

Motivational Cultural Intelligence, Realistic Job Preview, Realistic Living Conditions Preview, and Cross-Cultural Adjustment

KLAUS J. TEMPLER

CHERYL TAY

N. ANAND CHANDRASEKAR

Nanyang Technological University

This study explores the relationship of the motivational factor of cultural intelligence (CQ) and realistic previews to cross-cultural adjustment (work, general, and interaction adjustment) of global professionals. Regression analyses demonstrate positive relationships between motivational CQ and all three adjustment criteria after controlling for gender, age, time in the host country, and prior international assignment. Realistic job preview relates to work adjustment, realistic living conditions preview relates to general adjustment, and motivational CQ relates to work and general adjustment over and above realistic job and living conditions preview. This study demonstrates the importance and utility of motivational CQ in understanding cross-cultural adjustment. We discuss implications for cross-cultural adjustment research and suggest practical implications for organizations and individuals seeking overseas assignments.

Keywords: cultural intelligence; expatriate; realistic job preview; realistic living conditions preview; cross-cultural adjustment

Globalization encourages mobility of labor across national and cultural boundaries. This increases the need to understand why some global professionals, that is, skilled employees who work on international assignments outside their home country, are more successful than others. When global professionals perform ineffectively in a foreign work assignment they incur substantial direct and indirect costs to themselves (e.g., diminished self-esteem, impaired relationships, and interrupted careers) and to their

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Klaus J. Templer, Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Nanyang Avenue, Singapore 639798. E-mail can be sent to Prof.Dr.Templer@pmail.ntu.edu.sg

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employing organization (e.g., damaged corporate image and reputation; Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1992; Copeland & Griggs, 1985; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). In response, sojourner and expatriation research investigated determinants of cross-cultural adjustment to guide practice in assessing and managing the success of foreign work assignments. In this article, we explore and employ two theoretical perspectives that are underresearched in the literature on cross-cultural adjustment: motivational CQ and realistic preview.

Prior research on cross-cultural adjustment has established that individual-level factors, such as personality, self-monitoring, and self-efficacy, are important predictors of cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri, 2000; Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1999; Parker & McEvoy, 1993). Earley and Ang (2003) introduced a promising multidimensional individual attribute, CQ. Defined as a person's capability to deal effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity (Earley & Ang, 2003), CQ comprises cognitive CQ, metacognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ and has specific relevance to studies in cross-cultural contexts. Earley and Ang (2003) regarded motivational CQ as a critical CQ component and a key element in the adaptation to new cultural environments. Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, and Ng (2004) found that motivational CQ was related to general adjustment over and above gender, age, and citizenship in a sample of executives with international work scope. However, there is a need to further understand the predictive validity of motivational CQ on cross-cultural adjustment of employees working in foreign cultures.

The primary aim of the current study, accordingly, is to advance Earley and Ang's (2003) theoretical discussion of CQ and extend research on international assignment success and cross-cultural adjustment by examining the role of motivational CQ on multiple indicators of cross-cultural adjustment (work, general, and interaction adjustment) in a sample of global professionals. Because CQ is a relatively new construct, in-depth examination of motivational CQ, as one specific aspect of CQ, has the potential to advance our understanding of CQ and serves as a model of future research on CQ.

A second purpose of the current study is to understand and test the applicability of realistic preview, a concept from the domestic adjustment literature, to adjustment in cross-cultural contexts. Prior domestic adjustment research found that realistic job preview (RJP) affects newcomer adjustment (McEvoy & Cascio, 1985; Phillips, 1998; Premack & Wanous, 1985). Wanous (1992, p. 85) recognized the relevance of RJP and the obvious need to study its effectiveness in international assignments. Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991) suggested that integrating domestic adjustment literature can lead to further understanding of cross-cultural adjustment, as domestic

adjustment also involves the basic process of adjusting to a new setting. In response, we tested the relationship of RJP to work adjustment of global professionals on foreign work assignments on the basis that domain-specific preview should relate to adjustment in the same domain.

