
Tracing the route to organisational performance through expatriate leadership effectiveness: the role of emotional, cultural and spiritual intelligence

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the effects of emotional, cultural and spiritual intelligence on organisational performance through expatriate leadership effectiveness. For doing so, a conceptual framework has been designed. Afterwards, data were collected from expatriate managers of various multinational corporations in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, through the employment of self-administered questionnaires. The collected data were later analysed through SPSS and SEM. The outcomes indicated that cultural and spiritual intelligence have positive effects on expatriate leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, emotional, cultural and spiritual intelligence and expatriate leadership effectiveness have positive effects on organisational performance. The results have also shown that expatriate leadership effectiveness mediates the relationship between cultural and spiritual intelligence and organisational performance. Implications, limitations and future research directions are discussed.

Keywords: leadership; organisational performance; emotional intelligence; cultural intelligence; spiritual intelligence.

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1 Introduction

The world economy has experienced massive shifts due to globalisation (Irving, 2010; Stegaroiu et al., 2020). Escalation in international travels, advancements in communication and technology and emergence of a highly interdependent global economy immensely changed the way businesses are conducted in recent time. As a result of the interconnectedness among cultures, societies and businesses, the effects of globalisation can be felt like never before. The concept of globalisation has indeed rewritten social expectations, expanded the scope of multicultural interactions and opened the door for new opportunities, challenges as well as responsibilities (Zahonogo, 2018). With the drastic expansion of the global market, the number of multinational corporations (MNCs) has also ameliorated at a radical pace. As the number of MNCs increased globally, securing long-term success and improving organisational performance emerged as a necessity to survive in this competitive market. Under such circumstances, potential success of MNCs is greatly dependent on their organisational business performance, or in other words, their ability to meaningfully formulate strategies for attaining institutional objectives specially achieving profit and surviving successfully (Lovvorn and Chen, 2011; Rajagopal and Davila, 2020). This effort in turn requires globally competent and highly skilled expatriate leaders, who could contribute to the organisational business performance development in the organisations where many expatriate are working (Hassan et al., 2019; Rockstuhl et al., 2011; Okoro, 2012). Expatriates are sojourners who leave their countries to undertake business assignments with the intention of an eventual return (Ahmad and Saidalavi, 2019; Okpara, 2016). Leadership effectiveness of expatriates holding managerial positions play vital role in developing sustainable strategies that lead to organisational growth. Global leaders must develop their skills continuously in order to face the existing and upcoming challenges in today's increasingly changing business environment (Chuang, 2013; Rao-Nicholson et al., 2020). An expatriate leader's ability to effectively manage the culturally distinct workplace settings is key to organisational business success and expatriate employee empowerment (Rockstuhl et al., 2011; Ahmad and Saidalavi, 2019; Rawat, 2011).

Effective expatriate leadership skills are vital concerns for global organisations not only to lead the employees but also to ensure organisational business success in the ever competitive market environment in the globalised world (Basit et al., 2020; Irving, 2010; Islam, 2015; Shafiee et al., 2020). A review of literature demonstrated that when it comes to developing organisational performance of multinational corporations, leadership is utmost important for both men and women. Leadership has turned into a critical aspect in the arena of cross-border business (Harteis, 2012). In order to survive in the intensely competitive business landscape, it has become a necessity for organisations to have

leaders who possess the skills and abilities required to manage cultural differences and develop complex strategies (Chuang, 2013; Salim and Rajput, 2021). Furthermore, for enhancing leadership skills, it is essential for expatriate leaders to be aware of emotional, cultural, gender and spiritual intelligence (Sadri et al., 2011; Islam et al., 2018; Widiyanto, 2021). However, literature evidences that there is a scarcity of studies undertaken for determining the key factors that may lead to organisational performance in a global environment. Moreover, the simultaneous effects of emotional, cultural and spiritual intelligence on organisational performance through expatriate leadership effectiveness are yet to be examined. Henceforth, it has become ardently necessary to gain further understanding regarding the factors that may affect leadership effectiveness of expatriates for enhancing organisational performance in a global environment. Taking these issues into consideration, the current study aims to determine the effects of emotional, cultural and spiritual intelligence on organisational performance through expatriate leadership effectiveness in relation to Malaysia where many expatriates are working in different positions in different local and multinational companies (MNCs).

