

Adaptive Personality, Communication Patterns and Psychological Health: A Cross-cultural Adaptation Study of Korean Expatriates in Indonesia

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Abstract: The present study examined the adaptive personality, communication patterns and the adaptation experience of Korean expatriates in Indonesia. Based on Y. Y. Kim's (1988, 2001, 2005, 2012, 2015, 2018) Integrative Communication Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation, four hypotheses were developed linking three key factors: adaptive personality, host communication competence, host interpersonal communication and psychological health. Numeric data were collected in a questionnaire survey among 76 Korean expatriates living in Indonesia. As predicted, the positive correlations between the research variables suggest that expatriates with higher level of self-efficacy, host communication competence and more active engagements in interpersonal communication with host nationals experience greater psychological health vis-à-vis the host environment. The present study affirms Y. Y. Kim's theorems that emphasize the centrality of communication in the process of expatriate workers' cross-cultural adaptation. The present analysis highlights the practical insights on how to recruit, select and train international employees to facilitate their successful adaptation overseas.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, host communication competence, host interpersonal communication, psychological health, Korean expatriates in Indonesia

1. Introduction

The business environment is increasingly global. Because of the strategic importance of global markets and the management of subsidiaries, many companies increasingly dispatch their employees across borders, and this trend will likely continue to grow (Brookefield Global Relocation Services, 2016). Expatriate managers are sojourners who leave his/her country, under assignment, for a business purpose, with the intent of eventual return (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997, pp. 245-60). While the benefits of a successful international assignment include organizational success and individual career progress (Dickmann & Doherty, 2008, p. 145), an expatriate manager's ineffective performance can be detrimental to a multinational corporation's global business (Harvey & Moeller, 2009, p. 275). Nearly 20-40% of American expatriates return early, incurring serious costs to the company including reduced productivity, damaged relationships, and lost opportunities. They are also negatively affected through loss of self-esteem, self-confidence and reputation (Dowling, Festing, & Engle, 2013). The inability to adjust to a foreign cultural environment, rather than a lack of technical competence, has been noted as a major contributing factor to ineffective performance and even premature return (e.g., Stroh, Black, Mendenhall, & Gregersen, 2005).

For this reason, the issue of expatriate adjustment has gained wide attention for the past decades. Numerous studies have identified specific factors that promote expatriate adjustment, including individual job, organizational, and situational issues (e.g., Malek, Budhwar & Reiche, 2015, p. 258; Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999, p. 557), personality

traits (e.g., Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black, & Ferzandi, 2006, p. 109), spousal or family adjustment (e.g., Anderson, 2008, p. 382; Palthe, 2008, p. 42), culture novelty (e.g., Dunbar, 1994, p. 277; Jenkins & Mockaitis, 2010, p. 2694), cultural intelligence (e.g., Guðmundsdóttir, 2015, p. 175), previous experience (Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun & Lepak, 2005, p. 85) and training (e.g., Moon, Choi & Jung 2012, p. 285; Okpara, 2016, p. 259).

While there are many studies on North American and European expatriates in Asian countries, there are not many studies on Korean expatriates working in Asian countries. Thus, the present study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the cross-cultural adaptation of Korean expatriates in Indonesia. Using key theoretical constructs and concepts of Kim's (1988, 2001, 2005, 2012, 2015) Integrative Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation, the present analysis is to build on previous research findings, to seek additional clarity and depth in the current understanding of the role of personality and communication in the adaptation process of Korean expatriates in Indonesia.

2. Cultural Context of Indonesia

As of 2018, Koreans in Indonesia numbered 78,676 individuals, making them the 13th-largest population of overseas Koreans, according to South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Korean Trade Promotion Agency (KOTRA) also estimates 2,000 Korean firms in Indonesia, which have hired one million local employees. Indonesia consists of 16,000 islands with 400 different tribes. The population is 250 million and 90% live on the main islands such as Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Bali. Although Islam is not a national religion, Indonesia has the world largest Muslim population (218 million – 87% of the population). To better understand Indonesian culture, the following characteristics are presented.

2.1 Hierarchy and Social Status

As a patriarchal and hierarchical society, the higher level of power distance along the social structure is highly valued in Indonesia. In addition, gender, age, marital status and education are important factors in determining social status. A middle aged, married male with a university education might be perceived as higher status on the social ladder. In this context, sometimes, a western company will send a young negotiator to deal with Indonesian business people. This could be perceived as an insult to Indonesians because their counterpart is regarded as not an authority figure (Oranuch, 2012, p. 110).

2.2 Social Harmony

Indonesians value social harmony, referring to “rukun” which means harmony, stability and lack of conflict and confrontation. Creativity and active changes are not highly encouraged even if they would contribute to the betterment of a society or community. Members of a community are required to carry out their own work (no extra work) to avoid competition with other members which leads to disruption of the harmony. Being passive and defensive, they tend to always attempt to avoid conflict. This cultural value is clearly reflected in their fatalistic perceptions of nature (Koh & Kim, 2017). In agricultural society, they perceive nature as bringing either food or disaster. Thus, nature is not something they control or modify but something they respect and maintain peaceful relations with. In addition, Indonesians tend to be more present-oriented (Trompenaars, 1993), which makes them seek happiness and satisfaction in the present moment and accept whatever life or nature brings to them. They are prone to the polychronic time system (Hall & Hall, 1990) as they are used to

tropical weather and the life style of the agricultural society. In the workplace, sometimes, these values and attitudes could be perceived as slow, not motivated and showing a lack of responsibility by coworkers from different cultures.