Similarly, drawing on the concept of RJP, we introduce a parallel concept, the realistic living conditions preview (RLCP) that provides realistic information on general lifestyle matters in the new environment (Templer, 2002) and examine its relation to general adjustment. In addition, to add to our understanding on the utility of motivational CQ, our focal construct of interest, we also examine the influence of motivational CQ over and above realistic preview and demographic characteristics. Current research on CQ has examined the incremental predictive validity of motivational CQ over and above individual attributes (gender, age, and citizenship, see Ang et al., 2004). The current study of realistic preview advances our understanding of the utility of motivational CQ over and above factors that are not inherent in the individual but instead represent perceptions of the situation.

The current study aimed to provide much needed insights and practical suggestions to management. A clearer understanding of how individual factors and perceptions of the situation contribute to cross-cultural adjustment and work performance would aid decision makers and human resource (HR) professionals in the design of appropriate selection instruments and training programs. It should also have practical relevance to individuals preparing to relocate or seek employment in different cultural settings.

In the following sections, we discuss the concepts of motivational CQ, cross-cultural adjustment, and realistic preview and provide conceptual bases for our proposed relationships. Next, we test our hypotheses with field data (global professionals on work assignments outside their home country). We conclude by discussing theoretical and practical implications of our findings and the importance of motivational CQ in cross-cultural adjustment.

MOTIVATIONAL CQ

Motivational CQ refers to an individuals' extent of interest and drive to adapt to new cultural surroundings (Ang et al., 2004). It is conceptualized as an individual's intrinsic motivation and specific self-efficacy to engage in cross-cultural experiences and master its nuances. Individuals with high motivational CQ are intrinsically motivated to experience new and varied cross-cultural encounters (Earley & Ang, 2003). They value novel cultural experiences and enjoy interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Individuals with high motivational CQ are also self-efficacious

in their adaptive capabilities. “The motivational aspect of CQ requires a personal sense of efficacy and desire for enactive mastery as well as a positive evaluation of such situations” (Earley & Ang, 2003, p. 138). Based on Bandura’s (1986) definition of *self-efficacy* as a judgment of one’s capability to accomplish a certain level of performance, self-efficacy in motivational CQ refers to judgment of one’s capability to accomplish a certain level of performance in a new culture. Motivational CQ triggers attention and effort, stimulates and channels an individual’s cultural knowledge and strategies into guided action in novel cultural experiences. Hence, motivational CQ should influence the extent of the individuals’ cross-cultural adjustment. We discuss briefly below the multidimensional cross-cultural adjustment construct and present conceptual logic for our proposed relationships for each of the adjustment factors.

CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Black (1990) defined *cross-cultural adjustment* as “the degree of psychological comfort and familiarity an individual has for the new environment” (p. 122). It comprises three dimensions (e.g., Black & Stephens, 1989; Gregersen & Black, 1990): (a) general adjustment—adjustment to the host culture and general living conditions in the host society; (b) interaction adjustment—engaging comfortably in interpersonal relations with host country nationals; and (c) work adjustment—fitting into the local work culture, expectations, and requirements in the foreign facility. Sojourner and expatriation research literature regards adjustment as a key indicator as well as a determinant of expatriate success. Adjustment is fundamental to subsequent outcomes such as strain (Hechanova et al., 2003), job satisfaction (Takeuchi, Yun, & Tesluk, 2002), completion of foreign assignment and intent to stay (Black & Stephens, 1989; Gregersen & Black, 1990; Hechanova et al., 2003; Tung, 1981).

MOTIVATIONAL CQ AND WORK ADJUSTMENT

Work adjustment involves the adaptation to new job tasks, work roles, responsibilities, and the new work environment in a new cultural setting (Black, 1988). Individuals high in motivational CQ should experience higher levels of work adjustment. They are motivated intrinsically and by their efficacious beliefs of adaptive capabilities to deal with new cultural experiences. They are more open and tend to persist in adapting to new situations including work situations (Ang et al., 2004; Earley & Ang, 2003). Hence, they are

more likely to be psychologically prepared to adjust to the new work demands expected in the new cultural setting. Research shows that superiors expected managers who were culturally adventurous and intrinsically motivated to be successful in an executive assignment dealing with international issues (Spreitzer, McCall, & Mahoney, 1997). Research also found that self-efficacy, another important component in motivational CQ, is related to expatriate work adjustment (Harrison, Chadwick, & Scales, 1996; Hechanova et al., 2003; Palthe, 2004).

