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ETHNIC VARIATIONS OF VALUES, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, AND JOB PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF A MULTINATIONAL SUBSIDIARY IN A MULTI-ETHNIC CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between individual and cultural values, emotional intelligence (EI) and job performance across three major ethnic groups in a multinational subsidiary in Malaysia. Multinational subsidiaries in ethnically diverse host country such as Malaysia face increasing challenges of managing high-performance employees. Malaysia has hosted foreign direct investment since the 1970s and presents a unique context to explicate the limited attention of intra-national variations in international management research. The study presents a quantitative analysis of a sample of 156 managers in a multinational subsidiary, examining the association between cultural values, individual values, emotional intelligence and individual level job performance across three major ethnic groups – Malay, Chinese and Indian. Findings from this study have identified several variations in values held individually and the ones practised within a culture. Basically, the link between individual values, emotional intelligence, and job performance is highlighted while at the same time the indication of the idea that emotional intelligence is interconnected to the ethnic groups is provided.

Keywords: Cultural values; Individual values; Emotional intelligence; Ethnic groups; Job performance

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1. INTRODUCTION

Values, either shared within a particular culture, or individually held, define the very essence and core assumptions of how individuals think, behave and make decisions. Values are ingrained in generations of traditions, practices, norms, and socialisation and are common among individuals who identify with the same collective group. This paper argues that culturally defined values and

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individually-held values, as well as emotional intelligence, can differ across ethnic groups, and also influence individual level job performance. We contextualized this study within a multinational subsidiary located in Malaysia, an ethnically diverse country. Malaysia is a plural society, where different ethnic groups live side by side under a single political administration, but still hold different cultural values, core assumptions, beliefs and ethnic identities; and have little social or cultural interaction with the other ethnic groups (Furnivall, 1948).

The study is motivated by several reasons. Firstly, within the Malaysian multicultural context, very limited empirical evidence has appeared to delineate that different ethnic groups hold different values. Several qualitative studies have shown the three major ethnic groups in Malaysia, namely the Malays, Chinese and Indians hold different values, but further empirical evidence is needed to show the relationship governing values. We extend previous studies on values and ethnic groups to include emotional intelligence, and we argue that the values held culturally and individually also influence the ability to manage emotions, and subsequently influence job performance. This study responds to the limited research, particularly in the Malaysian context, on the differences of managerial predictors across ethnic groups. Finally, this study is also motivated by the limited research on job performance predictor at the individual level. We argue that examining the relationship at the same level of analysis provides a more nuanced understanding and implications to the issues at hand.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Values

Values are people's beliefs and opinions that shape their thinking, behaviours, and actions (Rokeach, 1973). They form the 'enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence' (p. 5). Kluckhohn (1951) defined values as the 'conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action' (p. 395). Values form the core of any culture (Hofstede, 1991). While behaviours, actions, practices, and routines are the tangible facets of a culture, values are ingrained deep in the culture, guide people's behaviours at the subconscious level, and serve as the foundation on which humans choose actions among existing alternatives (Trompenaars, 1993).

People who belong to different cultural groups or ethnic identities hold different values and beliefs and develop different value system (Rosario, Carmen & Biagio, 2014). The most fundamental and strongest bind between members of an ethnic group is the sense of shared values and beliefs that allow them to have ethnic identities (Hofstede, 1980; Phinney, 1990). Individuals who belong to an ethnic group feel the importance of being associated with the group (ethnicity salience) and identify with the shared core values and norms (Ting-Toomey, et al., 2000).

Malaysia's population distribution is the result of the country's historical and economic development pre- and post-colonial British era, with the Malays primarily engaged in agricultural activities in the rural areas, the Chinese in the mining and trade sectors in the urban areas, and the Indians located in estate plantations (Noor & Leong, 2013). In the present day, the *Bumiputeras*

make up the biggest ethnic group in the country, or 67.4% of the population while the Chinese, Indians, and Others make up 24.6%, 7.3% and 0.7% of the population respectively (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011). The Malays fall under the category of *Bumiputeras*, or indigenous population to the land.

Values, beliefs, and behaviours that people hold are shaped by years and generations of actions, practices and norms of the members of the society they belong to (Singer, 1987). Several Western-based studies have examined values in the Malaysian context (Hofstede, 1980; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Kennedy, 2002; Trompenaars, 1993) but examined Malaysia as one national culture, and ignored the intra-national variations between different ethnic groups that hold strong and significant ethnic identities. This stream of literature has not considered the multi-ethnicity element of the country and examined people from Malaysia homogenously. Similarly, several studies have examined values in the organisational context in Malaysia, but have focused on one particular ethnic group mostly the Chinese (e.g., Wah, 1993; Ward, Pearson, & Entrekin, 2002) , and Malays (e.g., Harris & Moran, 1979; Tamam, Hassan, & Said, 1996). Perhaps the most comprehensive study compiling the values between different ethnic groups in Malaysia is by Abdullah (2001). Adding to that, Zawawi (2008) concluded that generalisation of values to the whole population in Malaysia is not possible. The author further mentioned that trends of new patterns relating to the choices and the believed implications of these cultural values seemed to emerge among the community members.

