

The Mediation Effect of Emotional Intelligence on the Relationship Between Culture and Conflict Resolution Strategies within the Context of Expatriation

Göçmenlik Bağlamında Kültür ve Çatışma Çözme Stratejileri Arasındaki İlişkide Duygusal Zekanın Aracılık Etkisi

Abstract


This study offers an integrative perspective for the interrelations between culture, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution strategies within the context of expatriation. Based on a dataset collected from expatriates living in Turkey, this study aims to uncover the mediating role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between cultural dimensions and conflict resolution strategies. Data was analyzed through PLS-SEM software program. The findings of the study show that while emotional intelligence fully mediates the relationship between Confronting and Vertical Collectivism, Horizontal Individualism and Forcing, Vertical Individualism and Smoothing conflict resolution strategies, the rest of the findings vary between partial and no mediation. This study highlights the mediation effect of emotional intelligence and the predictive power of culture at individual level on emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies within the context of expatriation. While previous research has focused on emotional intelligence and culture as antecedents of conflict resolution strategies, studies that analyze these variables through a wholistic view are rare. Although this study has some limitations, it highlights how culture at individual level is influential on individual emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies. This wholistic approach provides the insight that through cultural orientations can shape individuals' both emotional intelligence and preference of conflict resolution strategies which shows the importance of cultural orientations for expatriates..

Keywords: Culture, emotional intelligence, expatriate, conflict resolution

Abstract

Bu çalışma, göç bağlamında kültür, duygusal zeka ve çatışma çözüm stratejileri arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkiler için bütünlendirici bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Türkiye'de yaşayan göçmenlerden toplanan bir veri setine dayanan bu çalışma, kültürel boyutlar ve çatışma çözüm stratejileri arasındaki ilişkide duygusal zekanın aracılık rolünü ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Veriler PLS-SEM yazılım programı aracılığıyla analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın bulguları, Duygusal Zekanın Yüzleşme ve Dikey Kolektivizm, Yatay Bireycilik ve Zorlama, Dikey Bireycilik ve Yumuşatma çatışma çözüm stratejileri arasındaki ilişkiye tam olarak aracılık ederken, bulguların geri kalanının kısmi ve hiç aracılık olmadığı arasında değiştiğini göstermektedir. Bu çalışma, göç bağlamında duygusal zekanın aracılık etkisini ve kültürün duygusal zeka ve çatışma çözüm stratejileri üzerindeki bireysel düzeydeki öngörücü gücünü vurgulamaktadır. Önceki araştırmalar, çatışma çözüm stratejilerinin öncülleri olarak duygusal zekaya ve kültüre odaklanmış olsa da, bu değişkenleri bütünsel bir bakış açısıyla analiz eden çalışmalar nadirdir. Bu çalışmanın bazı sınırlamaları olmasına rağmen, bireysel düzeyde kültürün bireysel duygusal zeka ve çatışma çözme stratejileri üzerinde nasıl etkili olduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Bu bütünsel yaklaşım, kültürel yönelimler aracılığıyla bireylerin hem duygusal zekalarının hem de çatışma çözme stratejileri tercihlerinin etkilenebileceğine dair içgörü sağlar ve bu da kültürel yönelimlerin göçmenler için önemini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültür, duygusal zeka, göçmen, çatışma çözümü

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Introduction

Previous research conducted on culture attempted to unveil its definition, its role in individuals' daily lives, and how it enables various and different points of view with individuals around the world (Oyserman, 2017; Oyserman & Lee, 2008; Triandis, 1996). Through globalization, societies are becoming more and more culturally diversified, which in turn, creates culturally diverse organizations (Ekermans, 2009). Firms hire individuals from different cultural settings (Gunkel et al., 2014) thus, these firms are subjected to deal with an international workforce (Gonçalves et al., 2016; Singh, 2010; Sousa et al., 2017). Expatriation, which has increased significantly due to the effects of globalization, refers to the state of an individual living and working abroad (Carpenter et al., 2001; Reuber & Fischer, 1997). Therefore, expatriates are subject to experience another culture (Crowne, 2013; Singh, 2010). The expansion of the number of expatriates worldwide is a sign of their role in the global business environment (Baruch et al., 2016). Thus, it is important to uncover how expatriates work in these new and unfamiliar environments, communicate and cooperate with their colleagues, practice their skills, and implement their knowledge (Tung, 1998; Yavas & Bodur, 1999). For expatriates, adaptation to the other culture is vital, to be able to work harmoniously in a highly intercultural working environment, otherwise, they cannot operate effectively (Cavusgil et al., 1992; Yavas & Bodur, 1999). In addition, it is important for companies to build teams of emotionally intelligent individuals that have the capacity to deal with various cultural orientations (Gunkel et al., 2014). Furthermore, as interactions between individuals from different cultures increase, an understanding of cultural orientations and related conflict resolution strategies become an import issue for the organizations. Therefore, this study aims to unveil the role of emotional intelligence and cultural values on predicting the preference of expatriates of conflict resolution strategies through an integrative perspective as the previous studies focused only the direct effects between those variables (Boroş et al., 2010; Chen et al., 2005; Gunkel et al., 2014; Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006).

Conflicts are considered as an inevitable part of daily human interactions, however, if they are not resolved, the results can be destructive (Gottoman, 1993; Thomas, 1992). Especially, cross-cultural interactions between individuals have a great potential to create a challenge for organizations with a highly internationalized workforce since cultural diversity can trigger the emergence of conflicts within the organizations (Earley & Ang, 2003; Jassawalla et al., 2004). Intercultural relations can give rise to the emergence of conflicts, therefore, the abilities to resolve conflicts or decrease tension in an organization are considered as one of the crucial competencies of individuals working in such environments (Dusi et al., 2014; Templer et al., 2006). In the literature, conflict resolution strategies are found to be important for both individual and firm level outcomes (Barbuto et al., 2010; Bradford et al., 2004; Chen et al., 2005; Song et al., 2006). Conflict resolution strategies reflect how individuals prefer to solve conflicts and they are crucial to obtaining positive results (Blake and Mouton, 1964; Rahim, 1983), therefore, uncovering the factors that determine conflict resolution strategies can contribute to both individual and organizational outcomes.