2.3 Face Saving

Like other Asian cultures, face saving is a very important cultural value in the relationship between boss and subordinates and parents and children. In Indonesia, reprimanding subordinates in public is a cultural taboo with negative repercussions. To save other's face, when correcting or disciplining others, a boss or parents should show tolerance and use indirect, gentle talking. In Indonesia, a person who makes mistakes is referred as "durung urti" which means not mature or not fully grown enough to understand properly. Indonesians believe that a person makes mistakes not because he or she is bad but because the person is not so fully grown as to control himself or herself. Thus, the proper way to discipline or correct this person is not to reprimand them but to show tolerance and pity and to gently explain the problem. Accordingly if a subordinate makes a mistake at work, it would be more proper for a boss to meet a subordinate privately and gently explain what seems to be the problem (Koh & Kim, 2017).

2.4 High Context Communication

Indonesians tend not to speak directly or express their feeling outwardly because that kind of behavior is regarded as unethical. When delivering information, people minimize the channel or means of delivery and make it invisible. Particularly, when delivering bad news, they talk about it indirectly or use metaphors instead of conveying the message in direct fashion. In addition, if you ask personal information, they generally do not disclose accurate information. This is not because they are dishonest but because they believe it to be respectful to do so. In Indonesian society, a person in a powerful position or a leader is expected to avoid strong, direct remarks and to instead give orders gently which refers to "Perintah Halus" (literally meaning gentle order). This gentle order is considered a strong order. Additionally, Indonesians never talk about the purpose of a visit when they visit friends or business partners. They need to warm up before they get to the point (Koh & Kim, 2017).

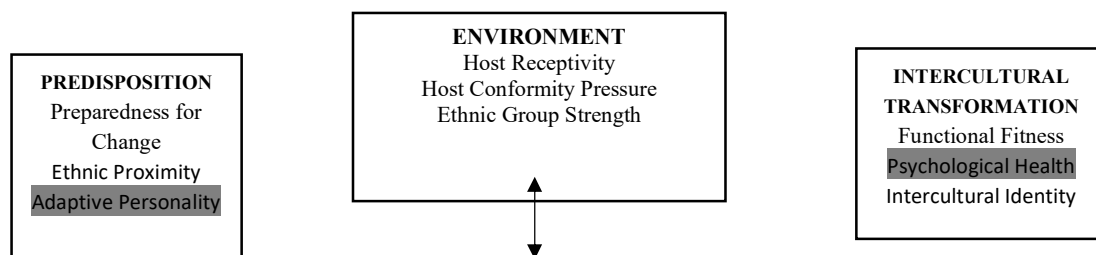
3. Kim's Integrative Cross-cultural Adaptation Theory

The present study uses key research variables based on Kim's (1988, 2001, 2005, 2012, 2015, 2018) Integrative Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation. Offering the inclusive term, "strangers," to cover immigrants, refugees, and sojourners, Kim proposed that individuals, or "strangers" as "open systems" respond to drastic environmental challenges with psychological stress, better known as culture shock, to maintain equilibrium. The term "adaptation" is used broadly, embracing more specific terms such as assimilation, acculturation, integration and adjustment (Y. Y. Kim, 2001, p. 90).

The theory addresses two basic questions: (1) What is the essential nature of the adaptation process individual settlers undergo over time? and (2) Why are some settlers more successful than others in attaining a level of fitness in the host environment? To address the first question, in a process model, the theory explains cross-cultural adaptation as a long-term process of systematic change in the individual's psyche, a gradual psychic transformation involving a "stress-adaptation-growth interplay," — a movement of increased chances of success in meeting the demands of the host environment.

3.1 The Structural Model

In addition to the process model, Kim's theory offers a multidimensional structural model (See Figure 1) to address the second question: 'Why do some settlers adapt faster than others?' or 'Given the same length of time, why do some settlers attain a higher level of adaptation?' The structural model identifies key factors that may facilitate or impede the adaptation process in a culturally different environment. Emphasizing the centrality of communication as the crux of cross-cultural adaptation, the theory posits that the individual adapts to the host environment through various communication activities, ranging from intrapersonal (or personal) to social (interpersonal/mass communication), which are identified as the dimension of personal communication, or host communication competence (Dimension 1) and host social communication (Dimension 2). Kim (2001) describes host communication competence as the overall capacity of the stranger to decode and encode information in accordance with the host communication system. It consists of the cognitive, affective, and operational (or behavioral) capabilities of an individual, which is deemed as the very engine that makes it possible for an individual to move forward along the adaptive path. Host communication competence is inseparably linked with host social communication (Dimension 2), which is the degree of engagement in the host social communication system through interpersonal and mass communication activities of the host environment. Ethnic social communication (Dimension 3) involves interpersonal and mass communication with coethnics in the host society. There are three key conditions to the host environment (Dimension 4): host receptivity, host conformity pressure, and ethnic group strength. The theory also recognizes the individual's predisposition (Dimension 5) which is the internal condition of strangers prior to their resettlement in the host society, consisting of preparedness for the new environment, ethnic proximity (or distance), and adaptive personality. The five dimensions of factors influence one another and, together, these factors facilitate or impede the overall process of intercultural transformation (Dimension 6) which includes three aspects, increased functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity. The level of intercultural transformation, in turn, helps to explain and predict the levels of all the other dimensions.