Hypothesis 1a: Motivational CQ is positively related to work adjustment.

REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW AND WORK ADJUSTMENT

Realistic job preview (RJP) is the presentation of accurate, favorable, and unfavorable job-related information to job candidates (Rynes, 1991; Wanous, 1992; Weitz, 1956). Hom, Griffeth, Palich, and Bracker (1999) found that RJP promotes accurate initial expectations, causes newcomers to develop coping mechanisms to manage workplace strain, and increases their perception of employer concern and honesty. Meta-analyses on the effects of RJP on work adjustment in domestic contexts have reported positive effects, such as lowered initial expectations, job satisfaction, job performance, and lower turnover (McEvoy & Cascio, 1985; Phillips, 1998; Premack & Wanous, 1985).

With support from the positive relations of RJP to work adjustment in new settings in the domestic context, we expect RJP to also relate to work adjustment in new settings in international context. This is because RJP provides the basic information specific to the work domain necessary in the process of adjusting to a new work setting whether in familiar or unfamiliar cultural settings.

Hypothesis 1b: Realistic job preview (RJP) is positively related to work adjustment.

MOTIVATIONAL CQ AND GENERAL ADJUSTMENT

General adjustment involves the overall adaptation to living in the foreign culture (Black, 1988). We expect individuals high in motivational CQ, who are intrinsically motivated to experience new and diverse cultural situations and are self-efficacious in adapting to different environments (Ang et al., 2004; Earley & Ang, 2003), to experience higher levels of general adjustment. Those high in motivational CQ are not only more open to new and different experiences but also enjoy trying new things. They are likely to persist

in adapting to diverse cultural situations and living conditions and thus should experience greater general adjustment than those low on motivational CQ. In addition, support from empirical research provides evidence that self-efficacy, a primary feature of motivational CQ, relates to general adjustment (Harrison et al., 1996; Hechanova et al., 2003).

Hypothesis 2a: Motivational CQ is positively related to general adjustment.

REALISTIC LIVING CONDITIONS PREVIEW (RLCP) AND GENERAL ADJUSTMENT

Drawing from the RJP concept, we introduce the concept of realistic living conditions preview (RLCP) and define it as the obtainment of accurate, favorable and unfavorable information on the general living environment in the host country. RLCP provides specific information related to the general living conditions, lifestyle, and daily routines in the new cultural setting. We expect individuals who receive RLCP to adjust better to daily living in a different cultural setting. Following the same reasoning in RJP, RLCP should provide a basis for more realistic initial expectations of the day-to-day living in a new culture, which in turn should assist in better general adjustment. Black et al. (1991) proposed that cross-cultural training facilitates more realistic and accurate expectations of the new culture and lifestyle and that accurate expectations are related to cross-cultural adjustment. They further suggested that specific types of expectations, in this instance, general living conditions, have their strongest relationships with conceptually similar adjustment facets, that is, general adjustment.

Evidence from prior research suggests that predeparture knowledge is related to general adjustment (Black, 1988). Expatriates who received more relevant and tailored cross-cultural training prior to departure reported lower unmet expectations, which in turn facilitated cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri, Phillips, Lazarova, Tarique, & Bürgi, 2001). Parallel to our hypothesis that RJP will facilitate work adjustment, we expect RLCP to relate to general adjustment.

Hypothesis 2b: Realistic living conditions preview (RLCP) is positively related to general adjustment.