2 Literature review

2.1 Expatriate leadership effectiveness and organisational performance

Leadership is one of the most important factors that pave the way to organisational success. Leadership is a way of social interaction that provides individuals the ability to influence the behaviours and actions of their followers (Dinh et al., 2014; Widiyanto, 2021). Leadership effectiveness denotes a leader's ability to influence his or her followers in attaining organisational objectives (MacKillop, 2018). Effective leadership is envisaged as the basis for organisational performance and growth (Sarabi and Saleh, 2018). The major roles played by effective leaders include the establishment of organisational objectives, formulation of strategies for accomplishing the objectives and development of positive atmosphere required for strategy implementation (Block and Manning, 2007). It has been suggested by Hussain et al. (2017) that organisational achievements share a direct association with leadership effectiveness.

Organisational performance has been defined as how well an organisation performs in terms of attaining its goals and objectives (Cho and Dansereau, 2010; Rajagopal and Davila, 2020). It has also been referred as the ultimate results of a particular organisation gauged against its expected outputs (Tomal and Jones, 2015). Other researchers have proposed that organisational performance is a multifaceted concept concerning productivity, growth and creativity (Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Shafiee et al., 2020). Organisational success is an outcome of leadership skills (Almatrooshi et al., 2016). In accordance to the findings of the study conducted by Ssekakubo et al. (2014), competent leadership is integral for organisational performance.

The relationship between leadership effectiveness and organisational performance has been a global phenomenon (Almatrooshi et al., 2016; Hassan et al., 2019). In the words of McNair et al. (2011), leadership is considered an art of motivating followers to attain a shared goal. It has been asserted by Pradhan and Pradhan (2015) and Soebbing et al. (2015) that organisational performance substantially depends on leadership capability and effectiveness. In regards to the above discussion; it is hypothesised that:

- *Hypothesis 7 (H7)*: Expatriate leadership effectiveness has a positive effect on organisational performance.

2.2 *Emotional intelligence, expatriate leadership effectiveness and organisational performance*

According to Gutiérrez-Moret et al. (2016) emotional intelligence is the ability of an individual to be conscious about his or her own feelings and the feelings of others and later on, make use of the information in order to guide one's thinking as well as action. A similar definition has also been given by Turnipseed (2018) whereby, they stated that emotional intelligence is a person's ability to properly comprehend his or her own and others emotional reactions to make sound decisions and take effective actions. Leadership is perceived as an intrinsically emotional process in which leaders strive to gain an understanding about the various stages of emotions their followers encounter, try to arouse certain emotional feelings within their subordinates and attempt to appropriately manage the different emotional states they go through (Stanescu and Cicei, 2012; Hosen et al., 2018). It has been asserted by Prezerakos (2018) that leaders enhance group solidarity through the formulation of shared emotional experiences.

A number of studies have demonstrated that emotional intelligence plays an important role when it comes to leadership behaviour and effectiveness (Koh and O'Higgins, 2018; Kasapi and Mihiotis, 2014; Stegaroiu et al., 2020). On the contrary, Gorgi et al. (2015) and Antonakis (2003) have stated that such intelligence is not a significant predictor of leadership effectiveness. Yet, in a study undertaken by Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005), on a total of 41 managers working in Australian public organisations, higher level of emotional intelligence was found to be associated to higher level leadership effectiveness. Research has also indicated that leaders with greater degree of emotional intelligence have the capability of enhancing organisational performance (Pekaar et al., 2017). In a similar manner, Dabke (2016) also suggested that emotional intelligence plays a vital role in developing organisational performance. In regards to the above discussion; the hypotheses below are derived:

- *Hypothesis 1 (H1)*: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on expatriate leadership effectiveness.
- *Hypothesis 1.1 (H1.1)*: Expatriate leadership effectiveness mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and organisational performance.
- *Hypothesis 2 (H2)*: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on organisational performance

2.3 *Cultural intelligence, expatriate leadership effectiveness and organisational performance*

Cultural intelligence refers to the ability of a person to work effectively in culturally diverse settings (Rao-Nicholson et al., 2020; Rockstuhl et al., 2011). Initially, the aspect of cultural intelligence was developed for attaining a clear idea about the factors that impact an individual's ability to adjust into a new culture (Basit et al., 2020; Keung and Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2013). Today, as more and more organisations are competing beyond national boundaries, they have come to recognise the importance of having

leaders with a global mind-set (Crowne, 2008; Salim and Rajput, 2021). Organisations are in need of personnel who are capable of skilfully working across distinct cultures in order to attain organisational objectives (Lovvorn and Chen, 2011; Rao-Nicholson et al., 2020).

