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Chinese Expatriates' Willingness Regarding Thailand-Exploring the Effects of Perceived Organizational Support, Cultural Intelligence, Overseas Study Experience and Overseas Work Experience

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Abstract

With the advent of globalization and multinational organizations, the number of Chinese corporate employees deployed abroad is increasing yearly. During the epidemic, the situation of expatriation is different than it was before. Based on the background of more exchanges between China and Thailand than ever before, this study aims to investigate the expatriation willingness of Chinese employees to Thailand in the post-pandemic era and to verify the relationship between cultural intelligence (motivational cultural intelligence, behavioral cultural intelligence, cognitive cultural intelligence, and Meta-cognitive cultural intelligence and expatriation willingness to Thailand. A total of 165 valid samples were collected from full-time employees of Chinese companies (working in companies within China) via the online questionnaire. The data was analyzed using SPSS 25.0 and AMOS 26.0 for reliability and regression analysis. The conclusion is that (1) Motivational CQ and Cognitive CQ have a significant positive relationship with the expatriation willingness to Thailand; (2) The expatriation willingness to Thailand is affected by demographic variables such as overseas study experience and overseas work experience; (3) Perceived Organizational Support has a positive effect on the expatriation willingness to Thailand. The results of this study can provide a reference for human resource management in dispatch in the post-pandemic era and make up for the gap in previous research.

Keywords: Cultural Intelligence, Chinese Expatriation Willingness to Thailand, Perceived Organizational Support, Overseas Study Experience, Overseas Work Experience

Introduction

The Journal of Shenzhen University (Humanities and Social Sciences), A Guide to the Core Journal of China, indicated that cooperation on the China-Thailand railway not only helps to strengthen China-Thailand economic and trade relations, but also actively develops the traditionally friendly relations between China and Thailand based on the principle of “amity, sincerity, reciprocity, and inclusiveness” (Zou, 2018). Another benefit of Chinese students studying in Thai universities is the economic benefit to Thailand. Chinese students contribute to the local economy by paying tuition fees and living expenses. In addition, the presence of Chinese students can help to attract Chinese businesses to invest in Thailand. In conclusion, the education of Thai universities for Chinese students during 2020-2023 has been characterized by increasing collaboration and partnerships between the two countries. The benefits of this collaboration include cultural exchange, economic benefit to Thailand, and academic collaboration between the two countries. It can be seen that business and academic exchanges between China and Thailand are greater than ever and mutually advantageous due to the Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese government. Therefore, this study focuses on Chinese corporate personnel and Thailand as the destination country to investigate the post-pandemic market dynamics and fill the gap in the academic literature.

Chinese expatriates working in Thailand can bring several benefits, including the transfer of knowledge and skills, promotion of cultural exchange, attraction of foreign direct investment, and creation of job opportunities. As Cultural intelligence is an important factor for expatriates working in a foreign country. It refers to an individual's ability to adapt and function effectively in a culturally diverse environment. The concept of cultural intelligence (CQ) has sub-concepts: Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence (Meta-cognitive CQ), Cognitive Cultural Intelligence (Cognitive CQ), Motivational Cultural Intelligence (Motivational CQ), and Behavioral Cultural Intelligence (Behavioral CQ) (Ang et al., 2007). Scholars have widely studied cultural intelligence in the context of cross-cultural and expatriates, such as the journal article “Research on Cultural Intelligence: Review and Prospect” funded by the Young Scientists Fund of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (Gao & Li, 2009), which again emphasized that Cultural Intelligence is a meaningful, valuable, and challenging research field with practical significance for the construction of global work teams. According to Ang et al. (2007), it positively impacts team performance if individuals can adapt to new cultures. Subsequent research has confirmed that cultural intelligence positively affects expatriate adjustment, cross-cultural communication, and team performance (Ang et al., 2007; Li & Wang, 2018). The employees with less work experiences and high Cultural Intelligence would be more willing to work in other countries voluntarily (Wu et al., 2013). In summary, developing cultural intelligence is critical for Chinese expatriates working in Thailand or any other country, as it can improve their ability to adapt to new cultural contexts and to function effectively in cross-cultural settings.