MOTIVATIONAL CQ AND INTERACTION ADJUSTMENT

Interaction adjustment involves the comfort achieved in interacting with host nationals in work and nonwork situations (Black, Gregersen,

Mendenhall, & Stroh, 1999). We expect individuals with high motivational CQ to adjust well in their interactions with those from different cultural backgrounds. Earley and Ang (2003) theorize that individuals with high motivational CQ have a basic sense of confidence for social interaction in novel settings and are adaptive interpersonally. They are confident in their ability to relate with others from different cultures and may actively seek to develop relationships with those who are culturally different. Thus, they should experience a high level of comfort interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Research shows that such efficacious beliefs relate to interaction adjustment (Harrison et al., 1996; Hechanova et al., 2003).

Hypothesis 3: Motivational CQ is positively related to interaction adjustment.

REALISTIC PREVIEWS AND INTERACTION ADJUSTMENT

Black et al. (1999) suggested that interaction adjustment is the most difficult of the three factors to achieve, as differences in mental maps and rules reveal themselves in interactions with host nationals. Domain-specific RJP and RLCP that provide information on work-related and environment-related matters respectively do not provide the bases to address these issues in the interpersonal domain. Tung (1981) concluded that environmental briefings do not provide relevant knowledge on relating to or interacting with the local community overseas. Such information alone is not sufficient for fostering interaction adjustment. As such, we do not propose relationships between realistic preview and interaction adjustment.

MOTIVATIONAL CQ, REALISTIC PREVIEWS, AND ADJUSTMENT

The preceding discussion addressed the relations of RJP and RLCP with cross-cultural adjustment. Below, we present our logic for the incremental validity of motivational CQ over and above realistic previews on adjustment.

As discussed above, respective domain-specific realistic preview (RJP and RLCP) provides information prior to taking up the international assignment and promotes mechanisms that ease initial adjustment to work and living in a new cultural setting. Motivational CQ on the other hand, as an individual-level construct, has a more enduring effect on how the individual responds to work and living in a new cultural setting. In addition, as Earley and Peterson (2004) stated, information and/or knowledge is not enough; one

must be able and motivated to use the knowledge and produce culturally appropriate responses. Individuals high in motivational CQ have the desire, drive, and efficacy to continually translate information to generate strategies to deal with working, living, and interacting in the new cultural environment. We, therefore, expect motivational CQ to relate to work and general adjustment over and above RJP and RLCP respectively.

Hypothesis 4a: After controlling for RJP, motivational CQ is positively related to work adjustment.

Hypothesis 4b: After controlling for RLCP, motivational CQ is positively related to general adjustment.

METHOD

PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE

We distributed 400 questionnaires through snowball sampling. We asked our initial contacts of HR managers and global professionals to pass on the survey questionnaire to colleagues at work who were global professionals in Singapore. Participation was voluntary, and respondents completed the questionnaires anonymously and returned them directly to the researchers in self-addressed sealed envelopes. A total of 185 completed questionnaires (response rate: 46%) were returned. We eliminated 28 from our analyses as 18 respondents had indicated that their current foreign assignment would be fewer than 6 months, and 10 had nonvaried responses.

The final sample comprised 157 global professionals of whom 79% were men. On average, respondents had been on their current foreign assignment for 3.7 years ($SD = 4.49$), average age was 33 years ($SD = 7.37$), and 41% of the respondents had prior international work experience. Respondents worked in various industries ranging from small and medium enterprises to large multinational corporations and in various departments: 23% in information technology, 16% in marketing, 15% in finance and/or accounting, 10% in a medical field, 10% in general management, and the remaining in human resources, public relations, production and/or engineering, and other departments. In this sample, 37% indicated they were in middle management, 32% in nonmanagerial and/or technical areas, 15% in senior management, 12% in the top management, and 4% were on company training programs that involved an extended stay in a foreign country. Respondents were well educated with 55% holding a bachelor's degree, 35% a master's degree, 2% a doctoral degree, and the rest having completed high school. Indian

nationals constituted approximately 22% of the sample, Southeast Asian nationals 20%, other Asian nationals 14%, European nationals 26%, American and Canadian nationals 8%, Australians and New Zealanders 6%, and other nationals 4%.