Given that the mainstream literature on values and ethnic groups mainly considered the Malaysian context as having universal values and beliefs despite the multi-ethnic population, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1a: Cultural values are different across ethnic groups.

Goldstein and Leopold (1990) advocated that the role and importance of ethnic roots and origins are discounted and disregarded when individual values are not considered alongside their ethnic background. Singer (1987) argued that continuous development based on ethnic roots affects people's personal attitudes and behaviours, and individual's uniqueness is discounted if these roots are not accounted for (Goldstein & Leopold, 1990). Values that humans possess are products of socialisation and interaction with members of the same cultural or ethnic group, as well as from unique personal experiences and personalities. While cultural practices, interactions, and socialisation within the same members of the ethnic group teach us the values associated with that particular group, interaction and socialisation with members outside the ethnic group, our own unique personalities and outlook in life, and life experiences may expose humans to values outside their ethnic groups. While Malaysia struggles to define a national 'culture' encompassing practices and values shared among her people regardless of ethnic backgrounds and religious affiliations, variations in terms of ingrained values and closely-held beliefs of members of different ethnic backgrounds of the diverse country still exist. This study acknowledges and seriously considers intra-national variation (Au, 2000; Realo & Allik, 2002) and examines the values held by individuals belonging to different ethnic backgrounds. This study removes the convenience of considering one national culture currently practiced by cross-cultural research in psychology and international management and attempts to explain variations of values of three major ethnic groups in Malaysia. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1b: Individual values are different across ethnic groups.

Apart from shared and learned values through socialisation process, humans acquire their values from their genetic makeup, unique attitudes and personality qualities (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998) and personal life experiences (Schwartz, 1999). Individuals may hold values that are different from those of the members of their cultural or ethnic group due to their life experiences and other factors, but they may feel guilty if they do not display culturally shared values (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). Schwartz (1999) and Meglino and Ravlin (1998) contend that values are products of shared and social experiences as well as individually-specific personalities and experiences. The practice that cultural studies (Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1999) aggregate individual values to measure cultural values also show the interrelatedness nature of individually-held values and culturally shared values. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1c: Individual values are related to cultural values.

2.2. Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence was introduced by Goleman (1996) and is often said to be a relatively new concept that treats emotional awareness and understanding as people's key abilities (Ogilvie & Carsky, 2002, p. 381). EI's popularity has since increased and more definitions surface. In general, EI is defined as a form of social intelligence that involves a person's ability to perceive and express emotions, to understand and use them, and to manage emotions so as to foster personal growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Emotions are commonly grouped as one of the skills that play an important role in human conditions and as such, influence many aspects of a human's life including judgments, interpersonal relationships and job performance (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Hughes, 2005; Huy, 1999). Despite the attention received by EI, there is still very limited empirical evidence on it (e.g., Bachman, Stein, Campbell, & Sitarenios, 2000; Lam & Kirby, 2002; Tischler, Biberman, & McKeage, 2002), suggesting an under-researched area in the literature.

Emotional intelligence is increasingly recognised as an important personal asset at the workplace as well as in the modern society. Ethnicity plays a crucial role in shaping a person's worldview and self-identity. The values and beliefs ingrained in ethnic identities also play a part in how a person manage his or her emotions. Previous studies (Cherniss, 2000; Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001; Van Rooy, Alonso, & Viswesvaran, 2005), mainly in the North American context, have examined differences in terms of emotional management and intelligence across different ethnic groups and have found conflicting results. Roberts et al. (2001) expressed the urgent need to examine group differences across emotional intelligence, and this paper hypothesises the following:

H2a: Emotional intelligence is different across ethnic groups.

Studies that relate emotional intelligence and culture have been limited. Many have proven some variations of emotional intelligence across different ethnic groups. Ghorbani, Davison, Bing, Watson and Mack (2002) showed subtle differences in terms of processing emotional information between American and Iranian university students. Shipper, Kincaid, Rotondo, and Hoffman (2003) measured EI in terms of interactive versus controlling self-awareness skills. Findings on managers of multinational subsidiaries based in the U.S., the U.K and Malaysia differentiate that

members of low distance culture (the U.S. and the U.K.) associate interactive skills of EI with enhanced work effectiveness, while those from the high distance culture (Malaysia) emphasise on controlling skills. Hispanic and Black Americans have been shown to display higher emotional intelligence compared to Whites (Van Rooy, et al., 2005). Because different ethnic and cultural groups have different values, we extend the argument that both cultural and individual values are associated with emotional intelligence, thus the following hypotheses:

H2b: Cultural values are related to emotional intelligence.
H2c: Individual values are related to emotional intelligence.