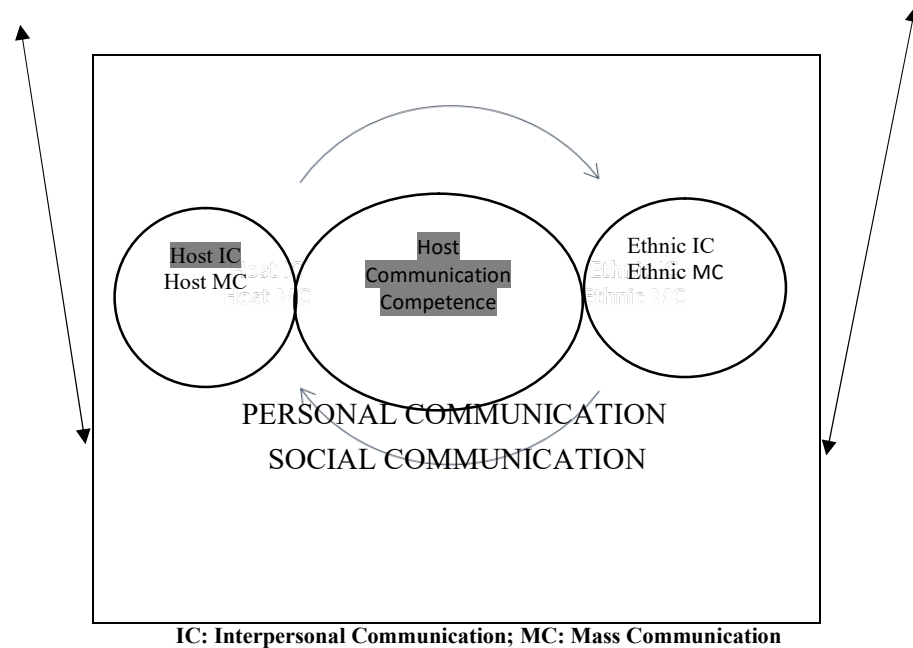


Figure 1. Y. Y. Kim's Structural Model: Factors Influencing Cross-Cultural Adaptation (Source: Y. Y. Kim 2001, p. 87).

3.2 Research Question and Hypotheses

The present study focuses on four of the theoretical constructs identified in Kim's structural model: (1) adaptive personality; (2) host communication competence; (3) host interpersonal communication; and (4) psychological health. They constitute the primary variables for understanding the role of personality and communication activities in the process of expatriates' adaptation. The interrelationships between and among these constructs are articulated in the following four theorems (See Kim 2001, pp. 91-92):

- (1) **Theorem 3:** The greater the host communication competence, the greater the intercultural transformation (functional fitness, psychological health, and intercultural identity).
- (2) **Theorem 5:** The greater the host interpersonal and mass communication, the greater the intercultural transformation (functional fitness, psychological health, and intercultural identity).
- (3) **Theorem 19:** The greater the adaptive personality, the greater the host communication competence.
- (4) **Theorem 20:** The greater the adaptive personality, the greater the host interpersonal and mass communication.

As we aim at investigating predicted relationships among the theorem constructs, based on these four theorems, we propose the following research question and four research hypotheses.

RQ1: How is the personality factor likely to facilitate Korean expatriates' adaptation in Indonesia?

H1: The greater the adaptive personality of a Korean expatriate, the greater his/her host communication competence.

H2: The greater the adaptive personality of a Korean expatriate, the greater his/her host interpersonal communication.

H3: The greater the host communication competence of a Korean expatriate, the greater his/her psychological health.

H4: The greater a Korean expatriate's engagement in host interpersonal communication activities, the greater his/her psychological health.

3. Methods

The present study was conducted between September and December of 2018 among Korean expatriate workers in Indonesia. The study employed a self-reported standardized questionnaire survey which consisted of demographic information (e.g., gender, age, length of stay, education, etc.) and main questions assessing research variables, followed by open-ended questions about perceived differences when working with Indonesians, their different attitudes toward work and how to deal with these differences.

3.1 The Participants

Given uneasy accessibility and difficulty in obtaining cooperation from eligible respondents in Korean firms in Indonesia, a combination of the convenience sampling method and snowball sampling technique was used to recruit the participants as the practical alternative to probability-based sampling. Using the business directory of KOTRA (the Korean Trade-Investment Promotion Agency) (KOTRA, 2018), the author contacted managers of the companies with whom he had personal connections, asking for cooperation with this study. Additionally, when the survey was conducted and collected, the respondents were asked to name potential participants for the study. The research settings for the survey were mostly city areas of Island Java in Indonesia including Jakarta, South Jakarta, Bandung, Bekasi, Cirebon, Purwakarta, Sukabumi, Yogyakarta, Banten and Surabaya. In total, 76 expatriate managers working in 32 companies in these areas participated in the survey. Seventy-six participants, whose ages ranged from 25 to 71 ($M = 44.17$, $SD = 11.00$), consisted of 65 (85.5%) male and 11 (14.5%) female with 59 (77.6%) being married. Most of the respondents had earned at least one college degree—61 undergraduates (80.3%), 13 graduates (17.1%) along with 2 high school (2.6%). The length of residence in Indonesia ranged from one month to 45 years and one month ($M = 14.09$ years, $SD = 9.65$). Regarding prior intercultural experience, 18 (28.6%) had lived in a foreign country (foreign countries) while 45 (71.4%) had no experience at all. For prior training experience, 25 (39.1%) had received training while 39 (60.9%) had not received any training prior to their international assignment. The training types consisted of intercultural training (8.3%), language training (25%), language and intercultural training (45.8%) and others (20.8%).