Developing cultural intelligence skills can lead to a greater willingness to work overseas, as individuals with higher levels of CQ tend to have a global mindset, be more effective in cross-cultural communication and collaboration, and be more adaptable to different cultural contexts. This can lead to greater organizational success and improved performance in the global marketplace. Therefore, the study suggests that there is a significant positive relationship between Cultural Intelligence and overseas work and voluntary expatriation.

After the covid-19, the willingness of employees and companies to choose expatriation may be affected, many Chinese companies have had to adjust their operations due to the pandemic, which has affected the number of expatriates they are sending to Thailand. In that case it is necessary for management to understand the expatriation willingness of employees effectively. Scholars have confirmed that the emphasis on the expatriation willingness of corporate employees can improve the efficiency of expatriation from the enterprise perspective. Implementing relevant measures and policies can increase the number of employees' willingness to accept Thai expatriation work, which gives the enterprise more dominant and expatriation resources (Du, 2011). Overall, it has had a mixed impact on Chinese expatriation in Thailand. While it has created some challenges, it has also created new opportunities for expatriates to adapt and to develop new skills. This study will significantly contribute if it properly identifies the factors that affect expatriation willingness to Thailand after the pandemic era.

Research Objectives

Cultural intelligence is an important factor for expatriates working in a foreign country. It refers to an individual's ability to adapt and function effectively in a culturally diverse environment. However, it is not all dimensions of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) are related to cross-cultural levels, only the motivational cultural intelligence can significantly predict the cross-cultural adaptability of expatriates (Templer et al., 2006); Higher cultural intelligence have a higher desire for expatriation to China (Wu et al., 2013). CQ has a stronger explanatory ability in predicting expatriates' job adaptation and job performance than demographic variables (such as gender and age) (Ang et al., 2007). Overall, Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is positively correlated with the desire for expatriation (Lee et al., 2019). Scholars have confirmed that emphasizing the CQ can predict the performance of Chinese employees in Thailand. This is because there are many cultural and work style differences between China and Thailand, which may lead Thai employees to view Chinese expatriates as ineffective leaders, thereby potentially reducing the success of expatriation (Guang & Charoensukmongkol, 2022). Therefore, this study aims to explore the four sub-constructs of cultural intelligence and their ability to predict the expatriation willingness of Chinese employees, and through these four dimensions of cultural intelligence, researchers and practitioners can gain a better understanding of the skills and competencies that are necessary for effective cross-cultural interactions among expatriates from this study.

The outbreak of COVID-19 may have affected the willingness of Chinese employees and companies to choose expatriation, and it is crucial for management to effectively understand Chinese employees' expatriation willingness. Therefore, this study aims to explore the desire for expatriation among Chinese employees in the post-pandemic era, to provide a reference for human resource deployment management in the post-pandemic era, and to fill the research gap. The objectives of this study are summarized as follows:

1. To verify the relationship between Cultural Intelligence (Motivational Cultural Intelligence, Cognitive Cultural Intelligence, and Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence) and the willingness for expatriation to Thailand;
2. To verify whether Perceived Organizational Support has an effect on the willingness for expatriation to Thailand;
3. To verify which control variable will affect the expatriation willingness to Thailand;
4. To provide practical suggestions/measures for human resource deployment management in the post-pandemic era.

Literature Review

Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Perceived Organizational Support is an employee's perception of the organizational environment, a measure of the organization's appreciation of its contribution and value, and the degree to which it cares about its interests (Cable & Edwards, 2004). Perceiving the level of care from the organization makes it easier to achieve internal and external satisfaction (Bogler & Nir, 2012). Therefore, this study assumes that Perceived Organizational Support is the way in which an organization treats its employees, including social support such as praise and recognition, as well as internal and external support such as promotions, increased benefits, and salary increases, all aimed at improving employees' positive expectations.