Cultural intelligence is characterised as a driving factor for cultural adjustment as it enables leaders to navigate and comprehend new cultures (Ang et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2008; Rao-Nicholson et al., 2020). Due to its ability of facilitating leaders to acquire a better understating of cultural diversity and working effectively in a culturally sensitive way, cultural intelligence has evolved as a pivotal element that leads organisations towards positive growth in cross cultural business settings (Basit et al., 2020; Keung and Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2013; Rawat and Basergekar, 2016). Moreover, other studies have also demonstrated that cultural intelligence allows leaders to work effectively in different cultures at a global level (Deng and Gibson, 2009). Cultural intelligence is critical for an expatriate's performance, as it enables them to adjust and adapt to new cultures and perform effectively in the host culture (Ahmad and Saidalavi, 2019; Lee and Sukoco, 2010). When it comes to cross border leadership effectiveness, findings of prior research indicated that the aspect of cultural intelligence is utmost important for leadership effectiveness and organisational performance (Rockstuhl et al., 2011; Ersoy, 2014). In regards to the above discussion, the hypotheses below are derived:

- *Hypothesis 3 (H3)*: Cultural intelligence has a positive effect on expatriate leadership effectiveness.
- *Hypothesis 3.1 (H3.1)*: Expatriate leadership effectiveness mediates the relationship between cultural intelligence and organisational performance.
- *Hypothesis 4 (H4)*: Cultural intelligence has a positive effect on organisational performance.

2.4 Spiritual intelligence, expatriate leadership effectiveness and organisational performance

In the words of Marques et al. (2005), spiritual intelligence has been defined as a person's deepest inner resources to care for others in the workplace. It has been mentioned by Ramachandaran et al. (2017) that when it comes to workplace environment, spiritual intelligence helps leaders to create a positive workplace atmosphere through integrating greater levels of mutual respect, values and integrity. Thus, spiritual intelligence is much important when it comes to leadership effectiveness, for the reason that leaders who are spiritually intelligent are able to bring about a greater sense of meaning and purpose in their followers. It has been noted by Koražija et al. (2016) that leaders who are spiritually intelligent resemble much more than a new type of leadership practice; they demonstrate a shift in the model of leadership.

Ramachandaran et al. (2017) further noted that spiritually intelligent leaders provide their followers meaningful directions that guide and help them to understand the true purpose of executing a task. Research indicated that workplace spirituality is one of the leading factors that ameliorates organisational competitiveness, enhances organisational

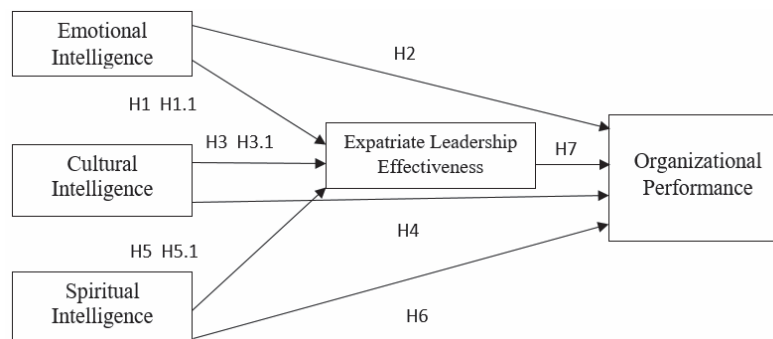
performance and increases organisational profitability (Al Eid et al., 2021; Ayranci, 2011; Milliman et al., 2003). Marques et al. (2005) suggested that there is a direct association between spirituality and organisational activities and eventually organisational outcomes. A favourable relationship between spiritual intelligence and organisational performance has also been affirmed by Sternberg (2007) and Al Eid et al. (2021). In regards to the above discussion, the following hypotheses are derived.

- *Hypothesis 5 (H5)*: Spiritual intelligence has a positive effect on expatriate leadership effectiveness.
- *Hypothesis 5.1 (H5.1)*: Expatriate leadership effectiveness mediates the relationship between spiritual intelligence and organisational performance.
- *Hypothesis 6 (H6)*: Spiritual intelligence has a positive effect on organisational performance.