2.3. Job Performance

Individual-level job performance in an organisational context is not new. Additional challenges in managing organisational behaviour and performance emerge for multinational companies that operate in multi-cultural and multi-ethnic host countries such as Malaysia. Theories and studies in Western context have mainly considered one particular race or national culture when examining multiracial countries (Harris & Moran, 1979; Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaars, 1993). Firms including multinational companies (MNCs) need to understand that differences exist among their employees to ensure superior job performance. In the context of an ethnically diversified host country such as Malaysia, MNCs' talent management challenges are even greater having to manage employees of various ethnic groups who co-exist in subsidiaries and the country. Furthermore, as Malaysian firms rapidly engage in international business, they also have the urgent need to understand the nuances of their diverse national culture. One primary reason many organisational solutions do not work is that firms and managers fail to understand how employees have different values, thus think, feel and behave differently (Hofstede, 1991). Because employees from different cultures have different sets of values and therefore behave differently, the need to examine how the variations in cultural behaviours and perspectives influence performance at work, is even more important. Awareness and sensitivity to different cultural nuances and beliefs can harness these differences into common bonds of solidarity (Abdullah, 2001). 'Understanding other peoples and developing sensitivity to their ways of life are very crucial to the success of social and business interactions' (Tayeb, 1994). Sidelining employees' values in organisations can result in reduced organisational commitment and decreased level of job performance (Finegan, 2000).

Firms, particularly multinational subsidiaries, must comprehend the dynamics of their ethnically diverse employees to more effectively manage the talents in their firms and subsequently improve their performance at work. Each ethnic group has long-standing traditions, practices, values and religion that shape their worldviews and behaviours in other aspects of life such as success, failure, respect of elderlies, apologies, politeness and emotions. Understanding whether these differences exist can assist firms to manage and improve their employees' performance towards common organisational objectives. A multinational firm operating in a multi-ethnic host country is a platform to fully understand how performance differ across different ethnic groups. There are also debates on converging and diverging cultural values (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002; Ford & Honeycutt Jr, 1992; Hartog, et al., 1997), and within the Malaysian context, this paper provides insights into whether employees in Malaysia are practicing values relating to their own ethnic group, or are merging towards Malaysian values. The following hypotheses on job performance across ethnic groups and relating to cultural and individual values are put forward:

H3a: Job performance is different across ethnic groups.
H3b: Cultural values are related to job performance.
H3c: Individual values are related to job performance.

Managers are firms' intellectual capital and they bring to firms their skills, talents, ideas, and creativity. Although employees' technical and analytic skills are needed to excel and perform, some studies have argued that managers with the appropriate people skills and the development of the skills over time are also crucial (Berman & West, 2008). As a person climbs higher in an organisational hierarchy, EI, as opposed to intelligence quotient (IQ), and technical skills, becomes more important (Goleman, 2001). One major benefit of studying EI is that it captures a range of activities that include perceiving emotions, facilitating thought with emotions, understanding emotions, and regulating emotions (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). Humans cannot be separated from their emotions; thus, employees need to be in control of their emotions to ensure productivity is maintained if not improved.

The study of EI stands on the notion that success is not simply determined by well-known abilities, such as verbal and quantitative, but also by abilities pertaining to emotions (Cote & Miners, 2006). Previous literature has examined the connections between EI and performance (e.g. Dulewicz & Herbert, 1999; Heffernan & Flood, 2000). Employees with high EI tend to rise as 'star performers,' and by extension, EI predicts life and work success (Goleman, 1995, 1998). Review of previous literature on EI and job performance has been mixed and varied. Some studies have found positive relationships between EI and job performance in the context of academic performance among undergraduate students (Lam & Kirby, 2002), account officers (Bachman, et al., 2000), and sales performance (Wong, Law, & Wong, 2004). Dulewicz and Higgs (2000) provides a comprehensive review and evaluation on the impact of EI on work success and they found that the combination of emotional and intellectual intelligence is a more powerful predictor of 'success' than either measure alone. EI and spirituality also lead to greater individual work success according to Tischler, et al. (2002). Examining several dimensions of EI such as emotional perception, emotional management, and emotional understanding, Lyons and Schneider (2005) found that certain EI dimensions were related to enhanced performance while others were associated to performance after controlling for cognitive ability.

Another stream of literature on EI found no or inconsistent relationship between EI and job performance. EI does not seem to be associated with higher academic performance (Petrides, et al., 2004), performance on particular tasks (Austin, 2004; Day & Carroll, 2004), and supervisory rating of job performance (Janovics & Christiansen, 2001; Sosik & Megerian, 1999). On the contrary, Newsome, Day and Catano (2000) found that EI scores have a significant and positive relationship with students' grade point averages. Jordan, Ashkansy, Hartel, and Hooper (2001) also showed that EI scores have a significant and positive relationship with team performance, but the relationship ceased to exist by the end of the nine-week project. However, another study by Wisker, and Poulis (2015) discovered no direct relationship between emotional intelligence and sales performance.