Starting from the Chinese context, a multi-dimensional conceptual model was proposed. The local research on perceived organizational support was expanded through peer and supervisor support refinement. Through exploratory factor analysis, it was found that Chinese employees' perceived organizational support is composed of six dimensions: perceived organizational system support, perceived organizational system protection, task-oriented supervisor support, relationship-oriented supervisor support, peer work support, and peer life support (Bao & Liu, 2011).

To sum up, many scholars have proposed different definitions and dimensions of perceived organizational support. This study focuses on Chinese employees and focuses on the main dimensions of expatriates in this study. Therefore, this study adopts the definition of perceived organizational support proposed by Chinese scholars Bao and Liu (2011). This study defines perceived organizational support as Chinese employees' perception of the organization's support for their expatriate work, and recognition of their expatriate work value and interest.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Cultural intelligence (CQ) is a concept proposed by scholars Earley and Ang (2003), which refers to an individual's ability to produce differences when interacting across cultures, that is, whether they have the ability to effectively adapt to different cultures in different cultural backgrounds/environments. Cultural intelligence is divided into four subconcepts: Motivational Cultural Intelligence (Motivational CQ), Behavioral Cultural Intelligence (Behavioral CQ), Cognitive Cultural intelligence (Cognitive CQ), and Meta-cognitive cultural intelligence (Meta-cognitive CQ).

This study is based on the definition of Ang et al. (2007), which defines the sub-constructs of cultural intelligence as Meta-cognitive cultural intelligence refers to an individual's ability to use advanced mental processes in their thinking, anticipate others' cultural preferences, and adjust their mental models in the face of different cultures, both at the time of and after the interaction; Motivational CQ refers to an individual's tendency to pay attention to and learn from cultural issues and experiences; Behavioral CQ refers to an individual's ability to correctly express both verbal and nonverbal communication when interacting with people of different cultures; Cognitive cultural intelligence refers to an individual's knowledge of different cultural norms, practices, and customs, including economic and legal issues. CQ is defined as the ability to adapt to different cultural contexts effectively, and it is divided into four sub-constructs: Motivational cultural intelligence (Motivational CQ), Behavioral cultural intelligence (Behavioral CQ), Cognitive cultural intelligence (Cognitive CQ), and Meta-cognitive cultural intelligence (Meta-cognitive CQ).

Expatriation Willingness to Thailand

Expatriation willingness refers to an employee's willingness to accept their company's arrangement to work overseas (Jiang, 2010). However, expatriation willingness is an adult's psychological activity or motivation, so the influencing factors of expatriation willingness are more complex and vary from person to person.

If a company considers the personal willingness of employees and provides targeted training and support for expatriates, it can increase employee expatriation willingness (Du, 2011). On the organizational level, the support of the unit or company for the expatriate's career, the daily life security in the destination country, and appropriate compensation systems are all significantly related to expatriation willingness (Chen & Shaffer, 2017).

In this study, the researchers define expatriation willingness to Thailand as the willingness of an employee to accept an assignment to work in Thailand for a certain period of time arranged by the company or unit (Jiang, 2010). In terms of practical management significance, international expatriates should be based on knowledge creation and transfer, and also have national leadership ability. Scholars have proposed that individual factors such as cross-cultural ability, communication ability, international test, and learning ability can affect expatriation

willingness. In addition, expatriates should also be able to effectively transfer and utilize relevant resources across borders and match them with the transfer of knowledge and patents related to the parent company to make overall planning and layout (Luo et al., 2013).