MEASURES

For all measures, we used a 7-point Likert-type rating format (1 = *not at all* and 7 = *to a very great extent*). Exploratory factor analyses showed convergent and discriminant validity of the scales.

Motivational CQ. We measured motivational CQ using the 5-item motivational subscale of the four-factor CQ scale (Ang et al., 2004). The CQ inventory with its four factors has sound psychometric properties and shows reliability and validity among college students and business executive respondents. Cronbach's alpha for motivational CQ in our study was .79 and is consistent with the reliabilities reported in Ang et al. (2004).

Realistic job preview (RJP). To operationalize RJP, we followed Vandenberg and Scarpello's (1990) approach that asked their respondents to reflect whether the organization had accurately portrayed relevant job-related aspects at the time they accepted their current job. We requested respondents to indicate the extent to which they had received accurate information from their employing organization prior to their relocation to the host country on three job-related items, (a) the good points and the bad points of the assignment (from Feldman, 1976), (b) the kind of work, and (c) the amount of work. Cronbach's alpha for this 3-item RJP scale was .81.

Realistic living conditions preview (RLCP). We assessed RLCP with a 6-item scale. Respondents indicated the extent to which they had gathered accurate information on various aspects of the general living conditions in the host country prior to their relocation. Items on the aspects of general living conditions in RLCP matched the established aspects of general living conditions in the General Adjustment Scale. Cronbach's alpha for the RLCP scale was .90.

Cross-cultural adjustment. Global professionals provided self-ratings on adjustment measures based on Black and Stephens's (1989) multidimensional adjustment scale that has demonstrated high reliability and structural equivalence across multiple samples (Black, 1988, 1990; Black & Stephens, 1989; Gregersen & Black, 1990; Shaffer & Harrison, 1998). Respondents

rated the extent of their work adjustment (3 items), general adjustment (6 items), and interaction adjustment (3 items). The reliabilities for the scales were work adjustment ($\alpha = .86$), general adjustment ($\alpha = .86$), and interaction adjustment ($\alpha = .91$). These alphas are generally consistent with those reported in prior research (Black & Stephens, 1989; Harrison et al., 1996; Parker & McEvoy, 1993).

Control variables. We controlled for gender (0 = male, 1 = female), age, months spent in the host country, and previous foreign assignment (0 = no previous foreign assignment, 1 = previous foreign assignment), as these variables were associated with cross-cultural adjustment in prior studies (Hechanova et al., 2003).

RESULTS

Table 1 reports the means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and Cronbach alphas. Correlational analysis shows that motivational CQ was significantly correlated with all three cross-cultural adjustment factors: work adjustment ($r = .35, p < .001$), general adjustment ($r = .32, p < .001$), and interaction adjustment ($r = .32, p < .001$). In addition, motivational CQ was significantly related to RLCP ($r = .25, p < .01$) and previous international assignment ($r = .17, p < .05$). RJP was significantly related to work adjustment ($r = .20, p < .05$), while RLCP had significant correlations with general adjustment ($r = .36, p < .001$) and work adjustment ($r = .25, p < .01$). RJP ($r = .01, ns$) and RLCP ($r = .14, ns$) were not correlated with interaction adjustment. Among the control variables, age was correlated with work adjustment ($r = .17, p < .05$).

We tested our hypotheses with hierarchical regression analyses. We entered control variables (gender, age, time in host country, and prior international assignment) in Step 1, followed by the respective independent variable(s) in subsequent steps.

In Hypotheses 1a and 1b we proposed that motivational CQ and RJP would respectively be positively related to work adjustment. Results (see Table 2 and Table 3) show that both hypotheses were supported. Motivational CQ was significantly related to work adjustment ($\beta = .40, p < .001$), explaining 15% variance over control variables. RJP was also significantly related to work adjustment ($\beta = .20, p < .05$) and contributed 4% additional variance.