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

An original version of the questionnaire was pilot-tested between March and early May among five Korean expatriates in Indonesia to refine the wording. The questionnaire was first written in English and translated into Korean by a Korean-American bilingual interpreter. Following Brislin's (1980) method, the Korean questionnaire was then back-translated by the bilingual interpreter. Both English and Korean versions were given to the participants, and they were asked to choose one version. All the participants chose the Korean version. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed via web-based questionnaire and a manager working in Korean companies who had personal connections with the author made a follow-up contact to encourage participation. Eighty-six questionnaires (57.3%) were returned. Of the 86

returned questionnaires, 10 were excluded due to many unanswered questions and the remaining 76 questionnaires have been used for the present analysis.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure – Questionnaire Design

The four theoretical constructs (adaptive personality, host communication competence, host interpersonal communication, psychological health) were operationalized mostly into Likert-type scales. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the scale reliability. The items in the scale that lowered the reliability were dropped from the scale to enhance the reliability.

Adaptive personality was measured in terms of one trait, positivity. For positivity, which refers to 'affirmative and optimistic mental outlook,' (Kim, 2001, p. 177), the new general self-efficacy scale consisting of eight items was used to assess the participant's self-evaluation of his or her effectiveness (achieving goals, accomplishing difficult tasks, ability to obtain outcomes, ability to succeed at most endeavors, overcoming challenges, performing different tasks, outperforming tasks than others, performing well in a tough situation). The scale items were adapted from Chen, Gully and Eden's study (2001). The answers used a five-point Likert-type scale (1=totally disagree; 5=totally agree). The reliability of this eight-item scale is found to be acceptable, with Cronbach's alpha of .80 ($M=3.87$, $SD=.40$; range: 2.50-4.88).

Host communication competence was measured in three areas: cognitive, affective, and operational dimensions. On the cognitive dimension, respondents were asked to assess their *Indonesian language ability* ("Bahasa Indonesia"), *English language ability* and their *knowledge of Indonesian culture*. While speaking *Bahasa Indonesia* (official Indonesian language) by foreigners is expected and highly appreciated by local people, their English ability was assessed as well because it is also used as a working language for international business in Indonesia.

The host language ability, for Indonesian language ("Bahasa Indonesia"), consisted of seven items assessing the participant's self-evaluation of his or her sense of adequacy in speaking, listening, reading, and writing to carry out specific communication activities. The answers used a five-point Likert-type scale (1=very inadequate; 5=very adequate). The scale items were mostly adapted from Maruyama's (1998) study. For English ability, the same scales were used to assess the level of adequacy. The reliability of this seven-item scale was found to be satisfactory, with the Cronbach's alpha of .94 for Indonesian language ability ($M=3.60$, $SD=.87$; range: 1.14-5.00) and with the Cronbach's alpha of .94 for English ability ($M=3.13$, $SD=.73$; range: 1.86-5.00).

The scale of *knowledge of host culture* was measured by the degree of knowledge about Indonesian cultural norms and communication rules. The five scale items, adapted from Gudykunst's (1991) measure, included understanding Indonesian cultural norms/values, verbal and nonverbal communication, way of thinking. The answers used a five-point Likert-type scale (1=not at all; 5=very much). The reliability of this five-item scale is found to be satisfactory, with a Cronbach's alpha of .91 ($M=3.59$, $SD=.72$; range: 2.00-5.00).

In the affective dimension, the adaptation motivation scale assessed the participant's motivation to adapt to the Indonesian society and culture. A five-point Likert-type scale was used (1= not at all; 5=very much). Of the five items, three were drawn from Kim's (1976) measure of acculturation motivation (making friends with Indonesians, understanding the ways Indonesian people behave and think, and learning about current political, economic, and social situations and issues in Indonesia). The remaining two items were adapted from Maruyama's (1998) research (i.e., learning Indonesian language, interacting with Indonesian

people, and adapting to Indonesian culture/society). The combined five-item scale has yielded the Cronbach's alpha of .86 ($M=3.79$, $SD=.65$; range: 2.20-5.00).

The operational dimension was assessed by the behavioral competence scale, comprised of an eight five-point Likert-type scale items measuring how effectively the participant could communicate with, and relate to Indonesians. The first four items were adapted from Tammam's (1993) measure. The remaining items were adapted from Maruyama's study (1998): (1) avoiding misunderstandings with Indonesians; (2) achieving what I hope to achieve in my interactions with Indonesians; (3) communication flows smoothly when interacting with Indonesians; (4) getting my point across easily; (5) being flexible enough to handle unexpected situations; (6) having difficulty establishing personal relationships with Indonesians; (7) feeling awkward and unnatural when communicating with Indonesians; and (8) finding interacting with Indonesians challenging. The answers used a five-point Likert-type scale (1=totally disagree; 5= totally agree). Cronbach's reliability test has yielded the Cronbach's alpha of .91 ($M=3.91$, $SD=.62$; range: 2.50-5.00).

