

The Role of Perceived Organizational Support, Cultural Intelligence and Marital Status in Influencing the Expatriation Willingness of Chinese Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Background and Objectives: As globalization increases the demand for internationally mobile professionals, organizations face growing challenges in attracting and retaining qualified personnel for overseas assignments. Among various professional groups, Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language (TCFLs) represent a unique category of knowledge-based professionals whose work requires both specialized expertise and cross-cultural adaptability. In particular, little is known about how perceived organizational support (POS) and cultural intelligence jointly shape TCFLs' willingness to accept expatriate assignments in Thailand. To address this gap, this study examines whether knowledge sharing moderates the relationships between POS, cultural intelligence, and expatriation willingness to Thailand (EWT).

Methodology: Snowball sampling was employed to recruit participants from universities in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, China. An online questionnaire was distributed to TCFLs in March 2025, yielding 410 responses. After excluding 23 invalid questionnaires, 387 valid responses remained for analysis. This final sample size of 387 slightly exceeds the recommended minimum of 384.16, indicating adequate statistical power for the planned analyses. Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted using SPSS 25.0. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using Mplus 8 to assess construct reliability and validity, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and model fit.

Main Results: The results indicate that POS significantly enhances EWT. Cultural intelligence partially mediates this relationship. In addition, knowledge sharing weakens the positive effects of POS on both cultural intelligence and EWT. By contrast, the moderating effect of marital status on the relationship between POS and EWT is not statistically significant.

Discussions: This study deepens the understanding of how POS influences EWT among knowledge workers-TCFLs. The mediating role of cultural intelligence suggests that organizational support not only shapes employees' assignment-related intentions but also enhances their psychological readiness for cross-cultural

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engagement. The unexpected negative moderating effect of knowledge sharing challenges the common assumption that knowledge sharing is uniformly beneficial. It suggests that excessive or unstructured knowledge exchange may generate concerns regarding professional differentiation, competitive pressure, or uncontrolled disclosure of expertise. These concerns may, in turn, weaken the motivational impact of organizational support. Finally, the non-significant role of marital status suggests that expatriation willingness is driven more by organizational and psychological factors than by demographic characteristics.

Conclusions: Cultural intelligence plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between POS and EWT. However, excessive knowledge sharing may generate concerns over unrestricted disclosure of expertise and create perceptions of burden or competitive tension, thereby reducing EWT. Institutions should therefore encourage knowledge sharing while simultaneously providing adequate emotional support, resources, and structured incentive mechanisms to promote voluntary knowledge exchange and improve expatriation outcomes. These findings have practical implications for organizations managing knowledge workers in China and Thailand. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the international human resource management and organizational behavior literature by identifying cultural intelligence as a mediating mechanism and knowledge sharing as a boundary condition in the relationship between perceived organizational support and expatriation willingness among professional knowledge workers, with TCFLs serving as the empirical research context.

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Introduction

Against the backdrop of increasing globalization and international labor mobility, the management of highly skilled foreign professionals has become a key concern in international human resource management. Within the field of international Chinese language education, Thailand represents a particularly important context because of its long-standing educational cooperation with China and its substantial demand for Chinese language teachers. The International Chinese Language Teacher Volunteer Program was formally implemented in Thailand in 2003, establishing an institutional channel for the recruitment and dispatch of Chinese language teachers. This cooperation has subsequently been reinforced by broader initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Education Action for the Belt and Road Initiative, which further promoted educational cooperation and cross-border social and cultural

interactions between China and participating countries. Thailand has consequently become one of the major destinations for Chinese language teachers working abroad. According to data reported by the Thai Ministry of Education, by 2021 more than 2,000 primary and secondary schools in Thailand offered Chinese language courses, with over one million students studying Chinese, reportedly the highest number worldwide (Fu, 2021). Against this institutional and educational background, an increasing number of Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language (TCFLs) have been dispatched to teach in Thailand (Da, 2020). Chou et al. (2023) further note that, given the inherent complexities of cross-cultural environments, there is growing scholarly and practical interest in understanding how to effectively enhance teachers' willingness to accept overseas teaching assignments. These characteristics make Thailand both a practically important destination and a theoretically relevant setting for examining TCFLs' overseas teaching intentions. For many TCFLs, accepting a teaching assignment in Thailand constitutes a form of international expatriation. Accordingly, this study conceptualizes expatriation willingness to Thailand as TCFLs' readiness and motivational inclination to accept professional teaching assignments in Thailand. It is understood as a behavioral intention shaped by anticipated exchange relationships with employing institutions.