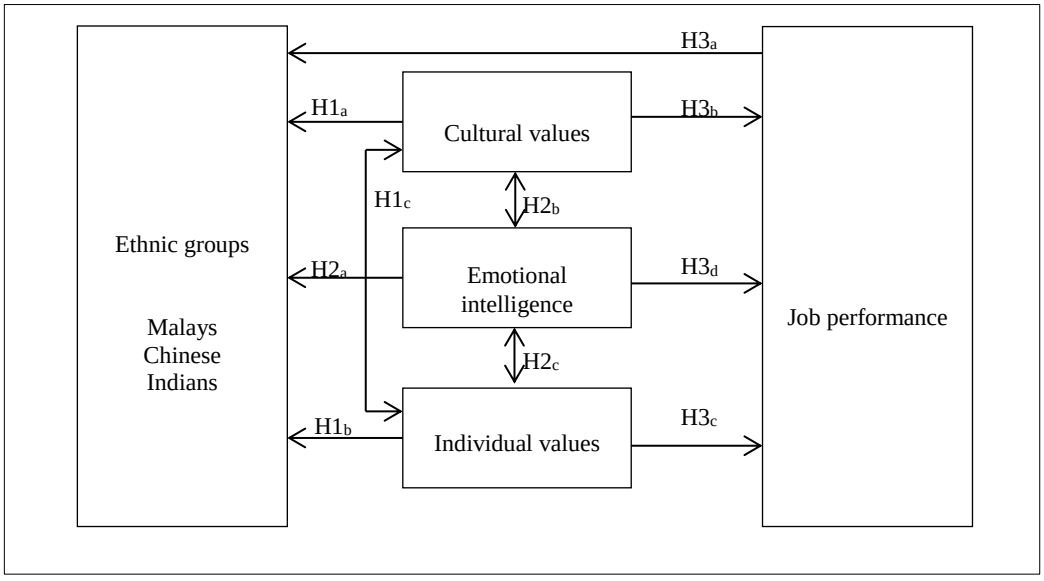
Even though findings on the relationship between EI and job performance are varied, studies conducted in the context of Western countries have generally shown a positive relationship between EI and performance. Studies that examined EI and job performance in non-Western contexts have shown varied results and in need of further investigation. Based on the above

arguments, we propose the following hypothesis in the context of managers of a multinational subsidiary:

H3d: Emotional intelligence is related to job performance.

The framework of the study is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Explaining Ethnic Variations of Values, Emotional Intelligence, and Job Performance: A Framework



3. METHODOLOGY

This study used quantitative method of inquiry. Data were collected through survey questionnaires to employees in the Malaysian subsidiary of a leading Swiss multinational corporation in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry. Because many FMCG multinationals take the strategy to tailor their products to local and regional preferences, they are argued to encourage their employees to display ethnic diversities to generate innovative ideas, products, and services specifically to the local and regional markets. The first stage of data collection involved the administration of survey questionnaires to a population of 470 management employees in the subsidiary. Data on respondents' values were collected using the Values Survey from Schwartz (1992) because its questions cover a wide range of values and more importantly are general and easily understood. Schwartz's survey consists of ten individual values - Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, and Security, and seven cultural values – Embeddedness, Intellectual autonomy, Affective autonomy, Hierarchy, Egalitarianism, Mastery and Harmony. Respondents rated 57 values on a 9-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (opposed to my values) to 7 (of supreme importance).

Emotional intelligence was measured using the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995). The TMMS scale was chosen because of its simplicity and proven reliability as EI is a relatively new concept among employees in Malaysia. The TMMS measures EI in three dimensions - as input (Attention to Feelings), process (Clarity of Feelings), and output (Mood Repair) (Ghorbani, et al., 2002). The TMMS is a 30-item self-reported assessment of EI, with 13 items to measure Attention to Feelings (the perceived ability to attend to moods and emotions), 11 items for Clarity of Feelings (the perceived ability to discriminate clearly among feelings) and 6 items for Mood Repair (the perceived ability to repair negative moods).

Managers' job performance data were obtained from the internal database of the subsidiary in which managers' performance appraisals by their immediate supervisors for the past 3 years were obtained and used. The job performance data consists of a single rating by the immediate supervisor, ranging from 1 (well above expectations) to 5 (well below expectations). The subsidiary measured their managers' performance on nine dimensions – i) Managing for results; ii) Being effective on a technical basis (Professionalism); iii) Being effective on an individual basis; iv) Adaptability/flexibility; v) Leading people; vi) Developing people; vii) Analysing and applying Judgement; viii) Problem solving/decision making and ix) Planning and organisation. Managers were rated from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high) by their direct supervisors.