2.5 Conceptual framework of the study

The conceptual framework has been created with the primary objective of investigating the factors that may affect organisational performance. The current framework connects all the variables into one structure and illustrates their relationship with each other. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the conceptual framework of the study.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the study



2.6 Methodology

The current study is quantitative in nature as it aims to determine the effects of emotional, cultural and spiritual intelligence on organisational performance through expatriate leadership effectiveness. In order to conduct this quantitative study, survey method was utilised for collecting data through the distribution of self-administered questionnaires. Expatriate managers of various multinational corporations in Malaysia made up the target population of this research. For data collection, convenience sampling was used. This particular method has been utilised as it facilitates researchers to collect required data in a relatively limited timeframe (Hair et al., 2009; Islam et al., 2020). Therefore, for the

present study primary data were collected through distributing self-administered questionnaires to 157 expatriate leaders of MNCs located in Kuala Lumpur following convenience sampling method from November 2019 to May 2020. Kuala Lumpur has been selected as it is the commercial hub and therefore, has majority of the MNCs in the country. A self-administered questionnaire was developed with six sections. The first five sections were dedicated to each of the variables and the last section consisted questions pertaining to the respondents' demographic characteristics. The questionnaire was created by adapting items from previous studies. The items were later modified in order to suit the needs of the current study. This was done in order to confirm issues pertaining content validity (Awang, 2012; Bansal and Agarwal, 2020). Table 1 depicts the sources from where the questionnaire items were taken for each of the variables.

Table 1 Questionnaire items

Variable	Source
Emotional intelligence	Ayranci (2011) and Tang et al. (2010)
Cultural intelligence	Ang et al. (2007) and Kodwani (2012)
Spiritual intelligence	Ayranci (2011)
Leadership effectiveness	Vilkinas et al. (2009) and Hassan et al. (2013)
Organisational performance	Delaney and Huselid (1996) and Katou (2015)

After the primary data required for the study were gathered, they were analysed through two statistical tools namely, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS). At the beginning, descriptive analysis was conducted on the respondents' demographic characteristics. Afterwards, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and measurement model were done. Finally, the conceptual framework and hypotheses were verified through structural equation modelling (SEM).

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Demographic information

Table 2 summarises the findings pertaining to the general characteristics of the respondents. Specifically, it illustrates the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents' gender, age, marital status, nature of organisation and total work experience.

Based on the information provided in Table 2, it can be seen that majority of the participants were male making up a total of 76.4%, and rest (23.6%) were female. In terms of age, most of the respondents (53.5%) belonged to the age group of 36 to 45 years and 84.7% were married. The statistics also revealed that 67.5% of the respondents are from the manufacturing industry and 32.5% from service industry. Approximately, 35.7% of the respondents have a total working experience of 21 to 30 years, 35% have an experience of 30 years and above, while the remaining 15.9% and 13.4% have an experience of 16 to 20 years and 10 to 15 years respectively.

Table 2 Demographic information

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender		
Male	120	76.4
Female	37	23.6
Age		
25 to 35 years	32	20.4
36 to 45 years	84	53.5
45 and above	41	26.1
Marital status		
Married	133	84.7
Unmarried	24	15.3
Nature of organisation		
Manufacturing	106	67.5
Service	51	32.5
Total work experience		
10 to 15 years	21	13.4
16 to 20 years	25	15.9
21 to 30 years	56	35.7
30 years and above	55	35.0

3.2 Reliability analysis

It is very important to ensure the items included in the questionnaire are reliable. One of the main reasons for doing the reliability test is to check consistency of the data. That refers to the degree to which the items that make up the research instrument are consistent with each other. The reliability of 26 items in the questionnaire was investigated with Cronbach's alpha. Ideally, Cronbach's alpha coefficient should be 0.70 and above (Pallant, 2010).