Research has shown that expatriation willingness is not determined by a single factor but instead emerges from both organizational and individual influences. In this regard, perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' beliefs that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, thereby reducing uncertainty and perceived risk and shaping individuals' attitudes toward challenging assignments (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kawai & Strange, 2014). From an individual perspective, cultural intelligence (CQ) reflects the capability to interpret unfamiliar cultural environments, adapt one's behavior accordingly, and communicate effectively across cultures. Empirical studies further indicate that higher levels of CQ are associated with better cross-cultural adjustment and more positive attitudes toward international work assignments (Richter et al., 2020; Van et al., 2012). In intercultural work contexts, both organizational support and cultural intelligence are therefore widely recognized as key determinants of individuals' willingness to engage in international assignments.

Although organizational support (Changet al., 2023; Georgiadou et al., 2024) and cultural intelligence (Lei et al., 2025) have been widely examined in expatriation and cross-cultural research, their applicability to educational expatriation contexts remains underexplored. Existing studies on Chinese language teachers working overseas have primarily focused on their teaching experiences, professional challenges, and adaptation after entering the host-country context. For example, Ewe and Min (2021) examined the challenges experienced by Chinese language teachers in Thailand, while Lu et al. (2019) investigated the professional challenges and development needs of Chinese language teachers working in the UK. However, these studies have largely concentrated on teachers' post-arrival experiences rather than the factors influencing their willingness to undertake an overseas assignment. In particular, limited attention has been paid to destination-specific expatriation willingness among TCFLs, especially their willingness to accept teaching assignments in Thailand.

Moreover, in workplace contexts, individuals' understanding of organizational information is not derived solely from formal communication channels but is also shaped through everyday interactions with colleagues, during which work-related experiences and information are continuously shared and exchanged (Koch & Denner, 2022). In organizational settings, knowledge sharing refers to the dissemination of work-related knowledge and

information among organizational members through both formal mechanisms and informal interpersonal exchanges (Wang & Noe, 2010; Wu et al., 2023). In expatriate contexts, existing evidence suggests that knowledge-sharing behavior is highly context-dependent and is strongly influenced by organizational and relational factors, such as leadership, perceived support, and trust (Wu et al., 2023).

In parallel, individual background factors also warrant attention. Prior studies have shown that spousal and family considerations exert complex and multifaceted influences on expatriates' decisions and performance (Andreason, 2008). In particular, married individuals often need to balance family adaptation and support-related demands, which may shape their willingness to undertake overseas assignments. Nevertheless, little is known about the role of marital status in shaping the relationship between POS and TCFLs' willingness to accept teaching assignments in Thailand.

Based on this background, the present study adopts Thailand as the research context and focuses on knowledge professionals (TCFLs) as a distinct occupational group. Specifically, this study is guided by three research questions:

- (1) Are POS and cultural intelligence significantly associated with TCFLs' willingness to accept teaching assignments in Thailand?
- (2) Does knowledge sharing moderate the relationships among perceived organizational support, cultural intelligence, and expatriation willingness??
- (3) Does marital status play a moderating or contextual role in the relationship between organizational support and TCFLs' willingness to accept teaching assignments in Thailand?

By addressing these questions, this study contributes to international human resource management and organizational behavior research by clarifying the factors that influence expatriation willingness among knowledge-based professionals, using TCFLs in Thailand as an empirical context.

Literature Review

Theoretical Background

Cultural adaptation theory views adaptation to a new cultural context as a continuous process involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioral adjustment to unfamiliarity and uncertainty (Kim, 2001). From this perspective, cultural intelligence (CQ) reflects an individual's capacity to navigate culturally diverse environments and facilitates adaptation through accurate interpretation, appropriate behavioral adjustment, and effective responses to uncertainty. In expatriation contexts, higher levels of CQ reduce perceived cross-cultural difficulties and enhance individuals' willingness to accept overseas assignments (Chou et al., 2023).

At the organizational level, social exchange theory (SET) explains how employees' attitudes and behavioral intentions are shaped by reciprocal exchange relationships with their organizations. SET posits that individuals evaluate social interactions in terms of perceived benefits and costs and are more likely to maintain relationships when such exchanges are perceived as favorable (Homans, 1958). In this regard, this study argues that perceptions of fair and supportive treatment signal positive exchange relationships, thereby influencing employees' trust, attitudes, and behavioral intentions.