A number of studies shed light on the determinants of the preferences for conflict resolution strategies including culture, personality, demographic characteristics, and some competencies like cultural intelligence (Barbuto et al., 2010; Boroş et al., 2010; Gonçalves et al., 2016; Gunkel et al., 2016; Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006; Shih & Susanto, 2010; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991). In addition to those studies, the effect of emotional intelligence on the preference of conflict resolution strategies has received attention as well (Gunkel et al., 2014; Jordan & Troth, 2004; Rahim et al., 2002; Shih & Susanto, 2010; Zhang et al., 2015), however, the results are unsteady (Schlaerth et al., 2013). Emotional intelligence has received considerable attention in the past decade (Bozionelos & Singh, 2017; Petrides et al., 2016). Understanding the determinants of conflict resolution strategies and analysing the extent to which emotional intelligence can provide insights into the selection processes of expatriates, and the development of their skill training programs are crucial for expatriate cross-cultural adjustment. For organizations, uncovering the required multicultural skills contributes to both individual and organizational effectiveness (Singh et al., 2017). Moreover, in the literature, some of the research shed light on the effect of culture on emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies by operationalizing Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions to measure individual cultural values (Gunkel et al., 2016). Although Hofstede's cultural dimensions are the most cited and utilized measurement, it has been the focus of some critics (Fang, 2003; McSweeney, 2002a, 2002b). Studies analysing culture at an individual level are scarce, as most of the studies examine culture at the national level (Cai & Fink, 2002). In addition, evaluating the effect of culture on different social contexts can help explain the differences in social relationships on a highly diversified cultural environment (Ratzlaff et al., 2000). Therefore, this study aims to uncover the mediation effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between culture and conflict resolution strategies in the context of expatriation.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Culture and Emotional Intelligence

Hofstede (1983, p. 76) describes culture as *"the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group from another"*; while according to Triandis (1994, p.1) *"culture is to society what memory is to individuals"*. Culture sets the norms and values of a society that can affect the emotional adjustment of individuals (Gunkel et al., 2014; Matsumoto et al., 2008), such as, which emotions can be revealed or hidden or how they are supposed to be communicated (Matsumoto, 1989). Therefore, a nation's culture can affect individuals' emotional experiences, including their thoughts, feelings and actions (Bhullar et al., 2012; Hofstede, 2001). Consequently, how emotions are communicated can show significant variations between cultures, and culture can determine the emotional intelligence of individuals. Emotional Intelligence has received the attention of both researchers and practitioners (Petrides et al., 2016; Singh, 2007). Individuals high in emotional intelligence can use those abilities to foster positive emotions and intellectual improvement. Emotionally intelligent individuals are good at building relationships, including friends and colleagues etc., as it helps those individuals to improve their interpersonal interactions, increase positive attitudes and behaviours that can foster organizational effectiveness (Abraham, 2005; Cherniss, 2001; Herkenhoff, 2004; Miao et al., 2018; Perez-Diaz et al., 2018). In the literature, various views of emotional intelligence have been presented (Joseph et al., 2015). While some scholars conceptualize it as a trait (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Petrides et al., 2007), some others view it as an ability (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005; Mayer & Salovey, 1995; Mayer et al., 2008). Emotional intelligence is defined as *'the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth'* (Mayer & Salovey, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). It is suggested that emotional intelligence has four dimensions that include: *"self-appraisal, other's emotional appraisal, and regulation of emotion and use of emotion"* (Bowling & Hoffman, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Wong & Law, 2002). This conceptualization reflects the ability of individuals who are more skilled at understanding what other people feel and are better at reacting to them in a manner filled with empathy and compassion. Individuals high in self-appraisal have the ability to understand their feelings in a given situation that shows the extent of self-awareness and concern. Whereas, individuals that are high in other's emotional appraisal reflect concern for others (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). The ability to use and regulate emotions shows the extent an individual can monitor his/her emotions and react accordingly by showing concern for others and for themselves. Those dimensions focus on how an individual receives and assesses information, and acts depending on the information evaluated. In this vein, the evaluation and reaction processes are exposed to some internal and external factors, such as, cultural values and norms, and experience (Matsumoto et al., 2008). Kitayama & Markus (1994) assert that culture affects how people feel, think and give reactions to a situation. In other words, cultural norms and values can influence the psychological processes of individuals and perceptions or reactions to a stimuli. Thus, communication styles with others can be culturally grounded (Kluckhohn, 1951; Luomala et al., 2004; Oyserman et al., 2002; Oyserman & Lee, 2008). In this vein, an individual's perception of a situation, reactions, and regulation of emotions can be the reflections of some cultural values (Gunkel et al., 2014). People from different cultures can show variations in their emotional expression, recognition, and regulation of their emotions (Bono & Barron, 2008; Fischer, 2016; Marsh et al., 2003). In this sense, culture has the power to determine how emotions are evaluated, recognized, and managed, accordingly; evaluation, recognition, managing and display of emotions also show variations throughout cultures (Matsumoto, 1989, 2008). Despite the studies focusing on the effect of culture on the psychological processes of individuals, studies analysing the direct effect of culture at an individual level on emotional intelligence as a whole construct are rare. For example, Gunkel et al. (2016) analysed the effect of culture on emotional intelligence by operationalizing Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions. Hofstede (2001) categorizes culture into five dimensions including: *"individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, power distance, short term-long term orientation, and uncertainty avoidance."* Hofstede's categorization, which is considered to reflect the main dimensions of culture, constitutes the basis of studies focusing on the effect of cultural orientations on emotions (Gunkel et al., 2014). However, Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions have been exposed to some criticism (Fang, 2003; McSweeney, 2002a, 2002b), and also individuals within a culture can have different levels of cultural orientations from their main cultural orientations (Ratzlaff et al., 2000). Accordingly, Triandis & Gelfand's (1998) cultural dimensions are utilized at an individual level in this study, which is considered to be a potential contribution to the existing literature (Gomez & Taylor, 2018). Further, studies focusing on the relationship between individualism and emotional intelligence are scarce (Scott et al., 2004) and majority of studies have focused on the relationship between collectivism and emotional intelligence in the literature.

Cross-cultural researchers put great emphasis on the differences between individualism and collectivism in many contexts (Triandis, 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). While in individualism the survival of the self and individual autonomy is important, in collectivism the survival of the group and their needs are prioritized (Chiou, 2001). Triandis (1995) asserts that both individualism and collectivism are multidimensional. Triandis and Gelfand (1998) categorize collectivism and individualism into vertical and horizontal dimensions by referring to power distance in order to show the level of equality and hierarchy. While horizontal level reflects the extent of equality, vertical level shows the hierarchy level. In horizontal dimension, the self is equal to other selves, whereas the self becomes distinct in relation to every other self in vertical dimension. Horizontal collectivism can embrace interdependence and the power of equality simultaneously. It promotes communication and socialization both within the group members and within the individuals, which is considered as crucial to sharing a common goal or vision. Horizontal collectivists put great importance on the wellbeing of other individuals. However, they feel that they are less likely to subordinate group goals (Scott et al., 2004). Individuals in vertical collectivism prioritize society's or a group's goals. Thus, group success is viewed as more important than individual success, because for all members the integrity of the group is of upmost importance. In vertical collectivism, individuals are expected to obey the rules as a result of a high level of hierarchy. In addition, vertical collectivists put more importance on group cohesion, an individuals' emotional world can be less important. Due to those stated reasons, horizontal collectivists are expected to be higher in emotional intelligence than vertical individualists. Individualism in general is associated with lower levels of emotional intelligence (Scott et al., 2004). In horizontal individualism, individuals perceive themselves as equal to others, and autonomy and independence are important patterns. Vertical individualism has patterns including freedom and autonomy; however, inequality is a part of this cultural pattern as well. Vertical individualists are high in competitiveness and want to be different from others (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis, 1999). Therefore, expatriates high in horizontal individualism can be better at regulating their own emotions, and also good at understanding others' emotions as they support equality. In addition, as expatriates high in vertical individualism can be highly competitive and they can be low in their emotional regulation and understanding of others.