We predicted in Hypotheses 2a and 2b that motivational CQ and RLCP, respectively, would be positively related to general adjustment. Hierarchical

TABLE 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Cronbach's Alphas (Alphas in Parentheses) (N = 157)

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Work adjustment	5.28	1.01	(.86)									
General adjustment	5.17	.94	.40***	(.86)								
Interaction adjustment	5.36	1.22	.56***	.55***	(.91)							
Motivational cultural intelligence	5.31	.79	.35***	.32***	.32***	(.79)						
Realistic job preview	4.21	1.22	.20*	-.05	.01	.11	(.81)					
Realistic living conditions preview	4.60	1.19	.25**	.36***	.14	.25**	.20*	(.90)				
Gender (0 = male, 1 = female)	.21	.41	.00	-.05	-.07	-.11	.02	.01	(-)			
Age	33.48	7.37	.17*	.04	.07	-.04	-.01	.08	-.26**	(-)		
Time in host country (months)	44.37	53.92	.14	-.01	.14	-.11	.06	-.01	-.12	.26**	(-)	
Previous international assignment (0 = no, 1 = yes)	.41	.49	.03	.07	.05	.17*	.05	.03	-.24**	.32***	-.03	(-)

NOTE: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 2
Results of Hierarchical Regression Analyses for Motivational CQ and Cross-Cultural Adjustment (N = 157)

Variables	Work Adjustment		General Adjustment		Interaction Adjustment	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Gender	.05	.09	-.04	-.01	-.04	-.01
Age	.15	.19*	.02	.05	.01	.04
Time in host country (months)	.11	.14	-.02	.01	.13	.16*
Previous international assignment	-.01	-.08	.05	-.01	.05	-.02
Motivational CQ		.40***		.32***		.34***
ΔF		28.16***		16.35***		19.08***
ΔR^2		.15		.09		.10
R^2	.04	.19	.01	.10	.03	.13
Adjusted R^2	.02	.16	-.02	.07	.00	.11
df (regression, residual)	4, 152	5, 151	4, 152	5, 151	4, 152	5, 151
F	1.60	7.14***	.25	3.49**	.96	4.68**

NOTE: CQ = cultural intelligence. Standardized regression coefficients are shown for the independent variables.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 3
Results of Hierarchical Regression Analyses for Motivational CQ, Realistic Previews, and Cross-Cultural Adjustment
 (N = 157)

Variables	Work Adjustment			General Adjustment		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Gender	.05	.04	.08	-.04	-.05	-.02
Age	.15	.16	.20*	.02	-.02	.02
Time in host country (months)	.11	.09	.13	-.02	-.01	.01
Previous international assignment	-.01	-.02	-.09	.05	.05	.01
RJP		.20*	.16*			
RLCP					.36***	.29***
Motivational CQ			.38***			.24**
ΔF		6.36*	26.07***		21.77***	9.56**
ΔR^2		.04	.14		.12	.05
R2	.04	.08	.22	.01	.13	.18
Adjusted R ²	.02	.05	.18	-.02	.10	.15
df (regression, residual)	4, 152	5, 151	6, 150	4, 152	5, 151	6, 150
F	1.60	2.60*	6.87***	.25	4.58***	5.62***

NOTE: CQ = cultural intelligence; RJP = realistic job preview; RLCP = realistic living conditions preview. Standardized regression coefficients are shown for the independent variables.
 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

regression analysis (see Table 2 and Table 3) with general adjustment as the dependent variable indicated that motivational CQ was positively related to general adjustment ($\beta = .32, p < .001$) explaining additional 9% variance, and RLCP was positively related to general adjustment ($\beta = .36, p < .001$) explaining 12% additional variance. Thus, Hypotheses 2a and 2b were supported.

Hypothesis 3 proposed that motivational CQ would positively relate to interaction adjustment. Hierarchical regression analysis with interaction adjustment as the dependent variable (see Table 2) indicates support of the hypothesis ($\beta = .34, p < .001$) where motivational CQ contributed 10% additional variance over and above control variables.

