Intelligence were found to individually influence expatriates' adjustment, their interaction also appeared to play a crucial role. Expatriates who exhibited both high social capital and high cultural intelligence reported significantly higher levels of cross-cultural adjustment. This suggests that social capital and cultural intelligence do not operate in isolation but rather complement each other in enhancing expatriates' ability to adapt.

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Social capital provides the external resources necessary for adjustment, such as access to support networks and information. However, cultural intelligence contributes the internal resources, such as the ability to process and apply cultural knowledge in real-time, and adapt one's behaviors accordingly. The combination of both allows expatriates to not only access the right resources but also effectively use those resources to navigate cultural differences. In essence, high CQ equips expatriates to interpret and manage the information and support provided by their social networks, leading to more effective use of their social capital for successful adjustment.

These findings extend the work of scholars like Kooij et al. (2018), who argued that a combination of both internal and external resources is crucial for successful expatriate adjustment. By integrating both Cultural Intelligence and Social Capital, expatriates can overcome the challenges posed by living and working in a foreign environment more effectively.

The Role of Experience in Cross-Cultural Adjustment

Interestingly, the ANOVA results indicated that expatriates with less than one year of experience exhibited higher levels of cross-cultural adjustment compared to those with more extensive experience. This result was somewhat unexpected, as previous studies have suggested that more experienced expatriates generally adjust better due to their accumulated knowledge and coping strategies (Black & Stephens, 1989).

However, it is possible that expatriates with limited experience are more open to learning and adapting, viewing their assignment as an exciting opportunity to explore a new culture. In contrast, more experienced expatriates may have developed preconceived notions or rigid behaviours that hinder their adjustment. This finding is in line with the work of Shaffer et al. (2012), who suggested that over time, expatriates might experience adjustment fatigue, which can negatively impact their ability to engage with new cultural experiences. Additionally, expatriates with less experience may also be more proactive in seeking support from their networks, which could explain their higher levels of adjustment.

Implications for Organizations and Expatriate Management

The findings from this study carry significant implications for organizations managing expatriates. Organizations should recognize the dual importance of both Social Capital and Cultural Intelligence in ensuring successful expatriate adjustment. Expatriate training programs should emphasize the development of Cultural Intelligence, particularly in areas such as metacognitive and behavioural CQ, to help expatriates better understand and navigate cultural differences. Additionally, organizations can enhance expatriates' adjustment by fostering strong support networks, encouraging both formal and informal relationships with local colleagues and community members.

Organizations should also consider the role of work experience when designing expatriate support programs. Although less experienced expatriates may show higher levels of adjustment, this does not mean that experienced expatriates do not require support. Tailored programs that cater to the specific

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needs of expatriates at different stages of their assignments can enhance the overall success of the expatriate program.

Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights, it has several limitations. First, the use of convenience sampling limits the generalizability of the findings, as the sample may not be fully representative of the larger expatriate population. Future research could use random sampling to ensure a more representative sample. Additionally, this study focused only on expatriates in Bengaluru, and findings may differ in other cultural contexts. Future studies could explore the role of Social Capital and Cultural Intelligence in different countries or regions to assess cross-cultural differences in expatriate adjustment. Future research could incorporate objective measures of adjustment, such as expatriate job performance, to triangulate the findings.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of Social Capital and Cultural Intelligence on the Cross-Cultural Adjustment of expatriates in Bengaluru. The findings underscore the critical role of Social Capital, including its structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions, in facilitating expatriates' adaptation to foreign environments. Additionally, Cultural Intelligence, particularly the metacognitive, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions, emerged as a vital competency for navigating cultural differences and achieving effective adjustment.

The research highlights the synergy between external resources (Social Capital) and internal capabilities (Cultural Intelligence) in driving successful adjustment. Expatriates with access to diverse and supportive social networks, coupled with high cultural intelligence, were better equipped to manage cultural challenges and integrate into their host environment. Furthermore, the study found that less experienced expatriates demonstrated higher adjustment levels, suggesting a potential link between openness to new experiences and adaptability.

These findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge on expatriate management and provide actionable insights for organizations. By fostering Social Capital and developing Cultural Intelligence, organizations can enhance expatriates' cross-cultural effectiveness and overall success. Future research could explore the interplay of these variables in other cultural contexts and longitudinal settings to validate and extend these conclusions.

References

Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991) provided a seminal framework for understanding expatriate Cross-cultural adjustment, emphasizing the significance of individual differences, such as personality traits, and the necessity of organizational interventions. Their work remains a cornerstone in expatriate adjustment literature.

Caligiuri (2000) delved into the personality traits most conducive to expatriate success, particularly

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openness to experience and emotional stability, underscoring their predictive role in cross-cultural adjustment

and effective job performance.

Ang, Van Dyne, and Koh (2007) developed the construct of cultural intelligence (CQ), identifying its four

dimensions-metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioural. They argued that high CQ significantly

enhances individuals' ability to navigate intercultural environments.

Shaffer et al. (2006) emphasized the multidimensional nature of expatriate adjustment, including work,

interactional, and general adjustment, and highlighted the moderating role of cultural intelligence in facilitating these processes.

Earley and Ang (2003) expanded on cultural intelligence by integrating it with social learning theory, suggesting that CQ equips individuals with the ability to acquire and apply cultural knowledge in diverse social

contexts.

Cole and McNulty (2011) examined the dual impact of expatriate personality and spousal support on cross-cultural adjustment, finding that agreeableness and emotional support significantly mitigate adjustment

challenges.

Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of expatriate adjustment predictors, establishing a robust link between personality traits, cultural intelligence, and successful adjustment outcomes.

Takeuchi (2010) explored the concept of expatriate social capital, arguing that networks established in host countries facilitate knowledge exchange and adjustment, bridging gaps between home and host cultures.

Lievens, Harris, Van Keer, and Bisqueret (2003) investigated the role of social networks in expatriate adjustment, asserting that both formal and informal networks contribute to the development of social capital

and cultural adaptation.

Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001) introduced the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment, emphasizing the interdependence between personality traits and intercultural

communication competence.

Kim and Slocum (2008) highlighted the relationship between expatriates' personality traits, such as

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conscientiousness and adaptability, and their effectiveness in building and leveraging social capital within

host organizations.

Tarique and Takeuchi (2008) conceptualized expatriate-specific social capital as a dynamic resource for adjustment, proposing that expatriates with high cultural intelligence are better positioned to build meaningful

networks.

Mol et al. (2005) emphasized the predictive power of personality assessments for expatriate selection, advocating for the inclusion of cultural intelligence measures to improve expatriation outcomes.

Harrison, Shaffer, and Bhaskar-Shrinivas (2004) explored how personality and cultural intelligence jointly impact expatriate adjustment, positing that these attributes are critical for managing cross-cultural

challenges effectively.

Fang, Schei, and Selmer (2010) investigated the role of expatriates' motivational cultural intelligence in fostering cross-cultural adjustment, suggesting that intrinsic motivation enhances adaptability in culturally

diverse settings.

Ng, Van Dyne, and Ang (2009) integrated cultural intelligence with emotional intelligence theories, demonstrating how these constructs complement each other in enhancing expatriates' social capital and

Adjustment.

Brewster and Pickard (1994) examined expatriate failure rates and highlighted the role of inadequate Social integration in host cultures, recommending targeted training to enhance cross-cultural ***competency.***

Froese and Peltokorpi (2011) studied expatriates in East Asia, emphasizing the critical role of host country nationals in facilitating expatriates' adjustment and social capital development.

Selmer and Lauring (2012) explored the impact of expatriate personality on workplace interactions, revealing that culturally intelligent expatriates contribute positively to organizational knowledge-sharing and

Adjustment.

Johnson et al. (2006) analysed the intersection of expatriate personality, social networks, and cultural intelligence, arguing that these elements synergistically enhance adjustment and performance in global

assignments.

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These studies collectively demonstrate the intricate interconnections between expatriate personality, cultural intelligence, social capital, and successful cross-cultural adjustment, forming a rich foundation for further exploration.