Host and ethnic interpersonal communication was measured by the participant's interpersonal ties according to group categories and intimacy levels. Adapted from the measure of interpersonal communication in the study of interethnic communication (Kim, Kim, Duty, & Yoshitake, 2002), the participants were asked to indicate the percentages of people with whom they had relationships in each group (Indonesians, co-ethnics, e.g., Koreans, and others) and the corresponding levels of closeness (casual acquaintances, casual friends, close friends). *Host interpersonal communication* was measured in terms of three levels of relationships with Indonesians while ethnic interpersonal communication in terms of three levels of relationships with co-ethnics (i.e., Koreans). The reliability test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .76 for *Host interpersonal communication* ($M=31.25$, $SD=15.88$; range: 0.67-76.67) and .74 for *Ethnic interpersonal communication* ($M=64.02$, $SD=16.54$; range: 20.00-99.33).

Psychological health, the subjective sense of well-being while living in Indonesia, was assessed by "satisfaction." *Satisfaction* was measured by seven items, consisting of four items adapted from Gao and Gudykunst's (1990) study and three additional items adapted from Maruyama's (1998) study. A five-point Likert-type scale was used (1=not at all; 5=very much) measuring the participant's sense of his/her life in Indonesia as being satisfactory, comfortable, rewarding, or stressful, as well as the participant's acceptance of Indonesian people's attitudes, satisfaction in their relationships with Indonesians and in their experiences of Indonesian culture. The combined seven-item scale has yielded the Cronbach's alpha of .87 ($M=3.35$, $SD=.64$; range: 1.57-4.71).

4. Results

For data analysis, a descriptive analysis was conducted to present the distribution of data on the key research variables based on means and standard deviations, which is reported in the measurement section (Also see Table 1). Additionally, the descriptive analysis on the key research variables based on demographic factors was conducted which is presented in this section (See Table 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4 and 1-5).

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis on Key Research Variables (n=76)			
Variables	Mean	SD	Range
ADAPTIVE PERSONALITY			

-Self-efficacy	3.87	0.40	2.50-4.88
HOST COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE			
- Host language competence (i.e., Bahasa Indonesia)	3.60	0.87	1.14-5.00
-English language ability	3.13	0.73	1.86-5.00
-Host Culture	3.59	0.72	2.00-5.00
-Adaptive motivation	3.79	0.66	2.20-5.00
-Behavioral competence	3.91	0.62	2.50-5.00
HOST INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	31.25	15.88	0.67-76.67
-Casual Indonesian Acquaintances	54.36	22.64	2.00-95.00
-Casual Indonesian Friends	25.61	18.70	0.00-80.00
-Close Indonesian Friends	13.98	16.98	0.00-70.00
ETHNIC INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	64.02	16.54	20-99.33
-Casual Korean Acquaintances	40.04	21.84	5.00-98.00
-Casual Korean Friends	69.60	20.14	15.00-100.00
-Close Korean Friends	82.42	19.50	20.00-100.00
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH			
-Satisfaction	3.35	0.64	1.57-4.71

Table 1-1. Descriptive Analysis on Key Research Variables according to gender (n=76)

Variables	Gender			
	Male (n=65)		Female (n=11)	
ADAPTIVE PERSONALITY	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
-Self-efficacy	3.83	0.39	4.15	0.37
HOST COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE				
-Host language competence (i.e., Bahasa Indonesia)	3.48	0.86	4.31	0.61
-English language ability	3.08	0.71	3.45	0.91
-Host Culture	3.51	0.64	4.04	0.99
-Adaptive motivation	3.73	0.63	4.20	0.73
-Behavioral competence	3.88	0.60	4.07	0.73
HOST INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	30.73	15.16	34.23	20.19
ETHNIC INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	64.90	15.52	59.00	21.78
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH				
-Satisfaction	3.33	0.65	3.44	0.63

Table 1-2. Descriptive Analysis on Key Research Variables according to age (n =75)								
Variables	Age (years old)							
	20-30 (n=6)		31-40 (n=23)		41-50 (n=26)		51+ (n=20)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
ADAPTIVE PERSONALITY								
-Self-efficacy	3.75	0.68	3.98	0.48	3.81	0.31	3.88	0.29
HOST COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE								
-Host language competence (Bahasa Indonesia)	4.21	0.82	3.55	0.84	3.64	0.73	3.39	1.05
-English language ability	3.43	0.83	3.21	0.77	2.78	0.55	3.26	0.78
-Host Culture	3.00	0.86	3.69	0.72	3.51	0.70	3.74	0.66
-Adaptive motivation	3.20	0.65	3.83	0.67	3.82	0.65	3.86	0.63
-Behavioral competence	3.75	0.58	3.89	0.63	3.81	0.69	4.11	0.54
HOST INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	20.11	20.31	32.20	14.19	29.57	12.70	36.88	19.20
ETHNIC INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	75.44	26.87	64.02	14.46	65.19	12.61	57.75	18.57
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH								
-Satisfaction	2.88	0.64	3.29	0.78	3.22	0.53	3.73	0.48