Cultural Intelligence and Expatriation Willingness

Scholars have conducted individual studies on individual sub-concepts of cultural intelligence, such as higher motivational cultural intelligence leading to higher cross-cultural adaptability of expatriates (Templer et al., 2006). Higher behavioral and motivational cultural intelligence also leads to stronger psychological and social adaptability of cross-border corporate executives (Ang et al., 2007). According to the pre-pandemic core journal article recorded in A Guide to the Core Journal of China, "Impact of Expatriate Cultural Intelligence on Expatriate Performance: A Mechanism Research of Chinese 'Going Out' Enterprise", the relationship between cultural intelligence and expatriation adaptation is positively correlated (Li & Wang, 2018). Therefore, this study concludes that in terms of cross-cultural adaptability, effective predictions can be made using the motivational cultural intelligence.

If the employee has high cultural intelligence, can he use the advanced psychological ability of personal thinking process to anticipate other cultural preferences and adjust psychology, and has a high interest in understanding the issues and experiences related to a foreign culture. In addition, they can correctly express their oral and non-oral abilities, communicate with local staff, and have a certain degree of knowledge, including economy and law. If employees have the motivation and interest to understand different cultures and have certain knowledge and communication skills, they will actively strive for the opportunity of assignment. Wu et al. (2013) have confirmed a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and willingness to go on assignment in China, so this study infers that cultural intelligence should be related to a voluntary assignment abroad. Therefore, the following H1 to H3 hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Meta-cognitive CQ has the positive impact on the willingness to go on voluntary assignment in Thailand.

H2: Cognitive CQ has the positive impact on the willingness to go on voluntary assignment in Thailand.

H3: Motivational CQ has the positive impact on the willingness to go on voluntary assignment in Thailand.

Perceived Organizational Support and Expatriation Willingness

The focus on employee expatriation willingness can increase the expatriation efficiency within a company. If the company considers employees' personal willingness and provides focused training and support on the expatriation willingness, it can increase the expatriation willingness of employees. From the company's perspective, implementing relevant measures and policies can increase the willing employees to accept expatriation, giving the company more control and resources for overseas deployments (Du, 2011).

Companies should provide adequate organizational support to help expatriates achieve work-family balance, and international companies should have a well-developed compensation (rewards) support system to increase their willingness to go abroad (He & An, 2020). Therefore, this study believes that when an enterprise employee perceives more organizational support, it will provide system and living support for their work in Thailand, which can positively affect their willingness to go abroad in Thailand. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Perceived Organizational Support has a positive effect on the expatriation willingness to Thailand.

Control Variables

In this research, it is indicated that male employees, those who are unmarried, managers, and employees with shallow experience have higher voluntary expatriation intentions (Wu et al., 2013); According to Zhang (2016), younger, unmarried, or married but childless employees can broaden and heighten their career development through expatriation or have a strong intention to expatriate to higher positions through expatriation. On the other hand, female expatriation intention is lower than male expatriation intention (Markham & Pleck, 1986; Tharenou, 2007). Therefore, this study set gender, and marital status. Whether employees with cultural intelligence have overseas experience, such as studying abroad or working abroad, would improve their adaptability to working overseas and also affect their willingness to be dispatched abroad by their employer (Wu, 2012). Employees with overseas experience can more efficiently complete their overseas assignments, so this study set study abroad experience and work abroad experience as variables. The research model shows that this study hypothesizes a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and expatriation willingness to Thailand. Gender and marital status are set as variables, and overseas study experience and overseas work experience may affect the main variables, so they are set as variables, as shown in Figure 1 below.