In Hypotheses 4a we proposed that motivational CQ would be positively related to work adjustment after controlling for RJP. We entered RJP in Step 2 of the equation after control variables in Step 1, and motivational CQ was entered in Step 3. Results show that motivational CQ was positively related to work adjustment ($\beta = .38, p < .001$), explaining an additional 14% variance over and above the controls and realistic job preview, indicating support for Hypothesis 4a (see Table 3).

In Hypothesis 4b, we expected motivational CQ to relate positively to general adjustment over and above RLCP. Hierarchical results support Hypothesis 4b. Motivational CQ was significantly related to general adjustment ($\beta = .24, p < .01$) explaining 5% of the variance over and above controls and realistic living conditions preview (see Table 3).

DISCUSSION

Our research aimed at further understanding motivational CQ, a critical CQ dimension, in association with realistic previews on cross-cultural adjustment. Three major findings emerged.

First, findings on motivational CQ and cross-cultural adjustment, using a group of global professionals from diverse backgrounds, demonstrate the validity, generalizability, and applicability of the CQ concept. Global employees who were more interested and motivated to explore and experience diverse cultures, and who were more self-confident in their abilities to adapt to new cultural environments adjusted better to work, life, and social demands in foreign assignments. While RJP and RLCP are individually related to selected facets of adjustment, motivational CQ is significantly related to and explains unique variance in all three adjustment factors. This is an important finding, suggesting that motivational CQ is a vital individual attribute that has strong relationships with cross-cultural adjustment. Our finding pro-

vides further evidence of the predictive validity of a key CQ dimension in employees working in different cultural settings.

Second, motivational CQ explains work adjustment over and above RJP and general adjustment over and above RLCP. Global professionals who are more motivated to learn of new cultures and are self-efficacious about their cultural adaptive abilities adjusted better to the foreign work assignment, even after accounting for age, gender, time in host country, prior international experience, and RJP. These employees also adjusted better generally to the living conditions in the new cultural setting after accounting for RLCP and the other control factors (age, gender, time in host country, and prior international experience). Our findings demonstrate the value of motivational CQ in cross-cultural adjustment even when realistic information on job and living conditions of the international assignment are acquired. These findings support Earley and Ang's (2003) view that an individual's cultural knowledge and strategies are but one aspect of cultural adaptation and that motivational CQ is necessary to direct such information into guided action in novel cultural experiences.

Third, our findings also suggest that RJP and RLCP may be useful and important interventions for enhancing adjustment outcomes by managing expectations of work and life in the new cultural environment. Job-related information provided by the organization and perceived to accurately portray the work requirements and demands in the new cultural setting may ease work adjustment of global professionals in the foreign assignment. Similarly, perceived accurate general living conditions information may facilitate adjustment to the day-to-day routines in the foreign assignment. The current study indicates that the theoretically rich domestic adjustment literature can offer a valid and useful platform to build conceptual frameworks to further understand adjustments in international work assignments (Black et al., 1991).

In sum, the current study suggests that motivational CQ is a vital factor for facilitating adjustment to new cultural settings. We also introduced a new concept, RLCP, and demonstrated that RLCP together with the traditional RJP is positively related to cross-cultural adjustment.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The current study has several key contributions and strengths. First, to our knowledge, this is the first empirical study on cross-cultural adjustment that focuses on two relatively new and contemporary theoretical perspectives—CQ and realistic preview. It furthers the theoretical developments of Earley and Ang's (2003) CQ concept. In particular, the current study provides

empirical support for the validity of a key CQ factor, motivational CQ, in understanding how individuals adjust to work, life, and interactions in new cultural environments. The current study also extends expatriation and sojourner research on cross-cultural adjustment by testing the relationships of underresearched concepts of motivational CQ and realistic preview to multiple indicators of cross-cultural adjustment. Second, the article introduces the new concept of RLCP, a concept that complements and contrasts well with the more established concept of RJP, helping to advance cross-cultural adjustment research. Third, the use of field data collected from global professionals from a wide range of backgrounds originating from four different continents enhances the generalizability of results.