A pilot study was conducted on 30 employees from the multinational subsidiary, all of whom did not participate in the actual survey, to check for reliability and validity of the measures. All instruments except job performance were tested for reliability and validity. Since job performance data were taken from the subsidiary's internal database and were already put into use for HR and talent management purposes, it was not tested for reliability and validity.

Table 1 displays the validity and reliability scores of the variables in this study. Validity tests measure the extent to which the instruments accurately measure the variables (Zikmund, 2000). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to validate the instruments. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) scores indicate that individual and cultural values from the Schwartz's Values Survey show reasonably good fit, with many of the items showing GFI scores of more than the threshold .80, and RMSEA values of less than .10. The Attention to feelings and Clarity of feelings dimensions of EI recorded GFI scores of .76 and .60, while their RMSEA scores are .157 and .277, respectively, indicating weak fit. Four out of the 13 items were removed from the Attention to Feelings dimension, which increased the GFI value to 0.88, indicating reasonably good fit. Four items out of the 11 items in the Clarity of Feelings dimension were also removed to improve the fit score to .92, and RMSEA value to .129. One item was removed from the Mood repair dimension of emotional intelligence to obtain a better fit and doing so increased the GFI value from .92 to .98 and lowered the RMSEA value from .144 to .035.

Reliability tests were also conducted. The commonly used Cronbach's alpha was administered. Items from the Schwartz's Values Survey recorded alphas above the threshold value of .70 (Sekaran, 2000). However, the Mood Repair dimension of EI recorded Cronbach's alpha of .44. Removing four items in the CFA improved the reliability of the dimension to .56.

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Analyses

Dimension	Original number of items	Final number of items	Validity		Validity after deleted items		Reliability	Reliability after deleted items
			GFI	RMSEA	GFI	RMSEA	(α)	(α)
Individual values								
Power			0.99	0.000			0.76	
Achievement			1.00	0.000			0.83	
Hedonism			1.00	0.000			0.70	
Stimulation			1.00	0.000			0.70	
Self-direction			0.98	0.079			0.77	
Universalism			0.92	0.103			0.85	
Benevolence			0.98	0.048			0.85	
Tradition			0.97	0.102			0.72	
Conformity			1.00	0.000			0.79	
Security			0.99	0.000			0.80	
Cultural values								
Conservatism			0.90	0.060			0.91	
Intellectual autonomy			0.99	0.000			0.71	
Affective autonomy			0.89	0.154			0.80	
Hierarchy			0.94	0.151			0.70	
Egalitarianism			0.98	0.011			0.84	
Mastery			1.00	0.000			0.77	
Harmony			0.97	0.154			0.81	
Emotional intelligence								
Attention to Feelings	13	9	0.76	0.157	0.88	0.130	0.73	0.84
Clarity of Feelings	11	7	0.60	0.277	0.92	0.129	0.70	0.76
Mood Repair	6	5	0.92	0.144	0.98	0.035	0.44	0.56

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 156 usable data were accumulated, giving a 33.2% response rate. Table 2 displays the respondents' socio-demographic profiles. In terms of ethnic groups, 38.5% of the respondents are Malays, 47.4% are Chinese, 8.3% are Indians, and 5.8% are categorised as Others.

Table 2: Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

Profile	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	110	70.5
Female	46	29.5
Total	156	100.0
Age		
Below 45 years old	113	72.4
45 years old and above	43	27.6
Total	156	100.0
Job Classification		
Mid-level management	81	51.9
Top-level management	75	48.1
Total	156	100.0
Education Level		
Diploma	25	16.0
Degree	76	48.7
Masters	22	14.1
Professional Qualifications	9	5.8
Doctorate	2	1.3
Others	22	14.1
Total	156	100.0
Ethnic Group		
Malays	60	38.5
Chinese	74	47.4
Indians	13	8.3
Others	9	5.8
Total	156	100.0

4.1. Hypotheses Testing

Due to the categorical nature of the data, Chi-square test of independence and post hoc analysis were carried out. The results are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Description	χ^2	p-value	Findings	Remarks
H1a	Cultural values & ethnic variation	37.586	0.004**	Partially supported	
H1b	Individual values & ethnic variation	31.794	0.240	Not supported	
H1c	Individual values & cultural values	204.141	0.000***	Supported	