*1: less than a year **2: one year and a month to five years

3: five years and a month to ten years *4: ten years and a month to twenty years

*****5: More than twenty years

Table 1-4. Descriptive Analysis on Key Research Variables according to prior intercultural experience (n=63)				
Variables	Prior Intercultural Experience			
	Yes (n=18)		No (n=45)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
ADAPTIVE PERSONALITY				
-Self-efficacy	4.00	0.44	3.79	0.41
HOST COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE				
-Host language competence (i.e., Bahasa Indonesia)	3.26	0.97	3.78	0.82
-English language ability	3.67	0.93	2.96	0.60
-Host Culture	3.47	0.73	3.64	0.76
-Adaptive motivation	3.87	0.59	3.78	0.74
-Behavioral competence	3.72	0.53	3.98	0.66
HOST INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	30.22	15.05	31.51	15.15
ETHNIC INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	65.11	15.84	63.57	15.89

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH				
-Satisfaction	3.44	0.75	3.31	0.60

Table 1-5. Descriptive Analysis on Key Research Variables according to prior training experience (n =64)

Variables	Prior Training Experience			
	Yes (n=25)		No (n=39)	
ADAPTIVE PERSONALITY	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
-Self-efficacy	3.80	0.45	3.91	0.34
HOST COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE				
-Host language competence (i.e., Bahasa Indonesia)	3.94	0.96	3.43	0.84
-English language ability	3.04	0.71	3.28	0.80
-Host Culture	3.76	0.88	3.48	0.67
-Adaptive motivation	3.88	0.85	3.76	0.59
-Behavioral competence	4.18	0.70	3.73	0.56
HOST INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	35.33	19.34	29.32	13.33
ETHNIC INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	62.13	18.85	65.07	15.02
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH				
-Satisfaction	3.42	0.74	3.30	0.59

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Key Research Variables according to Demographic Factors

Adaptive personality. In analysis of adaptive personality (assessed in terms of self-efficacy) by gender (see Table 1-1), female participants show a higher level of self-efficacy ($M = 4.15$; $SD = 0.37$), which suggests that females might have better assurance for their capabilities to achieve a certain level of performance at work. By age (see the Table 1-2), the participants aged between 31 to 40 years old show the highest level of self-efficacy ($M = 3.98$; $SD = 0.48$) and by length of stay (see Table 1-3), those who have lived in Indonesia between one to five years show the highest level of self-efficacy ($M = 3.95$; $SD = 0.49$). And those who have prior intercultural experience (i.e., previously staying and living in a foreign country or countries) have a higher level of self-efficacy ($M = 4.00$; $SD = 0.44$) (see Table 1-4).

Host communication competence. The overall score of host language ability (“Bahasa Indonesia”) is higher than English ability: Bahasa Indonesia ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.87$); English ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.73$) (See Table 1). While English is a second foreign language to be used in Indonesia, it shows that Korean expatriates have a better competence with the local language (i.e., Bahasa Indonesia). In analyzing host communication competence by gender, female participants show a higher score in all areas of host communication competence, specifically, higher in host language ability ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.61$), English language ability (M

=3.45, $SD=0.91$), adaptive motivation ($M=4.20$; $SD=0.73$) and behavioral competence ($M=4.07$; $SD=0.73$) (See Table 1-1).

The participants aged between 20-30 years old show the highest level of host language competence (i.e., *Bahasa Indonesia*) ($M=4.21$, $SD=0.82$) and English language ability ($M=3.43$, $SD=0.83$). Additionally, the participants who are 51 years and older show the greater level of knowledge of host culture ($M=3.74$; $SD=0.66$), adaptive motivation ($M=3.86$, $SD=0.63$) and behavioral competence ($M=4.11$, $SD=0.54$) (See Table 1-2). The participants who have stayed in Indonesia for more than 20 years showed the highest score on most of dimensions of host communication competence: host language ($M=3.77$, $SD=0.81$), knowledge of host culture ($M=3.85$, $SD=0.68$), adaptive motivation ($M=3.91$, $SD=0.74$) and behavioral competence ($M=4.1$, $SD=0.61$) (See Table 1-3). Those who have had prior intercultural training also show a higher score on most dimensions of host communication competence: host language competence ($M=3.94$, $SD=0.96$), knowledge of host culture ($M=3.76$, $SD=0.88$), adaptive motivation ($M=3.88$, $SD=0.85$), behavioral competence ($M=4.18$, $SD=0.70$) (see Table 1-5).

Host/ethnic interpersonal communication. According to the analysis of host interpersonal communication by gender, female participants showed a higher score ($M=34.23$, $SD=20.19$) (see Table 1-1). By age, participants who were older than 51 years showed the highest score ($M=36.88$, $SD=19.20$) (see Table 1-2). Those who have stayed in Indonesia for more than twenty years also showed the highest score ($M=35.22$, $SD=19.63$) (see Table 1-3). Those who have prior intercultural experience showed a greater level of host interpersonal communication ($M=31.51$, $SD=15.15$) (see Table 1-4) and those who have prior training also showed a greater level of host interpersonal communication ($M=35.33$, $SD=19.34$) (see Table 1-5). For ethnic interpersonal communication, male participants showed higher interpersonal ties with co-ethnics (i.e., Koreans) ($M=64.90$, $SD=15.52$) (see table 1-1). The older the participants were, the less ethnic interpersonal communication they had. The participants who were 51 years and older showed the lowest score ($M=57.75$, $SD=18.57$) (see Table 1-2). While those who have stayed for one to five years show the highest score ($M=78.00$, $SD=15.10$), the general pattern shows that the longer they stay, the less ethnic interpersonal relationships they tend to engage with. Those who have stayed more than twenty years showed the lowest score ($M=59.61$, $SD=19.13$) (see Table 1-3). Those who have no training experience show a higher score on ethnic interpersonal communication ($M=65.97$, $SD=15.02$) (see Table 1-5).