In light of the literature, the hypotheses below have been developed.

H1: Horizontal Collectivism has a greater positive significant effect on emotional intelligence than vertical collectivism.

H2: Horizontal Individualism has a greater positive significant effect on emotional intelligence than vertical individualism.

Culture and Conflict Resolution Strategies

Conflict refers to "*a perceived or real incompatibility of values, expectations, processes or outcomes between one or more parties in practical and/or relational issues*" [Ting-Toomey, (1994), p. 360]. Conflicts are considered as the inevitable parts of human relationships, they can be quite constructive if managed in the right manner, otherwise; their results can be destructive (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Dreu et al., 2001). Conflicts can be detrimental to psychological wellbeing of expatriates, which in turn, affects expatriate adaptation (Hammer, 1987; Hammer et al., 1978). Conflict resolution refers to: "*the process used by parties in conflict to reach a settlement*" [Sweeney & Carruthers, (1996), p. 328], and conflict resolution strategies are the types of behaviours that individuals prefer in a disagreement or dispute (Posthuma et al., 2006). The contingency perspective of conflict states that the structure of conflict, whether it is constructive or destructive, depends on how the conflict is handled by an individual, in such a way, that utilizes conflict resolution strategies (Chen et al., 2005; 2012; Lovelace et al., 2001; Rahim, 2002). In an interpersonal conflict, individuals have two motivations: "*concern for self*" and "*concern for others*" (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Rahim, 1983, 2002; Thomas, 1992). "Concern for self" is related to achieving one's own goals, whereas "concern for others" is related to maintaining interpersonal relationships. Individuals can engage in different strategies of conflict resolution in an interpersonal conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979). These strategies are: *compromising, smoothing, forcing, confronting, and avoiding*. Rahim and Bonoma (1979) assert that each strategy is the reflection of the extent of concern for self and concern for others.

In *forcing behaviours*, an individual can claim his own view by competition and power, as there is a high concern for self, and low concern for others (Rahim, 2002). Individuals engaging this strategy are apt to do everything to reach their own goals by ignoring the interests of others and hope to convince others to accept their perspectives (Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Zhang et al., 2015). In *confronting behaviours*, parties in conflict try to overcome the situation by facing the problem directly in a collaborative manner to solve the problem and reach a consensus, which is considered to be the most effective manner in

conflict resolution (Gross & Guerrero, 2000). This strategy encourages parties to solve problems by sharing their opinions and feelings, by exchanging information to achieve a maximum level of mutual benefits and to be more open to each other (Rahim et al., 2000; 2002; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Yu et al., 2006). In *smoothing strategy*, individuals try to solve the issue by downplaying the differences (Dallinger & Hample, 1995) as there is little concern for self and high concern for others. Individuals with smoothing strategy are unwilling to express their own needs and goals but they are apt to put importance on others' needs (Chen et al., 2012; Rahim, 2002). Avoiding strategy is also referred to as *withdrawal* or *ignoring strategy*, in which, individuals have a tendency to postpone a problem or withdraw from a conflict as they are unwilling to become involved in any discussion over a conflict and show low concern for self and others (Rahim et al., 2000; Song et al., 2006). In *compromising*, parties are ready to find a solution that will serve for each parties' interest (Kim & Coleman, 2015). Compromising strategy indicates a moderate level "concern for self" and "concern for others", therefore, modest interest in achieving a mutually acceptable solution for both parties (Montes et al., 2012). It is regarded as a cooperative strategy to handle conflict (Rahim, 1983; Song et al., 2006). Confronting and compromising strategies are considered to make a contribution to mutual exchange and openness between individuals. Which in turn, provides developing beneficial solutions, whereas, forcing and avoiding strategies may lead to frustration of communication and fail to reach unfulfilling solutions (Chen et al., 2012). In the literature, confronting and smoothing strategies are found as constructive, while forcing and avoiding are viewed as destructive conflict behaviours (Song et al., 2006). Constructive conflict resolution strategies can facilitate expatriate cultural adjustment as those strategies focus on understanding the counterpart's culture (Black, 1990). By engaging in constructive strategies, expatriates can understand and observe the appropriate behaviours of the host country culture that provides them the cultural adjustment. Those strategic changes are important for expatriates in order to avoid negative experiences that can hinder their adjustment process. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) assert that culture encompasses traditional beliefs, values, and norms. Individuals can observe or experience the consequences of specific behaviours or attitudes in their cultural environment. According to those consequences, they can formulate their understanding of their environment (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). Thus, culture can shape how individuals perceive and react, and it provides individuals with a comprehensive understanding of the results of actions or behaviours in a given situation (Hofstede, 1984). Conflict resolution strategies can be related to the interpretation of a behaviour in a given situation, which originated within that culture (Ross, 1993; Kazan, 1997). In the literature, the preferences for conflict resolution strategies are considered to be culturally grounded (Gunkel et al., 2016; Holt & DeVore, 2005; Kim et al., 2007; Rahim & Blum, 1994; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991; Wang et al., 2005).

Horizontal/Vertical Collectivism- Conflict Resolution Strategies

Cultural values of individualism, collectivism, and power distance have been the most analysed dimensions in the context of conflict resolution strategies (Gunkel et al., 2016). However, those relationships show inconsistencies in the literature. According to Kaushal and Kwantes (2006), those consistencies can be attributed to the level of hierarchy that both individualistic and collectivistic cultural orientations hold. In this sense, depending on the level of hierarchy, there can be differences among the conflict resolution strategies preferred between the Horizontal and Vertical dimensions of each cultural orientation.

Vertical collectivism reflects interdependent relationships, where people view themselves differently than others and there is no equality within the group members, due to high level of power distance (Boroş et al., 2010; Komarajju & Cokley, 2008; Shavitt & Cho, 2016; Vargas & Kimmelmeier, 2013). Individuals may prefer conflict resolution strategies that can reduce the unfavourable outcomes for the group's interests. In addition, as the harmony of the group is important, strategies like smoothing or avoiding can be preferred by individuals to maintain harmony (Ma et al., 2010). Moreover, if they think the results will be in favour of the group's interests, they can sacrifice their own needs and wants. Since power distance is high in this dimension, individuals can use forcing strategy, depending on their power or authority, in order to achieve the group's goals. Although vertical collectivists want to be the best among the others, they use group functioning as a means to achieve this end (Boroş et al., 2010). Thus, they can be willing to utilize confronting strategies to simultaneously achieve both individual and group's goals (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). Some authors view compromising strategy as a confronting strategy (Pruitt & Kim, 2004). Further, since vertical collectivists can feel highly subordinate to their groups, they can integrate different perspectives to satisfy both individual and group needs and they can sacrifice their needs for the group's interests (Ma et al., 2010). Therefore, individuals in vertical collectivistic cultures may prefer compromising and confronting strategy. Horizontal collectivists emphasize equality (Choiu, 2001; Komarajju & Cokley, 2008; Shavitt & Cho, 2016; Vargas & Kimmelmeier, 2013). In this vein, those individuals high in horizontal collectivism may not prefer forcing or avoiding strategy and engage more in

compromising, smoothing, and confronting strategy as individuals feel themselves still interdependent (Komarajju et al., 2008).