Hypothesis	Description	χ^2	p-value	Findings	Remarks
H2a	Emotional intelligence & ethnic variation	13.342	0.038*	Supported	
H2b	Cultural values & emotional intelligence	14.088	0.295	Not supported	
H2c	Individual values & emotional intelligence	19.899	0.339	Not supported	
H3a	Job performance & ethnic variation	2.441	0.486	Not supported	i. MR
		0.785	0.853		ii. EFFT
		5.122	0.163		iii. EFFIV
		2.734	0.435		iv. AD/FX
		6.215	0.102		v. LD
		7.218	0.065		vi. DV
		5.502	0.138		vii. ANJDG
		7.616	0.055		viii. PS/DM
		0.919	0.821		ix. PLO
H3b	Cultural values & job performance	6.183	0.403	Not supported	i. MR
		3.712	0.716		ii. EFFT
		6.414	0.378		iii. EFFIV
		3.090	0.798		iv. AD/FX
		3.084	0.798		v. LD
		2.247	0.896		vi. DV
		10.380	0.110		vii. ANJDG
		2.444	0.875		viii. PS/DM
		7.654	0.265		ix. PLO
H3c	Individual values & job performance	19.583	0.019*	Partially supported	MR
H3d	Emotional intelligence & job performance	6.394	0.041*	Partially supported	PS/DM

***Note*:** n = 156, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

:MR=Managing for Result, EFFT = Being Effective on a Technical Basis, EFFIV=Being Effective on an Individual Basis, AD/FX=Adaptability/Flexibility, LD=Leading People, DV=Developing People, ANJDG=Analysing & Applying Judgement, PS/DM=Problem Solving/Decision Making, PLO=Planning & Organisation

In terms of ethnic variations, only emotional intelligence shows statistically significant difference across the ethnic groups (χ^2 = 13.342, p = 0.038). Table 4 shows the cross-tabulation between ethnic groups and emotional intelligence. Chinese employees in the subsidiary are more inclined on mood repair and attention to feelings, while their Malay counterparts are more into clarity of feelings.

Table 4: Emotional Intelligence and Ethnic Cross Tabulation

Emotional Intelligence		Ethnic group				
		Malay	Chinese	Indian	Others	Total
Mood Repair	Count	20	26	2	1	49
	% within EI	40.8%	53.1%	4.1%	2.0%	100.0%
Attention to Feelings	Count	21	35	6	2	64
	% within EI	32.8%	54.7%	9.4%	3.1%	100.0%
Clarity to Feelings	Count	19	13	5	6	43
	% within EI	44.2%	30.2%	11.6%	14.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	60	74	13	9	156
	% within EI	38.5%	47.4%	8.3%	5.8%	100.0%

Note: EI = Emotional Intelligence

Although the frequency data show that the highest number of respondents belong to the Attention to Feelings domain, not all the ethnic groups recorded their highest percentage in this category. The Malays, Indians, and Others are more inclined to belong to the Clarity to Feelings domain (44.2%, 11.6%, and 14.0%, respectively). More than half (54.7%) of the Chinese managers belong to the Attention to Feelings domain.

In addition, the proposed notion that cultural values are different across ethnic groups is partially supported (χ^2 = 37.586, p = 0.004). Findings in Table 5 show that the Malays have values of Embeddedness, Hierarchy, and Mastery. Embeddedness describes a society that focuses on the maintenance of the status quo. Members will avoid actions that disrupt the intactness of the group. Malays also accept the unequal distribution of power as their cultural values (Hierarchy). Malay respondents in this study highlight the importance of being ambitious and getting ahead of others (Mastery), which contradicted the findings by Abdullah (2001). On the other hand, the Chinese display the values of Egalitarianism, Harmony, Intellectual autonomy, and Affective autonomy. The combination of these values is seen to be logical as they seem to be interrelated with one another. Egalitarianism, described by the need to be selfish in ensuring commitment towards promoting the welfare of others, is ranked highest among all the other cultural values of the Chinese. Complementing the value of Egalitarianism, the Chinese stated the desirability to pursue their own ideas and intellectual directions (Intellectual autonomy) and affectively positive experience (Affective autonomy) while at the same time still looking at ways to fit harmoniously into the environment (Harmony). The Indians are skewed towards the cultural value of Hierarchy.

Table 5: Ethnic and Cultural Values Cross Tabulation

Cultural Values		**Ethnic Group**				**Total**
		Malay	**Chinese**	**Indian**	**Others**	
Embeddedness	Count	11	4	2	0	17
	% within CV	64.7%	23.5%	11.8%	0.0%	100.0%
Hierarchy	Count	18	13	3	1	35
	% within CV	51.4%	37.1%	8.6%	2.9%	100.0%
Mastery	Count	11	7	2	1	21
	% within CV	52.4%	33.3%	9.5%	4.8%	100.0%