The current study also has practical implications for organizations and for individuals considering overseas assignments. Organizations typically select employees based on their job knowledge and technical competence even for overseas assignments (Sinangil & Ones, 2001). These factors alone, however, do not account for a successful assignment or for effective performance of employees working outside their home countries (Black et al., 1991). Instead, the current study suggests that organizations should consider the role of motivational CQ as it provides important insights to organizations for their review and development of selection and hiring procedures and training and development programs for global professionals. Organizations designing cross-cultural training programs should include trainings that develop and enhance self-efficacy of trainees to enhance adjustment and success in the international assignment. In addition, organizations should make available multiple sources of information relating to the new assignment, such as providing networks and contacts of previous employees with overseas assignment, and current employees in the new location. To further assist global professionals to adjust to the new cultural and work environment, organizations should also promote and encourage self-acquisition of accurate information about the new culture and job assignment.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study makes important theoretical and empirical contributions to the research on CQ, RJP and RLCP, and cross-cultural adjustment, one should note the limitations and boundary conditions in the current study as they suggest avenues for future research.

First, inflationary bias might exist in the data, as predictors and criteria are self-reported (Crampton & Wagner, 1994). However, exploratory factor analysis provided support that predictors and criteria had discriminant valid-

ity. In addition, despite common method variance, the parallel concepts of RJP and RLCP were not similarly related to all three adjustment criteria. Furthermore, motivational CQ as a self-report measure is validated by its significant correlation with the descriptive measure “previous international assignment.” As one would expect, individuals with high motivational CQ would seek greater international work experiences, and those with more international assignments have greater opportunities for developing motivational CQ. Employing a longitudinal design in future research where predictor and criterion variables are obtained in different surveys and from multiple sources (employee’s spouse, superior, and colleagues) can validate the reported findings.

Second, we operationalized RJP and RLCP differently in the current study. Information provided in RJP and RLCP can either be organization initiated, employee initiated, or both. In the current study, RJP is organization initiated while RLCP is employee initiated. Future research could compare and contrast organization- versus self-initiated previews to further advance development and integration of the realistic preview concepts to international contexts.

Third, the measures of RJP and RLCP were retrospective accounts leading to concerns that individuals might attribute feelings of poor work adjustment to lack of organization-provided job-related information. On the other hand, individuals who feel well adjusted to the general living conditions might attribute this to personal initiative in obtaining relevant information. However, RJP and RLCP measures are necessarily retrospective as global professionals can only make judgments on how “realistic” job-related and living conditions information were after having worked and stayed in the host country for a period of time. Future research might consider a longitudinal design, in which global professionals maintain logbooks containing preview information obtained prior to departure and comparing this information with actual experiences at a later point in time during the foreign assignment.

Last, the sample of the current study consisted of global professionals working in the same overseas location—Singapore. Future studies should include global employees working in different host countries to further validate our findings in wider and broader contexts.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the current study offers exciting findings and insights into the motivational factor of CQ and for cross-cultural adjustment. It provides

evidence that motivational CQ holds promise as an important correlate of cross-cultural adjustment. Our findings with regards to realistic preview call attention to the relevance and applicability of theoretical perspectives in the domestic domain to research and development in the international domain. We recommend further research on the relationships between other specific CQ factors (metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, and behavioral CQ) on an expanded set of outcomes for global professionals, such as psychological well-being, intent to leave the foreign assignment, interest in and willingness to take up another foreign assignment, manager ratings of performance and promotability, successful repatriation, and further career success.

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Klaus J. Templer (Ph.D., University of Hamburg, Germany) is an associate professor of management and business psychology at Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His research interests include expatriate management, selection and assessment, and personality at work.

Cheryl Tay is an assistant professor of organizational behavior and human resource consulting, and director of cultural assessment at the Center for Cultural Intelligence in the Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

N. Anand Chandrasekar is a doctoral candidate in organizational behavior at Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His research interests include expatriate management, work stress, burnout, and organizational commitment.