In accordance with the literature, hypotheses based on the effect of culture on conflict resolution strategies are as follows:

H3: Vertical Collectivism is positively related to avoiding (I), forcing (II), smoothing (III), compromising (IV) and confronting (V) conflict resolution strategies.

H4: Horizontal Collectivism is negatively related to avoiding (II) and forcing (I) strategies, whereas, it is positively related to smoothing (III), compromising strategies (IV), and confronting (V) strategies.

Individualism encourages people to put emphasis on personal needs and goals (Komarajju et al., 2008). Therefore, both the vertical and horizontal aspects of individualism may prefer forcing strategy and not avoiding strategy. In vertical individualism, since people are motivated to compete with others, be the best one among their peers, and to have higher status (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998), they may not prefer smoothing or compromising in which an individual can sacrifice personal needs for others. However, they can engage in confronting strategy to achieve their personal goals. On the contrary, for horizontal individualists equality is important (Probst et al., 1999; Singelis et al. 1995). Thus, expatriates display horizontal individualism can prefer smoothing, compromising, and confronting strategy as it can be important for them to satisfy the counterparts' needs. Based on the discussion above, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H5: Vertical individualism is positively related to confronting (V) and forcing (II) strategy whereas negatively related to avoiding (I), smoothing (III) and compromising (IV) strategy.

H6: Horizontal individualism is positively related to smoothing (III), compromising (IV), and confronting strategy (V) and negatively related to forcing (II) and avoiding (V) strategy.

Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution Strategies

In the literature, the effect of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution strategies has received much attention (Gunkel et al., 2016; Jordan & Troth, 2002; 2004; Morrison, 2008; Rahim et al., 2002; Schlaerth et al., 2013; Shih & Susanto, 2010). Effective and constructive conflict resolution strategies depend mostly on the individual's abilities (Jordan & Troth, 2002). Emotional intelligence plays an important role in conflict resolution strategies (Jordan & Troth, 2004). Constructive conflict resolution strategies may require compromising of needs, and downplaying the differences, both of which require the ability to understand and regulate emotions (Schlaerth et al., 2013). Jordan and Troth (2004) assert that individuals who are low in emotional intelligence engage in avoiding and forcing strategies, as their ability to monitor emotions are low. Individuals who are high in emotional intelligence have a tendency to prefer confronting, smoothing, or compromising strategies (Goleman, 1998). Emotionally intelligent people show respect, not only to their own but also others' emotions. In this regard, they do not ignore the others' interests, in the event of any conflict. Furthermore, Zhang et al. (2015) assert that individuals high in emotional intelligence prefer constructive or cooperative strategies to reach a solution, where both parts can satisfy their needs. Therefore, it can be proposed that people who have the ability to monitor emotions and show consideration to others' interests, are likely to engage in smoothing, confronting and compromising strategies (Shih & Susanto, 2010; Zhang et al., 2015). In contrast, people low in emotional intelligence can prefer forcing and avoiding (Gunkel et al., 2016; Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006; Morrison, 2008). In addition, Schlaerth et al. (2013) found that individuals high in emotional intelligence are apt to monitor conflicts in a constructive and productive manner.

Therefore, these hypotheses were developed as follows:

H7: Emotional Intelligence is negatively related to avoiding (I) and forcing strategy (II) and positively related to confronting (V), compromising (IV) and smoothing (III) strategy.

Accordingly, emotional intelligence plays a mediator role on the relationship between cultural orientations and conflict resolution strategies. Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between vertical collectivism and the five conflict resolution strategies (**Hypothesis 8**, avoiding(I), forcing (II), smoothing(III), compromising(IV) and confronting (V) ,between

horizontal collectivism and the five conflict resolution strategies (**Hypothesis 9**, avoiding(I), forcing (II), smoothing(III), compromising(IV) and confronting (V)), between vertical individualism and the five conflict resolution strategies (**Hypothesis 10**, avoiding(I), forcing (II), smoothing(III), compromising(IV) and confronting (V)), between horizontal individualism and the five conflict resolution strategies (**Hypothesis 11**, avoiding(I), forcing (II), smoothing(III), compromising(IV) and confronting (V)). The conceptual model is indicated in Figure 1.