Cultural Values		Ethnic Group				Total
		Malay	Chinese	Indian	Others	
Affective Autonomy	Count	8	9	2	1	20
	% within CV	40.0%	45.0%	10.0%	5.0%	100.0%
Intellectual Autonomy	Count	2	11	2	4	10
	% within CV	10.5%	57.9%	10.5%	21.1%	100.0%
Egalitarianism	Count	2	17	0	0	19
	% within CV	10.5%	89.5%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Harmony	Count	8	13	2	2	25
	% within CV	32.0%	52.0%	8.0%	8.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	60	74	13	9	156
	% within CV	38.5%	47.4%	8.3%	5.8%	100.0%

To test the relationship between individual and cultural values, Chi-square test of independence was conducted. The relationship is significant (χ^2= 204.141, p = 0.000). The relationship is especially strong between the individual value of Power and the cultural value of Hierarchy as stated in Table 6. Relationship also exists between the individual values of Hedonism, Universalism, and Self-direction with the cultural values of Affective autonomy, Harmony, and Intellectual autonomy, respectively. In all of these cases, both types of values have similarities in their meanings.

Table 6: Individual Values and Cultural Values Cross Tabulation

CV/ IV		CF	TR	BV	UV	SD	ST	HD	AC	PR	SC	Total
Embeddednes:	Count	3	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	6	17
	% within CV	17.6%	11.8%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	23.5%	35.3%	100.0%
Hierarchy	Count	1	3	1	1	0	2	2	1	23	1	35
	% within CV	2.9%	8.6%	2.9%	2.9%	0.0%	5.7%	5.7%	2.9%	65.7%	2.9%	110.0%
Mastery	Count	0	0	3	0	2	3	3	6	3	1	21
	% within CV	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	9.5%	14.3%	14.3%	28.6%	14.3%	4.8%	100.0%
Affective Autonomy	Count	0	1	3	0	0	3	11	0	2	0	20
	% within CV	0.0%	5.0%	15.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	55.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Intellectual Autonomy	Count	1	1	1	0	8	3	1	1	1	2	19
	% within CV	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%	42.1%	15.8%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%	10.5%	100.0%
Egalitarianis m	Count	5	1	2	1	0	1	4	2	1	2	19
	% within CV	26.3%	5.3%	10.5%	5.3%	0.0%	5.3%	21.1%	10.5%	5.3%	10.5%	100.0%
Harmony	Count	0	2	0	8	0	4	2	1	5	3	25
	% within CV	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	32.0%	0.0%	16.0%	8.0%	4.0%	20.0%	12.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	10	10	11	10	10	17	23	11	39	15	156
	% within CV	6.4%	6.4%	7.1%	6.4%	6.4%	10.9%	14.7%	7.1%	25.0%	9.6%	100.0%

Note: CV = Cultural Values, IV = Individual Values, CF = Conformity, TR = Tradition, BV = Benevolence, UV = Universalism, SD = Self Direction, ST = Stimulation, HD = Hedonism, AC = Achievement, PR = Power, SC = Security

Findings show partial support that job performance is statistically significant across individual values and emotional intelligence. Individual values are significantly related to the Managing for Results dimension of job performance (χ^2= 19.583, p = 0.019). Cross tabulations analysis in Table

7 showed that the relationship is mostly significant with the values of Power. Also, respondents with Hedonism individual value also performed higher while respondents with Security are more likely to perform lower in terms of Managing for Results.

Table 7: Individual Values and Job Performance Dimension (Managing for Results) Cross Tabulation

Job Performance/ Individual values		CF	TR	BV	UV	SD	ST	HD	AC	PR	SC	Total
Managing for Results (Low)	Count	2	2	5	7	4	8	4	4	14	11	61
	% within MR	3.3%	3.3%	8.2%	11.5%	6.6%	13.1%	6.6%	6.6%	23.0%	18.0%	100.0%
Managing for Results (High)	Count	8	8	6	3	6	9	19	7	25	4	95
	% within MR	8.4%	8.4%	6.3%	3.2%	6.3%	9.5%	20.0%	7.4%	26.3%	4.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	10	10	11	10	10	17	23	11	39	15	156
	% within MR	6.4%	6.4%	7.1%	6.4%	6.4%	10.9%	14.7%	7.1%	25.0%	9.6%	100.0%

Note: CV = Cultural Values, IV = Individual Values, CF = Conformity, TR = Tradition, BV = Benevolence, UV = Universalism, SD = Self Direction, ST = Stimulation, HD = Hedonism, AC = Achievement, PR = Power, SC = Security

Moreover, findings also showed significant association between emotional intelligence and the Problem solving/ Decision making dimension of job performance (χ^2, n = 156) = 6.394, p = 0.041). The cross-tabulation data in Table 8 illustrated low level of Problem Solving/Decision Making is significant with Attention, in which 50.0 per cent of the respondents are in that domain. On the other hand, 39.5 per cent respondents with high level of the Problem Solving/Decision Making are associated with Repair.