SET also provides a useful theoretical lens for linking POS with knowledge sharing (Hameed et al., 2019). Perceived appreciation and concern from the organization can foster a

sense of obligation among employees to reciprocate with favorable attitudes and behaviors (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Georgiadou et al., 2024). This reciprocal orientation strengthens organizational trust and increases employees' willingness to share knowledge in the workplace (Wang & Noe, 2010).

Existing studies grounded in social exchange and cultural adaptation perspectives have demonstrated that organizational support influences employees' cultural intelligence and expatriation willingness (Chou et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024). These findings provide a solid theoretical foundation for explaining expatriation-related decisions. Building on this literature, the present study integrates these two theoretical perspectives by incorporating knowledge sharing and marital status as contextual factors and by focusing on TCFL expatriation to Thailand. In doing so, the study offers a more fine-grained understanding of how individual capabilities and organizational exchange mechanisms jointly shape expatriation willingness.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

From the perspective of Organizational Support Theory, POS reflects employees' general assessment of the degree to which they feel valued and supported by their organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). These beliefs are formed based on the treatment employees receive from the organization and reflect whether they perceive their efforts as being recognized and their welfare as being supported. Prior research has linked POS to important expatriation outcomes, including expatriates' willingness to remain in the host country and their performance in overseas assignments (Cao et al., 2014; Kawai & Strange, 2014). In this study, POS refers to TCFLs' perceptions that their employing institutions acknowledge their contributions and care about their well-being.

Knowledge Sharing (KS)

KS refers to "the provision of task information and know-how to help others and to collaborate with others to solve problems, develop new ideas, or implement policies or procedures" (Wang & Noe, 2010). In organizational contexts, knowledge sharing is often understood as employees' willingness to share personal work experiences and professional networks, reflecting their propensity to contribute tacit knowledge grounded in their professional practice (Lu et al., 2006; Wang & Noe, 2010). In this study, knowledge sharing refers to TCFLs' willingness to voluntarily share experiential and tacit teaching knowledge as well as cultural insights through informal and unstructured interactions, rather than through formal, codified, or mandated knowledge dissemination channels.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

CQ captures a person's capacity to deal effectively with situations involving cultural differences (Ang et al., 2007). CQ has been widely recognized as an important antecedent of success in cross-cultural contexts, including adaptation, expatriate effectiveness, global leadership, intercultural negotiation, and multicultural teamwork (Van et al., 2012). The effect of CQ on expatriation willingness appears to operate through more than one pathway, encompassing both direct relationships and indirect processes (Lee et al., 2019; Presbitero & Quita, 2017; Richter et al., 2020). As a multidimensional construct, CQ is commonly conceptualized as a four-dimensional construct encompassing metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions, which together support effective functioning across

cultural contexts (Ang et al., 2007). Following prior expatriation research, the present study conceptualizes CQ as an overall capability rather than examining its individual dimensions separately, focusing on its aggregated effect on expatriation-related outcomes (AlMazrouei & Zacca, 2021; Chou et al., 2023). In this study, cultural intelligence is defined as TCFLs' ability to effectively adapt to unfamiliar Thai cultural environments.

Expatriation Willingness to Thailand (EWT)

Expatriation willingness, it is defined as "the likelihood of accepting a job offer that requires living and working in a foreign country for a temporary period" (Mol et al., 2009). Research suggests that expatriation willingness is closely associated with outcomes in expatriate assignments and may contribute to assignment success (Kim & Froese, 2012). Lee et al. (2019) define it as the extent to which an employee demonstrates readiness to undertake employment in a foreign country. Similarly, Presbitero and Quita (2017) conceptualizes it as an individual's desire and motivation to pursue a professional career abroad. Moreover, expatriation willingness is shaped by various factors, including career adaptability, foreign language proficiency, and the economic conditions of the host country (Kim & Froese, 2012; Li et al., 2020; Presbitero & Quita, 2017).

Therefore, in this research, EWT is defined as a TCFL's readiness and motivation to accept a professional assignment in Thailand.

Research Hypotheses

Mediation Effect of CQ between POS and EWT

Prior empirical research suggests that cultural intelligence can be enhanced through structured learning and mentoring interventions. For example, Young et al. (2017) found that business students significantly improved their CQ through cross-cultural management courses and diversified mentoring relationships. In organizational settings, POS often encompasses developmental resources such as guidance, mentoring, and access to learning opportunities, which facilitate employees' capability development. Accordingly, POS is expected to be positively associated with employees' cultural intelligence.