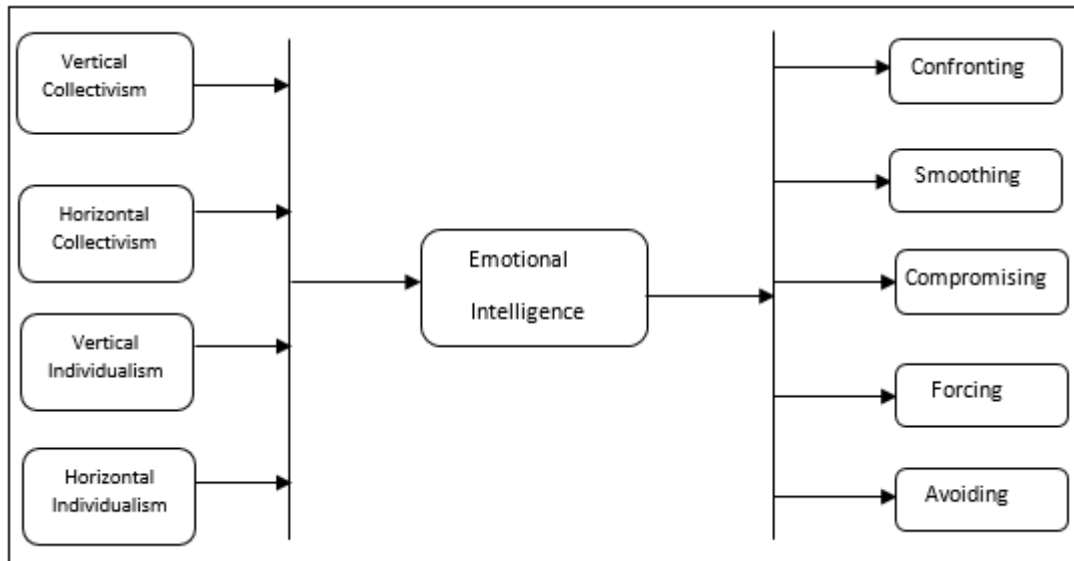


Figure 1:
The Theoretical Framework

Methodology

Sample and Data Collection

In order to test the hypothesized relationships in the conceptual model, data is collected from expatriates who work in different positions in international organizations or companies, state and private universities, and colleges located in Izmir and Istanbul where majority of the expatriates live in Turkey. In this study, convenience sampling method is utilized and in data collection process, both online and face-to face surveys were carried out. The survey was administered in an eight-month period. The number of participants reached is 247 and 226 of them were available to include to the analysis. The nationalities of the expatriates vary; however, 13 participants did not identify their nationalities in the online survey and there are 30 different nationalities in total. In Table 1, demographic characteristics of the participants are indicated. The demographic characteristics of the study show that 58% (131) of the sample is composed of women and 42% (95) of it is composed of men. While 120 of the participants are single, 106 of them are married. For family accompaniment, 21 participants did not want to reveal whether they live with their family or not. 48 of the expatriates have family accompaniment while the rest do not have. Expatriates' average age is 35.6. Majority of the participants' education level is college and university graduates (143) and post-graduates (77) and the rest of the participants (6) did not state their level of education. The surveys were carried out in English. Contribution to the study was kept voluntary and the participants were assured with the confidentiality of the information they provided. The ethics committee approval for this study was obtained from Yaşar University Ethics Committee with the approval number 81715. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants who participated in the study.

Table 1.
Demographics

	Frequency Percentage	& Nationality	Frequency & Percentage
Gender			
Male	95 (42%)	Non-Response	13 (5.7%)
Female	131 (58%)	American	40 (17.7%)
Education			
Graduate	143 (63%)	Bulgarian	4 (1.7%)
Post-Graduate	77 (34%)	Danish	4 (1.7%)
Non-Response	6 (3%)	Russian	15 (6.6%)
Age			
Below 30	93 (41.2%)	Polish	4 (1.7%)
30-40 Years	67 (29.6%)	Spanish	5 (2.2%)
Over 40 Years	62 (27.4%)	Lebanese	4 (1.7%)
Non-Response	4 (1.8%)	German	8 (3.5%)
		Australian	3 (1.3%)
		Tunisian	4 (1.7%)
		Puerto Rican	1 (0.4%)
		Iranian	34 (15%)
		Colombian	3 (1.3%)
		Azerbaijani	5 (2.2%)
		Romania	1 (0.4%)
		Canadian	2 (0.8%)
		Greek	1 (0.4%)
		South African	3 (1.3%)
		Ukraine	1 (0.44%)
		French	3 (1.3%)
		Irish	3 (1.3%)
		Norwegian	2 (0.8%)
		Pakistani	6 (2.6%)
		Vietnamese	1 (0.4%)
		Filipino	3 (1.3%)
		Italian	9 (4%)
		Bosnian	6 (2.6%)
		Brazilian	2 (0.8%)
		British	27 (12%)
		Albanian	9 (4%)
		Total	226

Measurement

Culture: The cultural value dimensions are measured at the individual level by operationalizing the 16-item scale by Triandis and Gelfand (1998) as this study focuses on individual attitudes or behaviours. In addition, an individual's cultural values can be different from the national level cultural values (Yoo et al., 2011) and due to the high level of globalization, cultural values can change. Thus, cultural values are measured at the individual level under four dimensions, those are: Vertical Collectivism, Horizontal Collectivism, Vertical Individualism and Horizontal Individualism; each of these are assessed by four items. The 5-likert response scale is used for all cultural dimensions that ranges from 1 (Completely Disagree) to 5 (Completely Agree). The Vertical Collectivism ($\alpha = .71$, AVE = .52, CR = .80) is composed of four items (e.g.: Parents and children must stay together as much as possible.). All the items' factor loadings are higher than .5 and significant. The Horizontal Collectivism ($\alpha = .69$, AVE = .52, CR = .81) is measured by four items (e.g.: If a co-worker gets a prize, I would feel proud.). The Horizontal Individualism ($\alpha = .70$, AVE = .52, CR = .81) is assessed by four items (e.g.: I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others.). The Vertical Individualism ($\alpha = .71$, AVE = .52, CR = .80) is evaluated by four items (e.g.: Winning is everything.).

Emotional Intelligence: Emotional Intelligence ($\alpha = .91$, AVE = .43, CR = .92) is measured with the scale by Wong and Law (2002), which is composed of 16 items (e.g.: I have good control of my own emotions, I am a self-motivated person.). The 5-likert response scale is used to measure emotional intelligence that ranges from 1 (Completely Disagree) to 5 (Completely Agree).

Conflict Resolution Strategies: The Conflict Resolution Strategies are operationalized with the scale by Howat and London (1980), the scale was used to measure typical behaviours of expatriates when they resolve a conflict in the workplace on a 5-point scale (1 = never to 5 = always) under five dimensions confronting ($\alpha = .81$, AVE = .57, CR = .86) (e.g.: I confront the issue openly), forcing ($\alpha = .72$, AVE = .50, CR = .79), compromising ($\alpha = .75$, AVE = .57, CR = .84) (e.g.: I try to find a compromise.), avoiding ($\alpha = .61$, AVE = .54, CR = .77) (e.g.: I refrain from the argument.), and smoothing ($\alpha = .69$, AVE = .51, CR = .80) (e.g.: I play down our differences).

Analytical Process

In this study, PLS-SEM is used to measure the high number of constructs and to test the developed hypotheses. PLS path modelling was used to assess the conceptual model by using the software program SmartPLS (Ringe et al., 2015). PLS-SEM provides researchers with a tool to measure complex models (Hair et al., 2016).

Measurement Model

Reliability values of the constructs are higher than .70, except that of smoothing and withdrawing which indicated adequate levels (Clark & Watson, 1995; Nunnally, 1982). Convergent validity of the scales were assessed through the factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted values (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Some items were removed from the scales, as their t-values were not significant and lower than .50, and their deletion made for an improvement in composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted values (Hair et al., 2016). From compromising, smoothing, and forcing scales, 1 item was removed, while 2 items were removed from withdrawing scale. The rest of the factor loadings were significant and higher than .50. All the average variance extracted (AVE) values were higher than .50, except that of emotional intelligence, showing that convergent validity is not a problem for this study (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In addition, composite reliabilities of all constructs are higher than .70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2016). The requirements for discriminant validity are fully met; the values of the square root of the AVE are greater than the correlations between each construct (Chin, 1998; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2016) (see Table 2). In addition, the degree of multicollinearity between the variables is not a problem for this study as the variance inflation factor (VIF) values are lower than 5 for all the variables and factors (Henseler et al., 2010). In addition, as all the VIF values are lower than 3.3, common method bias is not a problem for this study (Kock, 2015). Reliability, composite reliability, and average variance extracted values are shown in Table 3.