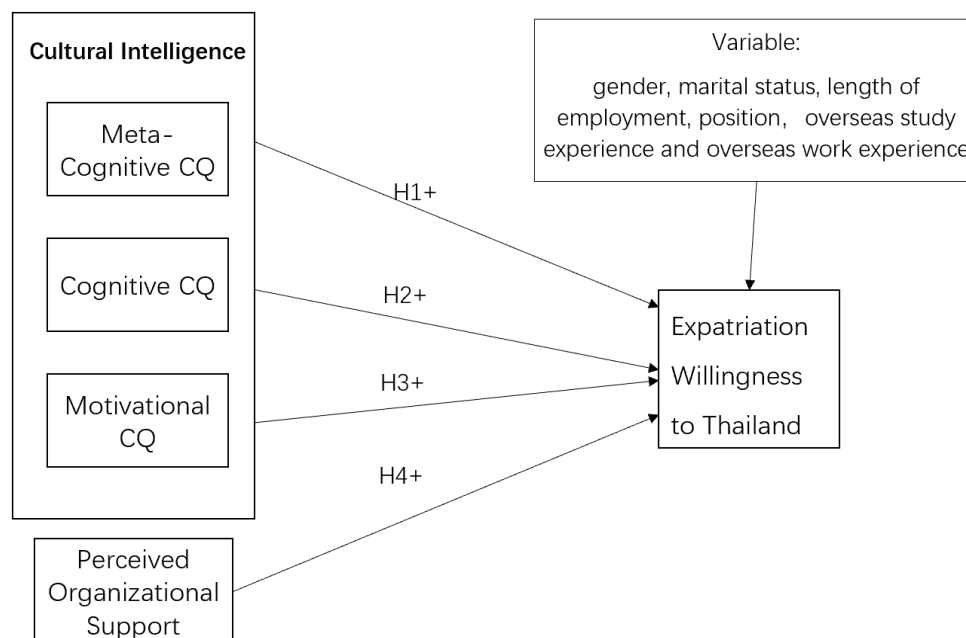


Figure 1 Proposed research model

Methodology

Sampling and Samples

This study's sample is Chinese employees in Chinese enterprises, and an online questionnaire is conducted. Purposeful sampling is used to collect the questionnaire, focusing on selecting employees from different management levels, and study-abroad backgrounds to achieve heterogeneity in the sample. SPSS 25.0 and AMOS 26.0 are used for reliability and regression analysis, and the study finally collect 165 valid samples.

Questionnaire Design and Measurements

The questionnaire of this study is divided into two parts. The first part is "basic information", including the respondents' gender, age, overseas study experience, overseas work experience, etc. The second part is the scale part, which involves the scale items of variables such as "Meta-cognitive intelligence (MeCQ)", "Cognitive cultural intelligence (CCQ)", "Motivational cultural intelligence (MCQ)", "Perceptual Organizational Support (POS)" and "Expatriation Willingness to Thailand (EWT)".

The scale questions are measured by Likert's 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), which evaluates the degree of subjects' consent to each item. A higher total score indicates a higher overall cultural intelligence, perceived organization support, and expatriation willingness to Thailand.

The scale used in this study is from the following literature.

Cultural Intelligence Scale

This study used the cultural intelligence scale published by Ang et al. (2007), which was translated into Chinese and discussed with experts, and has good scale reliability and internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.8$). The four sub-facets include 4 questions on Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence, 6 questions on Cognitive Cultural Intelligence, 5 questions on Motivational Cultural Intelligence, and 5 questions on Behavioral Cultural Intelligence for a total of 20 questions.

Researchers deleted "Behavioral Cultural Intelligence" when conducting exploratory factor analysis in the pilot test to pass the validity test. It is also shown in the research of Schlägel and Sarstedt (2016) that the Chinese sample lacked discriminant validity across Meta-cognitive and behavioral dimension. Therefore, according to the results of the pretest's reliability and validity, the scale of Cultural Intelligence was adjusted to a total of three dimensions, namely, 3 items of "Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence", 3 items of "Cognitive Cultural Intelligence", and 2 items of "Motivational Cultural Intelligence", totally including 8 items for Cultural Intelligence.

Perceived Organizational Support Scale

According to the development scale for perceived organizational support (Bao & Liu, 2011), 14 items were used in the pilot study stage and then adjusted to a total of 8 items according to the reliability and validity results.

Expatriation Willingness Scale

According to the Jiang (2010) development scale for expatriation willingness, a total of 13 items were adopted in the pre-test stage and then adjusted to 8 items according to the reliability and validity results.