Table 3 Reliability test

<i>Component</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	<i>N of items</i>
Emotional intelligence	.806	5
Cultural intelligence	.848	5
Spiritual intelligence	.798	5
Expatriate leadership effectiveness	.812	4
Organisational performance	.873	4
Overall	.889	23

Table 3 illustrates the Cronbach's alpha attained for the items of each of the variables. The first variable, emotional intelligence comprised of a total of five items and a Cronbach's alpha of .806 was attained. In terms of questions pertaining to cultural intelligence, containing five items, a Cronbach's alpha value of .848 was calculated. Next is the variable spiritual intelligence. For the purpose of measuring this variable five items were used and a Cronbach's alpha of .798 was derived. Then comes expatriate leadership effective, containing four items for which a Cronbach's alpha of .812 has been calculated. For the last variable, organisational performance, a Cronbach's alpha of .873 was attained for a total of four items. Finally, for all the 23 items the Cronbach's alpha was .889 which in turn indicated that all the factors have high degree of reliability. Therefore, the questionnaire can be considered reliable and suitable for further analysis.

3.3 Exploratory factor analysis

Factor analysis is mainly a data reduction technique. It takes large set of variables and reduces them to a smaller set of factors or components. It does so by looking for clumps or groups of inter-correlations in a set of variables. Factor analysis analyses the structure of the relationships among a large number of variables to determine a set of underlying factors (Hair et al., 2010). At the first phase of factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was tested. KMO is a statistical technique utilised in order to gauge the proportion of variance that exists amid variables.

Table 4 KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		.803
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	1.448E4
	Df	325
	Sig.	.000

In this research, KMO value is 0.803 which exceeds the minimum requirement of 0.60 as shown in Table 4. This ensures that factor analysis can be conducted. Similarly, the result of the Bartlett's test is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, meaning that factors that form the variables is adequate and the items are not highly correlated hence, indicating that EFA can be carried out.

3.4 Rotated component matrix

Rotated component matrix is a widely known technique employed by researchers for identifying the underlying dimensions in multivariate analysis of data. The major objective for the utilisation of this test is for the purpose of eliminating all the redundant items and at the end replacing the remaining ones with a smaller number of variables, often denoted as factors. The next task is to observe the number of items that load on the same factor and attempt to classify certain common themes. The output of the rotated component matrix is depicted in Table 5.

Table 5 Rotated component matrix

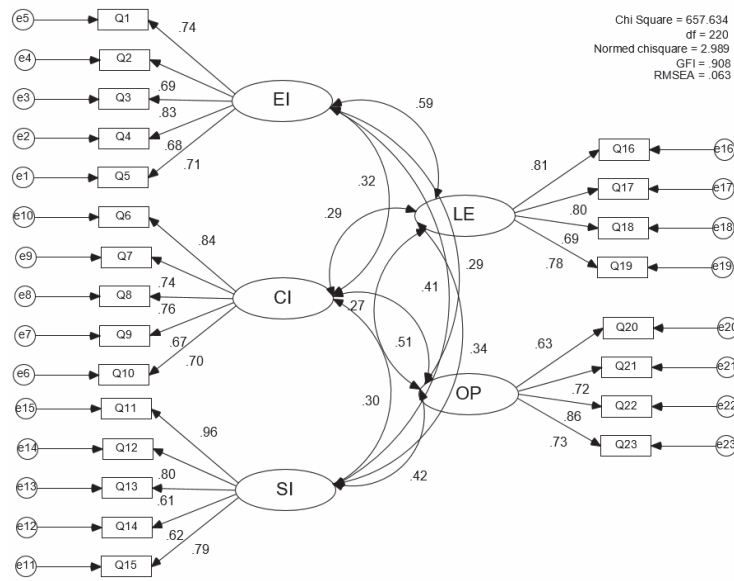
<i>Code</i>	<i>Component</i>				
	<i>Emotional intelligence</i>	<i>Cultural intelligence</i>	<i>Spiritual intelligence</i>	<i>Expatriate leadership effectiveness</i>	<i>Organisational performance</i>
Q1	.890				
Q2	.882				
Q3	.805				
Q4	.694				
Q5	.677				
Q6		.935			
Q7		.547			
Q8		.916			
Q9		.933			
Q10		.540			
Q11			.807		
Q12			.609		
Q13			.752		
Q14			.716		
Q15			.677		
Q16				.774	
Q17				.577	
Q18				.802	
Q19				.779	
Q20					.758
Q21					.737
Q22					.678
Q23					.849

Note: Extraction method – principal component analysis.

3.5 Measurement model

The measurement model (Figure 2) for the conceptual framework has been developed through the process of integrating all the 26 items and their respective factors. By looking at the results of the measurement model, it can be observed that all the factors loaded with values higher than the required value of 0.50. Furthermore, the fitness indices of the model also demonstrate that the model can be accepted as the requirement for all the fitness indices (absolute fit indices, incremental fit indices and parsimonious fit indices) are achieved.