Table 8: Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance Dimension (Problem Solving/Decision Making) Cross Tabulation

		Emotional Intelligence			
Job Performance		Repair	Attention	Clarity	Total
PS/ DM (Low)	Count	19	40	21	80
	% within PS/DM	23.8%	50.0%	26.3%	100.0%
PS/ DM (High)	Count	30	24	22	76
	% within PS/DM	39.5%	31.6%	28.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	49	64	43	156
	% within PS/DM	31.4%	41.0%	27.6%	100.0%

Note: PS/DM= Problem Solving/Decision Making, EI = Emotional Intelligence

The results show the interrelationship between cultural and individual values. The strongest relationship is between Hierarchy (a cultural value), and Power (an individual value). In most cases, individual values are seen as the refined set of cultural values. Individuals may have changed their cultural values by retaining or adding values that can assist them to perform in organisations, and at the same time disposing the unwanted values resulting in a new set of individual values. Such condition is expected to happen in this study resulting in the significant relationship between the two types of values. In addition, findings of this study indicate that individual values are significantly related to job performance, but only in terms of managing results. The relationship is

particularly strong between Power and Managing for Results. Having the Power value means that individuals attribute social power and prestige to a certain degree of control or dominance over people and resources. The ability to exert control over people and show authority can assist employees to attain resources to achieve short- and long-term objectives, which is part of the definitions of Managing for Results. In addition, individuals who aim to gain social power and prestige may also be able to pose realistic and challenging goals in order to achieve what they desire.

Furthermore, this study found a significant relationship between EI and Problem Solving/Decision Making dimension of job performance. Individuals who show Attention to Feelings display low performance in solving problems and making decisions, while individuals with strong Mood Repair show high performance when solving problems and making decisions. This implies that an individual's ability to change and maintain his/her moods surpasses his/her ability to recognise feelings when solving problems and making decisions. Particularly relevant to the context of this study, EI is highly important when making important decisions and solving critical problems in firms. The non-significant relationship between EI and other job performance dimensions are consistent with previous related studies that found mixed evidence. Slaski (2001) illustrated through an intervention study that employees who initially achieved high emotional quotient (EQ) scores showed no significant improvements in performance when they are evaluated again six months after the completion of EI training session.

In terms of EI across ethnic differences, findings show a significant relationship between EI and ethnic groups. The Malays, Indians, and Others are found to focus more on the clarity of feelings, whereby their main ability is to distinguish the different feelings seen or experienced. In contrast, the Chinese managers are more focused on paying attention to feelings, implying that they notice and think carefully about their feelings. One can infer from the findings of this study that people from different ethnic groups have differing abilities in managing and dealing with their emotions. Although no past studies have been conducted specifically on EI and ethnic groups, cross-cultural studies of emotions have provided evidence for both similarities and differences between cultures (Fischer, Manstead, & Mosquera, 1999).

5. CONCLUSION

This study extends the literature on the intra-national variation of values, emotional intelligence and job performance, particularly in a multi-cultural context. While many national culture studies have been carried out, distinguishing intra-national variation of values, both culturally and individually, have not received empirical attention. This study has examined variations of national culture in the context of multinational subsidiaries operating in an ethnically diverse host country. In addition, it has also proven that values held individually and collectively with members of the ethnic group are interrelated. Findings that relate individual values and managing for results dimension of job performance display that firms should also focus on individual values in managing employees' job performance. Results on EI are particularly interesting. Emotional intelligence has been found to be linked to ethnic groups, and managers' problem-solving and decision-making dimensions of job performance. The significant findings between problem solving and decision making dimensions of job performance confirm the impact of competency on job performance by Blumberg and Pringle (1982) and Waldman and Sprangler (1989). It is also

important to note that this study provides further evidence to confirm the assumed association between EI and job performance made popular by authors such as Boyatzis (1982); and Goleman (1995, 1996). This empirical evidence on the impact of EI on job performance proves that studying EI in an organisational context is vital. However, findings also imply that the influence of EI in an organisational context may be limited to some areas of job performance. It is therefore essential for future studies to take into account various types of job performance so that in proper conditions, EI competency can be applied to its highest potential.

The significant relationship between EI and ethnic groups is also a contribution of this study. Although there has been no study on the differences of EI among various ethnic groups, previous related cross-cultural studies on emotions have provided evidence of similar and different EI across people from various ethnic backgrounds and cultures (e.g., Fischer, et al., 1999). This significant finding provides important insights into the current theories and perspectives on emotions and cultural differences.

The study has some limitations. Single firm data may restrict the generalisation of the findings. Due to the categorical nature of the data, analyses were also quite limited to simple tests. Future studies are hoped to widen the scope to several firms, giving careful attention to those consisting of a majority of one type of ethnic group to examine the robust impact of ethnic differences on EI. Future research is also recommended to experiment with different instruments as a means of comparison and hopefully generate EI instruments that are relevant, applicable and accurate in non-Western organisational context.

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