Table 2:
Discriminant Validity Assessment

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1) Vertical Individualism	0.722									
2) Vertical Collectivism	0.312	0.721								
3) Emotional Intelligence	0.270	0.455								
4) Confrontation	0.259	0.167	0.653							
5) Avoiding	-0.127	0.022	0.412	0.757						
6) Smoothing	0.033	0.145	-0.117	-0.384	0.735					
7) Confronting	-0.039	0.247	0.446	0.533	-0.143	0.719				
8) Horizontal Individualism	0.293	0.237	0.452	0.456	-0.016	0.644	0.759			
9) Horizontal Collectivism	0.057	0.490	0.427	0.372	-0.069	0.262	0.315	0.722		
10) Forcing	0.182	0.000	0.565	0.263	-0.035	0.364	0.409	0.401	0.719	
			-0.196	0.107	0.115	-0.035	-0.145	-0.075	-0.158	0.705

Table 3.
Reliability and Validity of Constructs

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE	Mean	S. Deviation
1. Vertical Collectivism	1. Parents and children must stay together as much as possible. 2. It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want. 3. Family members should stick together, no matter what sacrifices are required. 4. It is important to me that I respect the decisions made by my groups.	0.671 0.802 0.694 0.711	0.71	0.80	0.52	3.595	.811
2. Horizontal Collectivism	1. If a co-worker gets a prize, I would feel proud. 2. The well-being of my co-workers is important to me. 3. To me, pleasure is spending time with others. 4. I feel good when I cooperate with others.	0.778 0.765 0.558 0.753	0.69	0.81	0.51	3.958	.646
3. Horizontal Individualism	1. I'd rather depend on myself than others. 2. I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others. 3. I often do "my own thing." 4. My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me.	0.693 0.749 0.672 0.768	0.70	0.81	0.52	4.001	.742
4. Vertical Individualism	1. It is important that I do my job better than others. 2. Winning is everything. 3. Competition is the law of nature. 4. When another person does better than I do, I get tense and aroused.	0.695 0.850 0.775 0.529	0.71	0.80	0.52	2.830	.850
5. Avoiding	1. I give in easily. 2. I withdraw from the situation. 3. I ignore the conflict.	0.863 0.545 0.760	0.61	0.77	0.54	2.561	.890
6. Forcing	1. I force my acceptance of my point of view. 2. I insist on one solution. 3. I demand to get my way. 4. I impose my solution.	0.598 0.883 0.550 0.739	0.72	0.79	0.50	2.327	.862
7. Compromising	1. I try to find a compromise. 2. I search for an intermediate position. 3. I am willing to give and take. 4. I take both sides of the issue into account.	0.793 0.617 0.833 0.774	0.75	0.84	0.57	4.112	.731
8. Smoothing	1. I emphasize common interests. 2. I stress our differences are less important than our common goals. 3. I try to smooth over our differences. 4. I act as though our common goals are of prime importance.	0.798 0.762 0.714 0.585	0.69	0.80	0.51	3.918	.729
9. Confronting	1. I bring the problem clearly into the open and carry it out into solution. 2. I confront the issue openly. 3. I do not drop the issue until it is resolved. 4. I face the conflict directly. 5. I clearly express a point of view.	0.798 0.802 0.532 0.823 0.788	0.81	0.86	0.57	3.826	.806
10. Emotional Intelligence	1. I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time. 2. I have good understanding of my own emotions. 3. I really understand what I feel. 4. I always know whether or not I am happy. 5. I always know my friends' emotions from their behaviour. 6. I am a good observer of others' emotions. 7. I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others. 8. I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me. 9. I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them. 10. I always tell myself I am a competent person. 11. I am a self-motivating person. 12. I would always encourage myself to try my best. 13. I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally. 14. I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions. 15. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry. 16. I have good control of my own emotions.	0.739 0.791 0.789 0.748 0.630 0.598 0.543 0.669 0.619 0.629 0.628 0.682 0.606 0.573 0.490 0.629	0.91	0.92	0.43	3.774	.654

Structural Model

The structural model can be tested, as there is no collinearity problem. R² values indicate a good data fit. The R² value of the Emotional Intelligence is 0.42, which indicates that cultural values have the power to explain the 42% variance in emotional intelligence. Cohen (1992) outlines the R² values of the constructs: compromising (0.205), smoothing (0.20), confronting (0.17), forcing (0.038), avoiding (0.014) as small; and emotional intelligence (0.42) as large. In addition, Q² values indicate the predictive power of the model (Geisser, 1974). Q² value is calculated by using blindfolding procedure (Hair et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2010). All the Q² values are higher than 0, except that of avoiding, that also indicates the predictive power of the model. Q² values are: emotional intelligence (0.160), confronting (0.089), smoothing (0.09), compromising

(0.106), forcing (0.011), and avoiding (0.003). As can be seen the predictive power of emotional intelligence is low on forcing and avoiding. In addition, the results show that the largest effect size in our conceptual model is the relationship between emotional intelligence and compromising ($f^2 = 0.257$). The lowest effect size belongs to the relationship between emotional intelligence and avoiding ($f^2 = 0.014$). In this sense, the effect sizes of the exogenous latent variables are varying between small and large effects (Cohen, 1988).

Hypotheses Testing

In order to test the hypotheses, their path coefficients and their related t values are evaluated. As it can be seen in Table 5, all the cultural values have a significant and positive effect on emotional intelligence. While the effect of horizontal collectivism on emotional intelligence is $\beta = (0.399, p < .01)$, the effect of vertical collectivism is $(\beta = 0.171, p < .01)$. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported, as the effect of horizontal collectivism is higher than vertical collectivism. The second hypothesis is supported as well since the effect of horizontal individualism on emotional intelligence ($\beta = 0.184, p < .01$) is higher than the effect of vertical individualism ($\beta = 0.140, p < .01$). The effect of vertical collectivism on each of the conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = 0.140, p < .05$), forcing ($\beta = 0.061, p > .05$), smoothing ($\beta = -0.018, p > .05$), compromising ($\beta = 0.125, p < .05$), and confronting ($\beta = -0.038, p > .05$). Therefore, we fail to support hypotheses 3 (I, II, III, and V) and hypothesis 3 (VI) is supported. The effect of horizontal collectivism on each of the conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.051, p > .05$), forcing ($\beta = -0.214, p < .05$), smoothing ($\beta = 0.308, p < .01$), compromising ($\beta = 0.261, p < .01$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.156, p < .05$); and accordingly, except hypothesis 4 (I), the rest of the hypotheses are supported. The effect of vertical individualism on each of the following conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.162, p < .05$), forcing ($\beta = 0.251, p < .01$), smoothing ($\beta = -0.054, p > .05$), compromising ($\beta = -0.169, p < .05$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.169, p < .05$). Thus, while hypothesis 5 (III) is rejected, the rest of the hypotheses are supported. The effect of horizontal individualism on each of the following conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.070, p > .05$), forcing ($\beta = 0.063, p > .05$), smoothing ($\beta = 0.167, p < .05$), compromising ($\beta = 0.229, p < .01$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.301, p < .01$). Thus, except hypotheses 6 (I and II) the rest of the hypotheses are supported. The effect of emotional intelligence on each of the following conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.119, p > .05$), forcing ($\beta = -0.196, p < .01$), smoothing ($\beta = 0.446, p < .01$), compromising ($\beta = 0.458, p < .01$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.413, p < .01$); accordingly, we cannot support hypothesis 7 (I) and the rest of the hypotheses are supported.