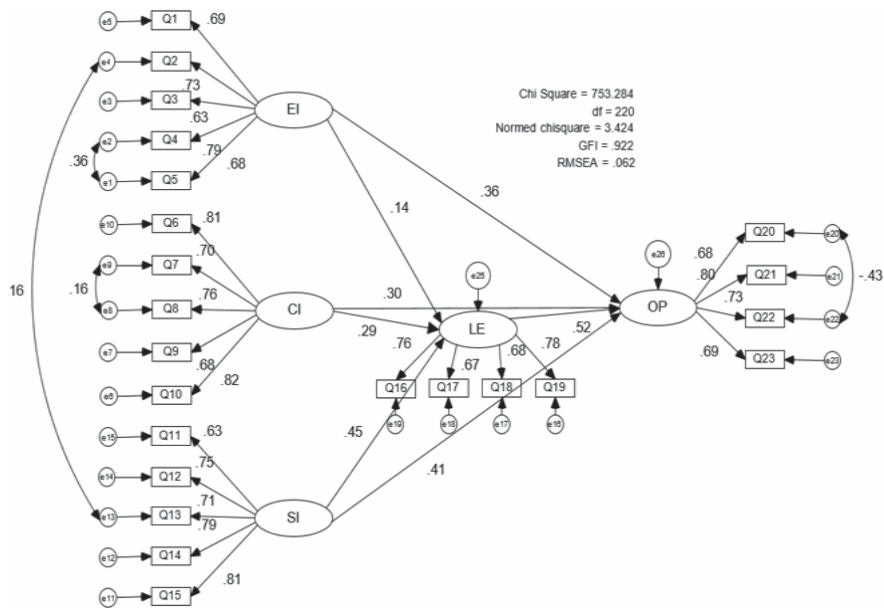
Figure 2 Measurement model



3.6 Structural model

Structural model is an inclusive way to measure the relationships among the constructs. The analysis of structural model illustrates the relationship among latent constructs. Figure 3 illustrates the structural model of the present study.

Figure 3 Structural model



3.7 Hypothesis testing

The hypotheses of the study were verified using structural equation modelling (SEM). Table 7 summarises the outcomes of the hypotheses testing and depicts the values attained for the estimate, standard error (S.E.), critical ratio (C.R.) and significance level (P). When verifying hypothesis through the utilisation of SEM, C.R. value is highly important. In order for a hypothesis to be accepted, it must have a C.R. value greater than 1.96 with a significant p-value ($p < 0.05$).

Table 7 Hypothesis testing results

			<i>Estimate</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>C.R.</i>	<i>P</i>
Expatriate leadership effectiveness	←	Emotional intelligence	.056	.052	1.072	.284
Expatriate leadership effectiveness	←	Cultural intelligence	.129	.030	4.296	***
Expatriate leadership effectiveness	←	Spiritual intelligence	.554	.069	8.075	***
Organisational performance	←	Emotional intelligence	.551	.119	4.646	***
Organisational performance	←	Cultural intelligence	.657	.171	3.836	***
Organisational performance	←	Spiritual intelligence	.235	.087	2.700	.002
Organisational performance	←	Expatriate leadership effectiveness	.376	.059	6.403	***

Note: *** $p < 0.05$.

3.8 Mediation test

In addition to the direct effects, this study also verified the mediating effects of leadership effectiveness between emotional, cultural and spiritual intelligence and organisational performance. For assessing mediating relationships, it is important to observe both the direct as well as indirect relationships between the independent variable (IV), dependent variable (DV) and mediating variable (MV). It has been stated by Awang (2012) that partial mediation happens when there is a significant relationship between all the respective variables (independent variable to dependent variable, independent variable to mediating variable and mediating variable to dependent variable). Whereas, full mediation happens when the relationship between independent variable to mediating variable and mediating variable to dependent variable is significant, but the relationship between independent variable to dependent variable is not. Lastly, when the direct relationship between the independent variable to dependent variable is significant, but the relationship between the independent variable to mediating variable or the relationship between the mediating variable to dependent variable is not then, there is no mediation.