Data Collection

This study takes Chinese enterprise employees working in China as the research objects, and the survey time is from October to December 2022. Two methods of questionnaire collection are used. The first is to use snowball sampling. The researchers organized experts to discuss and select 10 Chinese employees currently working in Chinese private enterprises, most of whom have overseas study experience or overseas work experience. Researchers asked these employees to fill in the online questionnaire for this study.

After the researchers tested the reliability and validity of this survey, they deleted some items from the questionnaire and then conducted large-scale questionnaire collection. The 10 employees selected for the first time need to recommend the people they know who have overseas study experience or overseas study experience, and who meet the requirements of this survey, continue to fill in the online questionnaire of this study, and collect 66 questionnaires through snowball sampling.

The second method to collect questionnaires is through the authoritative questionnaire collection platform, wxj.cn, which is a professional online questionnaire survey, examination, evaluation, and voting platform in China. It has more than 6.2 million registered members and more than 10 million online questionnaire fillers daily. Therefore, using wxj.cn can ensure the randomness of the samples. In this study, a total of 100 questionnaires were collected using the sample service on this platform.

Finally, 166 questionnaires were collected in this study in the above-mentioned two ways, and 1 invalid questionnaire was deleted. Therefore, there are 165 valid questionnaires in this study. Since Tabachnick et al. (2013) state that “a sample size of 5 to 10 subjects per variable is often suggested” for multivariate analysis, 165 valid questionnaires have exceeded the suggested number, thus the number of valid questionnaires is within the acceptable range.

Demographic Information of Respondents

The demographic and information of the respondents are displayed in Table 1. There are 78 males in this study, accounting for 47.27%; There are 87 women in total, accounting for 52.73%. There is no significant difference between gender and expatriation willingness to Thailand. More than 65% of the people in the marital status are “married”, and 33.94% of the samples are unmarried. Regarding “length of employment”, 56.36% of respondents have worked for more than 5 years. From the perspective of position, there is relatively more “junior staff” in the sample, accounting for 39.39%. Regarding the distribution of experience in studying abroad, 97 people have “no experience in studying abroad”, accounting for 58.79%. The number of people with “experience in studying abroad” was 68, accounting for 41.21%. Finally, from the perspective of overseas work experience, 54 people have “overseas work experience”, accounting for 32.73%; There are 111 people without overseas work experience, accounting for 67.27%.

Table 1 Demographic information of respondents

Item	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	78	47.27
	Female	87	52.73
Marital Status	Unmarried	56	33.94
	Married	108	65.45
	Divorce	1	0.61
Length of Employment	Less Than 1 Year	23	13.94
	1-3 Years	23	13.94
	3-5 Years	26	15.76
	More Than 5 Years	93	56.36

Table 1 (continued)

Item	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Position	Intern	19	11.52
	Junior Staff	65	39.39
	First-line Manager	46	27.88
	Middle Manager	31	18.79
	Top Manager	4	2.42
Overseas Study Experience	Yes	68	41.21
	No	97	58.79
Overseas Work Experience	Yes	54	32.73
	No	111	67.27
Total		165	100.0

Reliability and Validity Test

After testing the reliability of the collected questionnaires, researchers obtained the coefficient of Cronbach's α of Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence is 0.725; the coefficient of Cronbach's α of Cognitive Cultural Intelligence is 0.779; the coefficient of Cronbach's α of Motivational Cultural Intelligence is 0.717; the coefficient of Cronbach's α of Perceived Organizational Support is 0.899, the coefficient of Cronbach's α of expatriation to Thailand is 0.897. Thus, Cronbach's α of all variables in this study is greater than 0.7, indicating that the scale in this study has good reliability.

Next, confirmatory factor analysis was used in this study. The results showed that the standard estimate factor loading of the MeCQ2, POS6, and EWT2 was lower than 0.65, so these items were deleted during the data analysis. After adjustment, the standard estimate factor loading of all variables is higher than the recommended value of 0.65, the AVE value of all variables is greater than 0.5, and the CR value is greater than 0.7, which is higher than the recommended value, which means that the analysis data has good aggregation (convergence) validity. See Table 2 for details.