Psychological health. According to the analysis by gender, female participants show a slightly higher level of satisfaction ($M=3.44$, $SD=0.63$) (See Table 1-1). By age, those who are 51 years and older showed the relatively highest level of satisfaction ($M=3.73$, $SD=0.48$) (See Table-1-2). In terms of length of stay, an interesting pattern is shown. Participants who stayed less than a year showed the highest level of satisfaction ($M=3.67$, $SD=0.70$). Those who stayed between 1.1 year to 5 years showed the lowest level of satisfaction ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.87$). After that, the level of satisfaction gradually increases ($M=3.60$, $SD=0.40$) when the length of stay increases up to more than twenty years (see Table 1-3). According to Table 1-4 and 1-5, those who have prior intercultural experience and prior training show a slightly higher level of satisfaction (prior intercultural experience: $M=3.44$, $SD=0.75$; prior training: $M=3.42$, $SD=0.74$).

4.2 Hypothesis Test

A bivariate correlation analysis has been employed to test the hypothesized theoretical relationships between and among the research variables.

Table 2. Simple Correlation Coefficients (r) between Research Variables for Koreans

Note: *p <.05, **p <.01

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
ADAPTIVE PERSONALITY								
1. SELF-EFFICACY	1							
HOST COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE								
2. HOST LANGUAGE (BAHASA INDOENSIA)	.20*	2						
3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE	.37**	-.02	3					
4. KNOWLEDGE OF HOST CULTURE	.30**	.67**	.04	4				
5. ADAPTIVE MOTIVATION	.33**	.49**	.11	.70**	5			
6. OPERATIONAL COMPETENCE	.14	.61**	-.17	.70**	.58**	6		
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION								
7. HOST INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION	.21*	.35**	-.04	.38**	.34**	.39**	7	
8. PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH	.40**	.24*	.28*	.48**	.56**	.33**	.25*	8

Hypothesis 1. The first hypothesis positing the positive association between adaptive personality and host communication competence is supported. As shown in Table 2, a correlation analysis clearly indicates that self-efficacy is positively and significantly related to some assessed dimensions of host communication competence: host language ability (Indonesian- i.e., Bahasa Indonesia) ($r = .20$, $p < .05$); English ability ($r = .37$, $p < .01$); knowledge of host culture ($r = .30$, $p < .01$); adaptation motivation ($r = .33$, $p < .01$). However, self-efficacy is not significantly related to behavioral competence ($r = .14$, $p > .05$).

Hypothesis 2. The second hypothesis positing the positive association between adaptive personality and host interpersonal communication is fully supported. Correlational analysis (see Table 2) indicates that self-efficacy is significantly and positively related to host interpersonal communication ($r = .21$, $p < .05$).

Hypothesis 3. The third hypothesis predicted a positive theoretical relationship between host communication competence and psychological health measured by satisfaction. This hypothesis is fully supported. As shown in Table 2, correlational analysis indicates that all assessed dimensions of host communication competence are positively and significantly related to satisfaction: host language competence (i.e., Indonesian) ($r = .24$, $p < .05$); English ability ($r = .28$, $p < .05$); knowledge of host culture ($r = .48$, $p < .01$); adaptation motivation ($r = .56$, $p < .01$); behavioral competence ($r = .33$, $p < .01$).

Hypothesis 4. The fourth hypothesis predicts that the engagement of host interpersonal communication is positively associated with Korean expatriates' psychological health measured by satisfaction. As shown in Table 2, a correlation analysis fully supports this hypothesis. Host interpersonal communication is positively and significantly associated with satisfaction in support of this hypothesis ($r = .25$, $p < .05$).

5. Discussion

Employing Kim's (1988, 2001, 2005, 2012, 2015, 2018) Integrative Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation, the primary goal of this study was to add clarity and depth to the insight generated from previous studies by exploring the cross-cultural adaptation experience of 76 Korean expatriate managers in Indonesia. The four research hypotheses positing predictive relationships among adaptive personality, host communication competence, host interpersonal communication and psychological health have been tested using numeric data collected through a self-reported survey questionnaire. The findings revealed significant relationships, suggesting that expatriate workers' adaptive personality and effective communication competence were associated with their psychological health.

Results for the first hypothesis indicated that Korean expatriate workers who have a higher level of assurance for their capabilities to achieve a certain level of performance ("self-efficacy") tend to have better Indonesian language and English ability, knowledge of the host culture and much higher motivation to adjust to host Indonesian culture. Relatedly, results for the second hypothesis suggested that this positive adaptive personality trait (i.e., self-efficacy) tends to influence more active engagement of relationships with host nationals (i.e., Indonesians). Thus, these findings present clear theoretical explanations of how personality factors play out in facilitating expatriate adaptation as posed in research question 1. Adaptive personality tends to positively influence their host communication competence and host interpersonal communication, while these two factors promote psychological health in the process of adjustment, which has been verified by testing hypothesis 3 and 4.