Table 8 Mediating effect of leadership effectiveness between emotional intelligence and organisational performance

<i>Structural path</i>			<i>Estimate</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>C.R.</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Remark</i>
Leadership effectiveness	←	Emotional intelligence	.053	.050	1.069	.286	No mediation
Organisational performance	←	Leadership effectiveness	.372	.137	3.164	.001	
Organisational performance	←	Emotional intelligence	.323	.128	2.413	.004	

Note: ***p < 0.05.

Table 9 Mediating effect of leadership effectiveness between cultural intelligence and organisational performance

<i>Structural path</i>			<i>Estimate</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>C.R.</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Leadership effectiveness	←	Cultural intelligence	.716	.136	5.255	***	Partial mediation
Organisational performance	←	Leadership effectiveness	.399	.125	3.197	.001	
Organisational performance	←	Cultural intelligence	.463	.167	2.779	.005	

Note: ***p < 0.05.

Table 10 Mediating effect of leadership effectiveness between spiritual intelligence and organisational performance

<i>Structural path</i>			<i>Estimate</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>C.R.</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Leadership effectiveness	←	Spiritual intelligence	.814	.124	3.288	***	Partial mediation
Organisational performance	←	Leadership effectiveness	.298	.121	4.186	.002	
Organisational performance	←	Spiritual intelligence	.365	.174	2.637	.004	

Note: ***p < 0.05.

Based on the results of the mediation test, it can be seen that the direct relationship between the independent variables (emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence and spiritual intelligence) and dependent variable (organisational performance) is significant. Moreover, there is also a significant relationship between the independent variables (cultural intelligence and spiritual intelligence) and mediating variable (leadership effectiveness) and dependent variable (organisational performance). Hence, it can be stated that leadership effectiveness partially mediates the relationship between cultural intelligence and organisational performance and spiritual intelligence and organisational performance. However, the relationship between the independent variable (emotional intelligence) and mediating variable (leadership effectiveness) is not significant. Thus, leadership effectiveness does not mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and organisational performance. The results of the three (3) mediation tests are depicted in Tables 8, 9 and 10.

4 Discussion

The decision of the hypothesis testing can be addressed according to the values depicted in Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10. Table 11 provides a summary of the findings of the hypotheses testing results for this study.

Table 11 Summary of hypotheses testing

<i>H_(x)</i>	<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Comment</i>
H ₁	Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on expatriate leadership effectiveness.	Not supported
H _{1.1}	Expatriate leadership effectiveness mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and organisational performance.	No mediation
H ₂	Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on organisational performance.	Supported
H ₃	Cultural intelligence has a positive effect on expatriate leadership effectiveness.	Supported
H _{3.1}	Expatriate leadership effectiveness mediates the relationship between cultural intelligence and organisational performance.	Partial mediation
H ₄	Cultural intelligence has a positive effect on organisational performance.	Supported
H ₅	Spiritual intelligence has a positive effect on expatriate leadership effectiveness.	Supported
H _{5.1}	Expatriate leadership effectiveness mediates the relationship between spiritual intelligence and organisational performance.	Partial mediation
H ₆	Spiritual intelligence has a positive effect on organisational performance.	Supported
H ₇	Expatriate leadership effectiveness has a positive effect on organisational performance.	Supported

Researchers have indicated that it is utmost necessary for leaders to be emotionally intelligent in order to motivate their followers and drive organisational growth (Pekaar et al., 2017; Dabke, 2016). Therefore, it was hypothesised that emotional intelligence will be significantly related to leadership effectiveness. Yet, contrary to the authors' expectations it has been determined that emotional intelligence does not have a positive effect on expatriate leadership effectiveness. Thus, H1 is not accepted. The insignificant effect of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness is supported by past studies under taken by Gorgi et al. (2015) and Antonakis (2003). On the other hand, emotional intelligence was found to have significant effects on organisational performance in prior studies (Pekaar et al., 2017; Dabke, 2016) as well as the current study. Hence, H2 is accepted. When it comes to managing organisations in global environment, cultural intelligence is another pivotal factor. With respect to past studies, cultural intelligence is strongly associated to and paves the way to effective leadership (Deng and Gibson, 2009; Lee and Sukoco, 2010; Rockstuhl et al., 2011). Researchers have also paid attention the relationship between cultural intelligence and organisational performance. They have shown the presence of significant link between these two factors (Lovvorn and Chen, 2011; Ersoy, 2014). The findings of this study are synonymous to past findings. Hence, H3 and H4 are accepted. Besides, it is strongly believed that in order to effectively lead

followers, it is incumbent for leaders to be spiritually intelligent (Ramachandaran et al., 2017).