Table 2 The reliability and validity results and correlations between variables

Variables	Cronbach's α coefficient	AVE Value	CR Value	Correlations between variables				
				MeCQ	CCQ	MoCQ	POS	EWT
MeCQ	0.725	0.544	0.702	1				
CCQ	0.779	0.551	0.785	.430**	1			
MoCQ	0.717	0.575	0.727	.407**	.475**	1		
POS	0.899	0.557	0.898	.363**	.483**	.406**	1	
EWT	0.897	0.558	0.898	.392**	.342**	.481**	.390**	1

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Research Results

Next, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted on the collected data to accomplish objective 1 and objective 2 of this research. Then, independent Sample T-Test was conducted on the collected data to achieve the research objective 3.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The results of the correlation analysis between various variables in this study are shown in Table 2. From the results, we can see that the “expatriation willingness to Thailand” in this study is positively correlated with “Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence”, “Cognitive Cultural Intelligence”, “Motivational Cultural Intelligence”, and “Perceived Organizational Support”.

To verify the hypothesis of this research, it takes “Meta-cognitive Cultural Intelligence”, “Cognitive Cultural Intelligence”, “Motivational Cultural Intelligence” and “Perceived organizational support” as independent variables and takes “Expatriation Willingness to Thailand” as the dependent variable for multiple linear regression analysis. The analysis results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Linear regression analysis results of Expatriation Willingness to Thailand (n=165)

	Unstandardized Coefficient		standardized Coefficient	t	p	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Constant	0.956	0.373	-	2.561	0.011*	-
MeCQ	0.217	0.089	0.187	2.446	0.016*	1.341
CCQ	0.019	0.074	0.021	0.259	0.796	1.569
MoCQ	0.301	0.074	0.322	4.083	0.000**	1.433
POS	0.201	0.087	0.181	2.312	0.022*	1.408
R ²	0.306					
Adjusted R ²	0.289					
F	F (4,160) = 17.625, p=0.000					
Durbin-Watson	1.942					
Dependent Variable: EWT						

Note. * p<0.05 ** p<0.01

From the above table, we can see that the model formula is: $EWT = 0.956 + 0.217 * MeCQ + 0.019 * CCQ + 0.301 * MoCQ + 0.201 * POS$, and the R square value of the model is 0.306, which means that MeCQ, CCQ, MoCQ, POS can explain the 30.6% change of EWT. The model passed the F test ($F = 17.625$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), which means that at least one of MeCQ, CCQ, MoCQ and POS will affect EWT. In addition, the multiple collinearity test of the

model found that the VIF values in the model are all less than 5, which means there is no collinearity problem. The Durbin-Watson value is near 2, which indicates that the model does not have autocorrelation, and there is no correlation between the sample data, so the model is better.

Table 4 Statistical results of the research model

Paths	β	t	p	Results
H ₁ : MeCQ→EWT	0.217	2.446	0.016*	Supported
H ₂ : CCQ→EWT	0.019	0.259	0.796	Rejected
H ₃ : MoCQ→EWT	0.301	4.083	0.000**	Supported
H ₄ : POS→EWT	0.201	2.312	0.022*	Supported

The findings of this study showed that some sub-constructs of CQ, namely MeCQ ($\beta=0.217$, $t=2.446$) and MoCQ ($\beta=0.301$, $t=4.083$) were significant influencing Chinese employees' expatriation willingness to Thailand. Meanwhile, POS ($\beta=0.201$, $t=2.312$) were significant influencing Chinese employees' expatriation willingness to Thailand. However, there is one sub-construct of CQ, namely CCQ ($\beta=0.019$, $t=0.259$), will not significantly influence Chinese employees' expatriation willingness to Thailand. Thus, H₁, H₃ and H₄ were supported and H₂ was rejected, which were shown in table 4.