In order to test the mediation hypotheses, we followed the process used by Hair et al. (2016) and Preacher and Hayes (2004), recommended and bootstrapping is used to assess the indirect effects. The results of the bootstrapping indicate that the indirect effect of vertical collectivism on each of the conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.021, p > .05$), forcing ($\beta = -0.034, p > .05$), smoothing ($\beta = 0.077, p < .05$), compromising ($\beta = 0.079, p < .05$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.071, p < .05$). Therefore, while hypotheses 8 (I and II) are rejected the rest of the hypothesis are supported. The indirect effect of horizontal collectivism on the conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.046, p > .05$), forcing ($\beta = -0.076, p < .01$), smoothing ($\beta = 0.171, p < .001$), compromising ($\beta = 0.176, p < .001$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.158, p < .05$); and accordingly, except hypothesis 9 (I), the rest of the hypotheses are supported. The indirect effect of vertical individualism on the conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.018, p > .05$), forcing ($\beta = -0.030, p > .05$), smoothing ($\beta = 0.066, p < .05$), compromising ($\beta = 0.068, p < .05$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.062, p < .05$). Thus, while hypotheses 10 (I and II) are rejected, the rest of the hypotheses are supported. The indirect effect of horizontal individualism on the conflict resolution strategies is as follows: avoiding ($\beta = -0.021, p > .05$), forcing ($\beta = 0.036, p < .05$), smoothing ($\beta = 0.080, p < .001$), compromising ($\beta = 0.083, p < .001$), and confronting ($\beta = 0.074, p < .001$). Thus, except hypothesis 10 (I), the rest of the hypotheses are supported. A summary of the mediation analysis can be seen in Table 4 and the path coefficients are indicated in Figure 2.

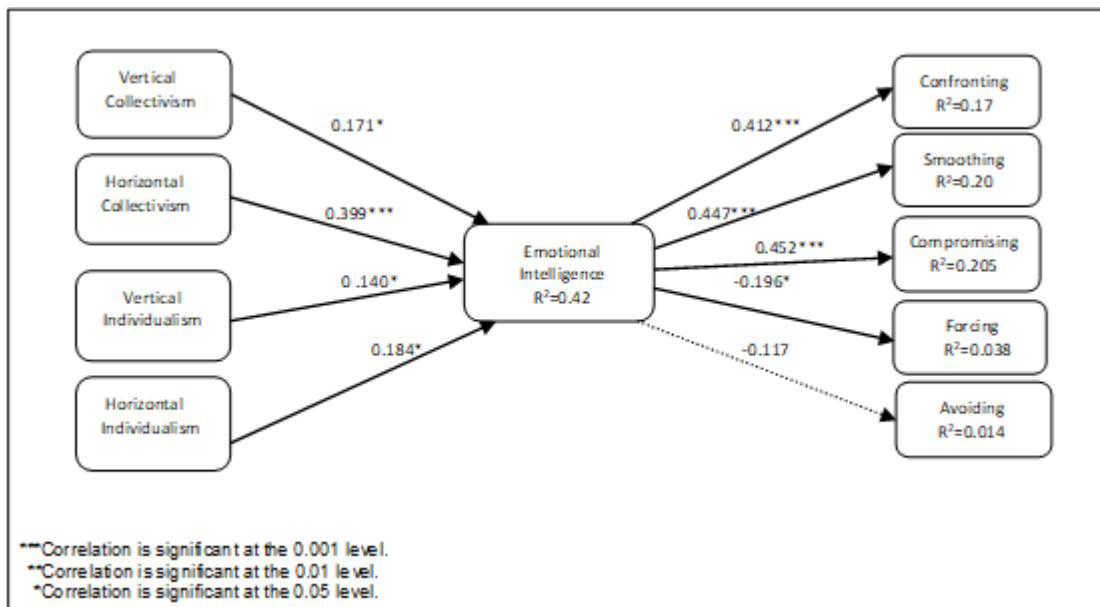


Figure 2:
Summary of Findings

The results show that emotional intelligence mediates the relationships between vertical collectivism and smoothing, compromising, and confronting; the relationship between horizontal collectivism and forcing, smoothing, compromising and confronting; and the relationship between vertical individualism and smoothing, compromising, and confronting; and also, the relationship between horizontal individualism and forcing, smoothing, compromising, and confronting. The level of mediation is determined by the method recommended by Hair et al. (2016). According to Hair et al. (2016), if the direct effect and indirect effect are both significant, then the mediation is partial and if the direct effect is not significant and the indirect effect is significant, there is a full mediation. In this vein, emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between vertical collectivism and smoothing (full), compromising (partial), and confronting (full). In addition, emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between horizontal collectivism, and all conflict resolution strategies partially, except avoiding strategy. Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between horizontal individualism and forcing (full), smoothing (partial), compromising (partial), and confronting (partial) strategies. Lastly, emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between vertical individualism and smoothing (full), compromising (partial), and confronting (partial) strategies.

Table 4:

Summary of the Mediation Analysis

Relationship (Specific Indirect Effects)	Hypothesis	Indirect Effect	p value	Confidence Interval	Mediation
VC→EI→Avoiding	H8 (I)	-0.021	.298	(-0.052 to 0.034)	No mediation
VC→EI→Forcing	H8 (II)	-0.034	.057	(-0.069 to 0.002)	No mediation
VC→EI→Smoothing	H8 (III)	0.077*	.019	(0.012 to 0.141)	Full Mediation
VC→EI→Compromising	H8 (IV)	0.079*	.028	(0.014 to 0.158)	Partial Mediation
VC→EI→Confronting	H8 (V)	0.071*	.020	(0.012 to 0.134)	Full Mediation
HC→EI→Avoiding	H9 (I)	-0.046	.247	(-0.096 to 0.070)	No Mediation
HC→EI→Forcing	H9 (II)	-0.076*	.007	(-0.121 to -0.014)	Partial Mediation
HC→EI→Smoothing	H9 (III)	0.171*	.000	(0.087 to 0.268)	Partial Mediation
HC→EI→Compromising	H9 (IV)	0.176*	.000	(0.092 to 0.289)	Partial Mediation
HC→EI→Confronting	H9 (V)	0.158*	.000	(0.090 to 0.241)	Partial Mediation
HI→EI→Avoiding	H10 (I)	-0.021	.282	(-0.049 to 0.039)	No Mediation
HI→EI→Forcing	H10 (II)	-0.036*	.045	(-0.069 to -0.004)	Full Mediation
HI→EI→Smoothing	H10 (III)	0.080*	.005	(0.024 to 0.137)	Partial Mediation
HI→EI→Compromising	H10 (IV)	0.083*	.010	(0.026 to 0.151)	Partial Mediation
HI→EI→Confronting	H10 (V)	0.079*	.009	(0.030 to 0.142)	Partial Mediation
VI→EI→Avoiding	H11 (I)	-0.018*	.337	(-0.045 to 0.032)	No Mediation
VI→EI→Forcing	H11 (II)	-0.030	.060	(-0.057 to -0.003)	No Mediation
VI→EI→Smoothing	H11 (III)	0.066*	.023	(0.007 to 0.123)	Full Mediation
VI→EI→Compromising	H11 (IV)	0.068*	.019	(0.010 to 0.134)	Partial Mediation
VI→EI→Confronting	H11 (V)	0.062*	.020	(0.014 to 0.117)	Partial Mediation
Note: 5000 sample bootstrap samples, 2.5 % to 97.5% bias corrected intervals are showed in parentheses.					