Similar connotations have also been made in other studies as it was indicated that the presence of spiritual intelligence is vital for the enhancement of leadership effectiveness (Koražija et al., 2016). In a similar way, spiritual intelligence was found to have significant effects on leadership effectiveness. Thus, H5 is accepted. Similarly, a number of scholars added that spiritual intelligence plays a crucial role in terms of building organisational performance (Ayranci, 2011; Sternberg, 2007; Marques et al., 2005; Milliman et al., 2003). Therefore, H6 is accepted as parallel findings were generated for the study at hand as spiritual intelligence was found to have a significant effect on organisational performance. Additionally, the findings also unveiled that the effects of cultural and spiritual intelligence on organisational performance is not only direct rather, their effects on organisational performance is also partially mediated through leadership effectiveness which led to the acceptance of H3.1 and H5.1, which are new contributions to the literature. Lastly, based on an assessment of prior studies, organisational performance is fundamentally dependent on leadership effectiveness (Almatrooshi et al., 2016; Pradhan and Pradhan, 2015; Soebbing et al., 2015; Agrawal, 2020). Similarly, a positive significant effect of leadership effectiveness on organisational performance was also found in this study hence, accepting H7.

5 Implications of the study

The results of this study have some significant theoretical and practical implications for different stakeholders, especially for the managers who manage and deal with the expatriates in their organisations. Furthermore, the study also contributes to the literature relating to expatriate leadership effectiveness and organisational performance through emotional, cultural, and spiritual intelligence.

The current study determined the effects of emotional, spiritual, and cultural intelligence on organisational performance, particularly in the context of Malaysia, where many expatriates are working. It also tested the mediating effect of leadership effectiveness in the relationship between emotional, cultural, and spiritual intelligence. On the basis of the overall outcomes of the statistical analysis, it can be observed that cultural, emotional, and spiritual intelligence are crucial elements that drive organisational performance. Additionally, this study has also demonstrated that expatriates' leadership effectiveness positively affects organisational performance. Thus, this study validates the notion of a significant impact of the expatriate leaders in developing overall organisational performance in Malaysian business organisations where many foreign employees are working in different positions. Additionally, confirmation of expatriate leadership as a mediator between cultural and spiritual intelligence and organisational performance is another significant contribution to the dearth of literature relating to expatriate leadership in the context of an emerging country where business organisations always try to boost their performance. Therefore, this study grounds a significant platform for future research, which could be conducted in different other countries' perspectives, especially concerning the countries where many expatriates are working and contribute to the development of organisational performance.

Furthermore, from the practical perspective, this study provides significant information for the decision-makers of the organisations with expatriates in Malaysia as

well as in other countries where many expatriates are working and contributing to the organisational performance. The study confirmed the significant role of the expatriate leadership in developing organisational performance; therefore, it is easier for the practitioners to ease the path for skilled and potential expatriate leaders to take leadership positions in the organisations. Moreover, the findings of the study enhance managerial understanding regarding the mediating role of leadership effectiveness in the relationship between cultural and spiritual intelligence and organisational performance. Therefore, expatriate leaders should be taken into consideration by the higher managers in Malaysian organisations, many of which struggle to enhance and retain continuous organisational performance. Besides, expatriates should continuously focus on developing their leadership skills as practical leadership skills pave the way to enhance organisational performance, which is very significant for both the organisations and expatriate employees. Hence, the outcome of the paper could enrich the current managerial understand or other leading practitioners in different organisations in Malaysia to apply emotional, cultural, and spiritual intelligence on their organisational performance through expatriate leadership effectiveness.

6 Limitations and future directions

This study carried out has several limitations that offer some significant opportunities for future researchers and academicians. Firstly, the research has been conducted from the Malaysian perspective only; therefore, the results should not be generalised in other countries' contexts where expatriates are also working on a larger scale. Thus, in the future, a country comparative study relating to the topic can be conducted for the greater understanding regarding the impact of the independent variables included in this study to examine their impact on organisational performance through the mediation of expatriate leadership effectiveness. Moreover, this study also has limitations in terms of the sample size. Hence, gathering data from larger sample sizes and extending the current model by incorporating new variables and testing them in different organisational and country contexts is highly recommended.

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