Independent Sample T-Test

In order to verify which control variable will affect the expatriation willingness to Thailand, we conducted an independent sample T-test on all control variables pointed out in our study, and found that the different "overseas study experience" and "overseas work experience" had a significant difference in willingness of expatriation to Thailand, while other variables were not showing the differences. To simplify the results, this study only presented data on "overseas study experience" and "overseas work experience" below, which were shown in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5 T-test analysis results of overseas study experience

	Overseas Study Experience (mean \pm standard deviation)		t	p
	Yes (n=68)	No (n=97)		
EWT	4.05 \pm 0.69	3.74 \pm 0.79	2.597	0.010*

Note. * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

The experience of studying abroad for EWT showed 0.05 level significance ($t=2.597$, $p=0.010$), as well as the specific comparison difference shows that the average value of "with overseas study experience" (4.05) will be significantly higher than the average value of "without overseas study experience" (3.74).

Table 6 T-test analysis results of overseas work experience

	Overseas Work Experience (mean \pm standard deviation)		t	p
	Yes (n=54)	No (n=111)		
EWT	4.09 \pm 0.67	3.76 \pm 0.78	2.697	0.008**

Note. * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Overseas work experience showed 0.01 level significance for EWT ($t=2.697$, $p=0.008$), and the specific comparison difference showed that the average values of “with overseas work experience” (4.09) would be significantly higher than the average value of “without overseas work experience” (3.76).

Conclusion

This study shed the light to the relationship between the overseas study experience, overseas work experience and expatriation willingness to Thailand. No scholars have done research on the expatriation willingness to Thailand of Chinese employees. Our study first proves that overseas study experience and more overseas work experience will affect the expatriation willingness to Thailand. Therefore, when the mainland Chinese company selects employees to work in Thailand, it needs to provide priority to employees with more overseas study experience and sufficient overseas work experience, which has similar results that international travel experience positively affect the expatriation willingness (Lee et al., 2019). In that case, this result could be a reference for the Chinese company, providing priority to employees with more overseas study experience and sufficient overseas work experience can help organizations to build a workforce with the necessary skills and competencies to succeed in a global business environment. It can also help retain Chinese talent that is more likely to be engaged and motivated, ultimately contributing to better expatriation outcomes.

One of the innovations of this study is that the score of Chinese employees' expatriation willingness to Thailand is medium-high (3.87, higher than the median), which means that under the condition of China-Thailand friendship, Chinese employees are willing to work in Thailand. This study also found that CQ and Organizational Support positively affect the expatriation willingness in Thailand among Chinese employees, which is similar to the finding of Wu et al. (2013). In summary, Chinese employees' expatriation willingness can be influenced by various factors such as overseas study experience, overseas work experience, cultural intelligence, and organizational support. When employees possess higher levels of these factors, they are more likely to express a higher willingness to expatriate.

However, our paper provides evidence that gender and marital status had no significant impact on willingness to expatriate to Thailand. This could be because both Chinese men and Chinese women are more likely to prioritize career advancement and the growth opportunities in Thailand. Moreover, the Chinese employees with children may

be more willing to accept expatriate assignments if they perceive the host country as a safe and desirable location with good educational opportunities for their children.

Although there are many innovations and highlighting the most important factors if willingness to expatriate in this study, it exists research limitations. First, this study only focuses on Thailand not different Thai cities. Different Thai cities may have different business environments, regulatory frameworks, and economic conditions. In order to get more information and comprehensive insights, we suggest that future research should be aware of the potential differences between different Thai cities, such as Chiang Mai or Bangkok. Second, this study mainly conducts questionnaires. Future research should involve interviews to identify several factors that could explain why Chinese employees' expatriation willingness to Thailand is medium-high, Future research can explore whether the cultural similarities, geographic proximity, language, cost of living make Thailand an attractive destination for Chinese employees seeking expatriation opportunities or not.

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