These findings are consistent with the findings from the previous studies. The findings of previous expatriate studies reported positive associations between self-efficacy and adjustment (Bahtti, Kaur, & Battout, 2013; Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer & Luk, 2005; Osman-Gani & Rockstuhl, 2009).

Results for the third hypothesis indicated that all indicators of host communication competence (i.e., host language/knowledge of host culture, adaptation motivation, and behavioral competence) help to facilitate psychological health in expatriate workers. The findings suggest that Korean expatriates are more likely to be satisfied in their life overseas when they have higher levels of host language competence (i.e., Bahasa Indonesia as well as English), knowledge of host culture and higher adaptation motivation and competent behavioral skills. Consistent with the theoretical relationship predicted in hypothesis 4, three levels of host interpersonal relationship have been found to be important factors in facilitating the psychological health of expatriate workers. Korean expatriates who actively engage in personal relationships with host nationals (i.e., Indonesians) tend to have more satisfaction in their life overseas.

These findings are consistent with the findings from previous studies, including the finding from studies of Korean expatriates (Kim & Kim, 2007) and Bosnian Refugees in the U.S. (Cheah, Karamehic-Muratovic, Matsuo, & Pojarevic, 2011) that host communication competence and host interpersonal communication contribute to expatriates' and refugees' adaptation. Additionally, other studies specifically reported that host language proficiency is positively related to expatriates' adjustment (e.g., Kim & Slocum, 2008; Zhang & Peltokorpi, 2016).

Overall, the present study indicates that, as highlighted by Y. Y. Kim's theory, one's ability to communicate and participate in the host social process is essential to successful adaptation in an unfamiliar cultural environment. The more expatriate workers know about a host country's cultural norms and systems and the more they are engaged in interpersonal relationships with host nationals, the better their psychological health is likely to be. Conversely, as predicted by the theory, this study has demonstrated the reciprocal influence between a lack of knowledge, motivation, and operational skills, a lack of interpersonal contact and interaction at all levels of relationships, and a higher level of psychological experiences of stress and dissatisfaction in the host environment. Additionally, expatriate workers' adaptive personality trait (e.g., self-efficacy) has a strong influence on their host communication competence and their maintaining meaningful relationships with host nationals, facilitating effective psychological health, and successful adjustment overseas.

5.1 Practical Considerations

While most of the previous studies of expatriates have been conducted from an American or Western perspective, the present study explores the adaptation experience of Korean expatriates in a non-Western cultural context (i.e., Indonesia). To multinational organizations and human resource practitioners, the present analysis highlights the practical insights on how to recruit, select and train their international employees. Particularly, the present analysis could provide practical tips about how they could help expatriate workers facilitate their successful adaptation overseas. Special training programs could focus on improving their language competence, familiarizing them with the host cultural norms and business practices, and fostering meaningful social interactions with host nationals. Specifically, considering the expatriation in the Indonesian context, training programs could focus on fostering flexible mindsets such as tolerance for ambiguity, empathy and mindfulness, etc., to prepare them not to be frustrated when facing unique cultural traits such as a slow-paced life style and ambiguous communication behaviors. The responses and comments on open-ended

questions in the end of the survey clearly voiced the importance of communication competence including understanding host culture, host language and close interpersonal relationships with business partners for successful performance in their international assignment. For example, they reported that unique and different Indonesian business cultures and norms might pose culture shock and hurdles to get over, which include, slow, passive and laid-back attitude toward work, ambiguous and indirect verbal communication style, importance of saving face, which regards supervisor's reprimanding the mistake in public as cultural taboo. Relatedly, they commented that it is important to have knowledge of local culture and news. Being fluent in Bahasa Indonesia is a key to success in their business overseas. Additionally, it is also reported that cross-cultural adaptation and relationship with host nationals are significantly correlated. One expatriate commented that he tried to build trust and relationship with Indonesian co-workers through family dinners and other social activities; as the relationship develops, communication at work becomes much smoother. Some respondents provide important insight about their life overseas:

"Without open-mindedness, successful business and adaptation would not be possible";

"If you want to continue to work here, you should be aware of these cultural differences";

"Expatriates need to grow the ability such as the display of respect toward other cultures, being considerate and being mindful toward differences."

A carefully designed training program will facilitate expatriate workers' adjustment and successful international business.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

The present study leaves room for further improvement for future studies. The sample size of the present study was 76 Korean expatriate managers who were selected using a convenience sampling method combined with snowball sampling. A more comprehensive survey with a larger sample size based on a more representative sample of expatriate managers in Indonesia would make the findings more generalizable. The study could incorporate in-depth personal interviews to obtain the participants' own voices of the adaptation experiences. As this study explored the expatriate adjustment experience in a non-western cultural context (i.e., Indonesia), a future study would be more fruitful if we examined expatriate managers' adaptation experiences in other Asian countries (e.g., Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, etc.). Finally, given that the scale reliability of host interpersonal communication (Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$)/ethnic interpersonal communication (Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$) is relatively low, the future study should address this issue to make research findings more reliable.

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