Discussion

Within globalization and the increase in the usage of technology, the borders between countries have disappeared. Internationalization of the business has increased as well. The greater number of global or international companies have resulted with cultural and multinational diversity in the workforce. There are many people living and working as expatriates all over the world. Thus, this has brought up the issue of managing cultural and multinational diverse workforce. Even though diverse workforce has many advantages for the companies, it could create conflicts within the organizations (Colquitt et al., 2011; Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000; Robbins & Judge, 2013). Conflict resolution strategies are of upmost importance as they are an important part of our daily lives, especially since cultural diversity is inevitable in today's globalized world. Highly diversified workplaces can boost performance, economic outcomes, innovation, and creativity (Ely, 2004; Rodriguez, 1998), however, conflicts can arise by cultural differences.

Mostly, studies focus on the impact of culture on organizations by taking culture at national level especially using Hofstede's dimensions. Even though Hofstede's dimensions are very beneficial to comprehend the cultural features of the nations, individual cultural orientations can vary thus it is crucial to understand cultural orientations at the individual level. In order to analyse the effect of culture at the individual level, Triandis' scale is utilized. In this study, culture is operationalized at the individual level, which has been collected from expatriates of different nationalities and it is found that expatriates high in horizontal collectivism display the highest effect on emotional intelligence among the expatriates of other cultural dimensions, which indicates that expatriates displaying horizontal collectivism are higher in emotional intelligence compared to others. In addition, the largest effect size belongs to the relationship between emotional intelligence and compromising ($f^2 = 0.257$). Emotional intelligence explains the 20% of the variance in compromising ($R^2 = 0.20$). While expatriates displaying vertical collectivism prefer avoiding and compromising styles, the ones high in horizontal collectivism favour smoothing, compromising, and confronting strategies, rather than forcing. Vertical individualism predicts forcing and confronting (positively) and determines avoiding and compromising (negatively). Horizontal individualism predicts smoothing, compromising, and confronting. In addition, this study unveils the role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between cultural dimensions and conflict resolution styles. Previous studies focus on the mediation effect of emotional intelligence between cultural dimensions and conflict resolution strategies by operationalizing Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Gunkel et al., 2016). However, it should also be noted that studies focusing on an integrative perspective of the interrelations between cultural dimensions, emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies in the context of expatriation are rare. For organizations, uncovering the required multicultural skills is important for both individual and organizational effectiveness. The mediation effects show the power of culture on conflict resolution strategies through emotional intelligence. Another contribution is made to the existing literature by analysing the direct effects of cultural dimensions at individual level to emotional intelligence. Through this wholistic perspective to the interrelations between cultural dimensions, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution strategies; this study provides a better understanding of the role of cultural dimensions on conflict resolution strategies and emotional intelligence, which highlights the determinant and predictive power of culture compared to the other possible determinants (e.g.: personality). This study sheds light for both academicians and executives since on the impact of culture on conflict management by taking the effect of emotional intelligence into consideration. Conflicts are inevitable both in business and in personal life; therefore, it is crucial for business people and academicians to know how to cope with conflicts in accordance with cultural diversities.

The results of this study are of interest to the highly international organizations that are comprised of diverse workforce. The predictive power of culture on emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies indicates how those constructs can be culturally grounded. Conflicts in highly diversified organizations can improve creativity, performance, and other work-related outcomes. In this vein, organizations can provide cultural orientations for expatriates that can improve their international assignment performance by resolving the conflicts through constructive strategies. Practitioners can take into account the cultural orientations of their international workforce in the recruitment and selection process. Different cultural orientations can require different criteria as their conflict resolution strategies can be culturally grounded (Feitosa et al., 2014; Ramamoorthy & Carroll, 1998) which is crucial for organizations with international workforce. In addition, as culture can be a determinant of emotional intelligence, cultural orientations can enhance expatriates' emotional intelligence. Furthermore, expats high in emotional intelligence are apt to prefer more constructive conflict resolution strategies. Thus, tools to evaluate the level of emotional intelligence can provide organizations to foresee the behaviours of expatriates in any possible conflict emergence and provide them required trainings (Clarke, 2010; Jordan & Truth, 2014). Particularly, during the recruitment process of expatriates, organizations can consider hiring individuals high in emotional intelligence. Understanding the determinants of conflict resolution strategies and analyzing the extent to which emotional intelligence can provide insights into the selection processes of expatriates, and the development of their skill training programs are crucial for expatriate cross-cultural adjustment and better performance achievements.

Limitations & Future Recommendations

Like all studies, this study has some limitations worth mentioning. In this study, control variables were not included to the analysis which can be considered as one of the limitations of this study. Therefore, future studies can consider the role of control variables that can affect those relationships such as, family accompany, education level, or the international experience of the expatriates. In addition, boundary factors in understanding the conflict resolution strategies such as power or position at work can be examined, as this study does not include those factors within its framework. The role of cultural

intelligence between culture and conflict resolution strategies within context of expatriation that can be referred as a recommendation for future studies. Furthermore, English language was used in surveys which can affect the results of the study (Harzing, 2005) which can be mentioned as a methodological limitation. Therefore, future studies can focus on certain countries with their national language. Although this study has some limitations, it highlights how culture at individual level is influential on individual emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies. This wholistic approach provides the insight that through cultural orientations, individuals' both emotional intelligence and preference of conflict resolution strategies can be affected, that shows the importance of cultural orientations for expatriates.

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Ethics Committee Approval: The ethics committee approval for this study was obtained from Yaşar University Ethics Committee with the approval number 81715.

Participant Consent: Written informed consent was obtained from all participants who participated in the study.

Author Contributions: Concept – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Design – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Supervision – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Resources – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Materials – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Data Collection and/or Processing A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Analysis and/or Interpretation – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Literature Search – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Writing Manuscript – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.; Critical Review – A.K.H.- F.D.Z.Ç.

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