Empirical evidence further indicates that organizational support, including financial and career-related support, together with cultural intelligence, is positively associated with expatriation willingness (Wang et al., 2024). This positive relationship has also been confirmed in the context of Chinese employees assigned to Thailand (Chou et al., 2023). Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: TCFL's POS positively influences TCFL's Cultural Intelligence.

H2: TCFL's POS positively influences EWT.

H3: TCFL's Cultural Intelligence positively influences EWT.

The Moderating Role of Knowledge Sharing: POS to CQ and EWT

Cultural intelligence can be developed through experience and training (Young et al., 2017). Traditionally, training programs emphasize a unidirectional flow of knowledge from experts to learners. However, when knowledge transfer is reconceptualized as a more dynamic and interactive process, similar to knowledge sharing, its effectiveness can be enhanced (Wang & Noe, 2010). By incorporating interactive components, such as experience-sharing sessions among knowledge-based professionals (TCFLs), into existing training programs, organizations

may be better positioned to enhance the cultural intelligence of teachers assigned to Thailand. Such interactions not only facilitate the dissemination of relevant information but also promote mutual learning, thereby enabling educators to gain broader insights into local culture, teaching requirements, and contextual conditions.

Based on the above reasoning, when an organization provides support and simultaneously fosters a strong knowledge-sharing environment, such as through regular seminars, online and offline interactions, and peer coaching, this context may help translate expatriate teachers' positive attitudes into cultural understanding and adaptive capabilities. In this sense, knowledge sharing can strengthen the role of POS in fostering cultural intelligence and enhancing willingness to accept overseas teaching assignments. Conversely, in the absence of sufficient channels and incentives for knowledge sharing, POS may provide emotional reassurance but may not be sufficient to promote deeper cultural understanding or strengthen confidence in cross-cultural teaching contexts. Overall, the preceding discussion suggests that knowledge sharing conditions the effects of POS on both cultural intelligence and expatriation willingness in the Thai context. Higher levels of knowledge sharing are expected to strengthen these positive relationships, whereas lower levels may weaken them. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4a: TCFL's Knowledge Sharing positively moderates the relationship between TCFL's POS and their Cultural Intelligence.

H4b: TCFL's Knowledge Sharing positively moderates the relationship between TCFL's POS and EWT.

Moderation Effect of Marital Status between POS and EWT

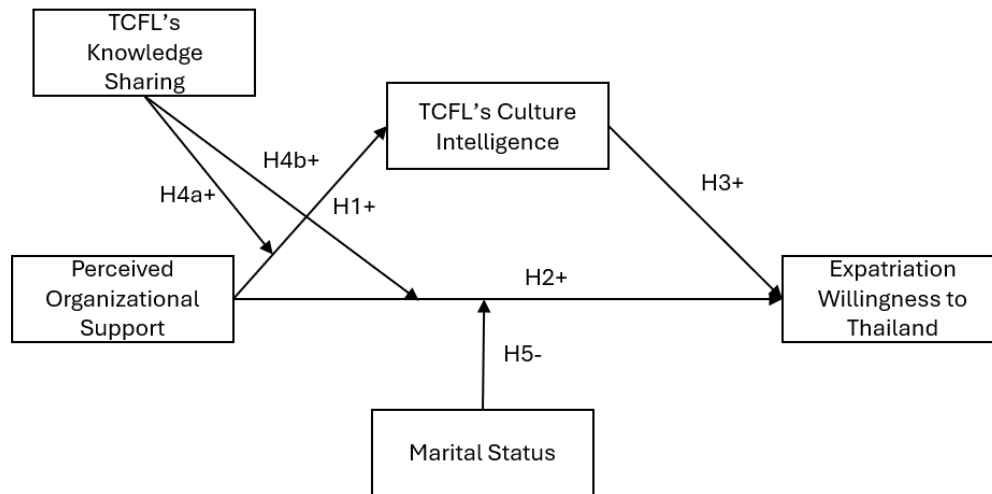
Cao et al. (2014) examined 112 self-initiated expatriates working in Germany and reported a positive relationship between POS and expatriates' intention to stay in the host country. This result aligns with prior expatriation research indicating that POS is an important determinant of assignment-related outcomes, particularly expatriate adjustment and performance (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004).

Marital status has also been employed as a moderating variable in studies of expatriate retention and international students' intentions to remain in host countries, as demonstrated by Chan et al. (2023) and Kim (2015). Building on this line of research, the present study incorporates marital status to examine Chinese TCFLs' willingness to accept assignments in Thailand. Specifically, this study investigates whether marital status influences the extent to which TCFLs respond to POS and how this, in turn, relates to their willingness to be assigned to Thailand.

Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Marital status negatively moderates the relationship between POS and EWT. Specifically, the positive effect of POS on EWT is expected to be weaker among married TCFLs than among their unmarried counterparts.

The framework is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1*Proposed Research Model*

Research Methodology

Population and Samples

Snowball sampling was employed to recruit knowledge-based professionals, using Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language (TCFLs) as the empirical research context, from universities in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, China. The study focused on university Chinese language teachers as the target population, particularly those with experience or potential interest in overseas teaching assignments. An online survey was distributed in March 2025, yielding 410 responses. After excluding 23 invalid questionnaires, the final sample comprised 387 valid responses.

Among the 387 participants, 62.02% were male ($n = 240$) and 37.98% were female ($n = 147$). In terms of age distribution, the majority were aged 26–35 (37.47%), followed by those aged 36–45 (35.40%), 46–55 (13.95%), 20–25 (11.37%), and over 55 (1.81%). Regarding educational attainment, 53.75% held a bachelor's degree, 38.76% held a master's degree, and 7.49% held a doctoral degree.

Questionnaire Design and Measurements

The questionnaire in this study consisted of two sections. The first section collected demographic information, including respondents' gender, age, educational level, and marital status. Marital status was measured using two categories: with a spouse or partner, and without a spouse or partner. This variable was included to examine its potential moderating effect on the relationships among the key study constructs. The second section comprised the measurement scales. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

CQ was assessed using the original 20-item scale developed by Ang et al. (2007), using the Simplified Chinese version adopted by Chou et al. (2023). The Chinese version had undergone a bilingual translation and back-translation procedure to ensure conceptual

equivalence. The present study used this validated Chinese version without any further modification or adaptation.

POS was measured using the 14-item scale developed by Bao and Liu (2011), with higher scores indicating stronger POS. Sample items include: “The organizational system ensures that I receive the necessary funding for my work,” “My supervisor is willing to listen to the difficulties and problems I encounter in my work,” and “When I encounter difficulties in life, colleagues help me find solutions.” All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

EWT was measured using the 11-item scale developed by Chou et al. (2023), with higher scores indicating greater willingness to undertake expatriate assignments in Thailand. Sample items include: “I have seriously considered pursuing a career in Thailand or even globally,” “Even if I work domestically, I would like to spend 40% of my time traveling to Thailand for work,” and “Working in Thailand would enrich my personal life and make it more interesting.” The present study adopted the original scale developed by Chou et al. (2023) without any modification or adaptation. All items were also rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

All instruments demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity in previous studies and met the recommended criteria in the present study, with satisfactory Cronbach’s alpha, CR, AVE, and Fornell–Larcker results.

Data Collection

This study was conducted in universities primarily located in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, China. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationships among CQ, POS, and willingness to expatriate to Thailand among knowledge workers. Specifically, online questionnaires were distributed to TCFLs, who represent a group of knowledge-based professionals engaged in educational services. Data were collected in March 2025.

Ethical approval was obtained from the Dhurakij Pundit University Ethics Committee. Participants provided informed consent and were informed that participation was voluntary and anonymous. Eligibility was verified by confirming that all respondents were university Chinese language teachers. The survey was administered through an online questionnaire platform to ensure accessibility and efficient participant recruitment. A snowball sampling technique was employed, whereby initial participants, university teachers involved in TCFL-related programs, were recruited through QQ groups and subsequently invited to share the survey link with eligible colleagues.

To ensure data quality and prevent duplicate responses, each IP address was restricted to a single submission. After data screening, a total of 387 valid responses were retained for analysis. The inclusion criteria required respondents to be full-time TCFL teachers, aged 20 years or older, holding at least a bachelor’s degree, with a minimum of one year of teaching experience, and providing informed consent to participate in the study. These criteria were established to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of the sample for the research objectives.

Reliability and Validity Evaluation

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability (CR). CFA was conducted to evaluate construct validity. Items with standardized factor loadings below 0.60 were removed, and the remaining items demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties.

Cronbach’s alpha coefficients varied between 0.722 and 0.862, and the corresponding CR estimates fell between 0.725 and 0.863, suggesting satisfactory internal consistency across the

constructs. Evidence of convergent validity was provided by the AVE results, which were approximately 0.50 or higher. In addition, the Fornell–Larcker assessment showed that, for every construct, the square root of its AVE was greater than its correlations with the remaining constructs (see Table 1). This pattern supports adequate discriminant validity and confirms that the constructs capture empirically distinguishable concepts.

Table 1*The Discriminate Validity*

	MEAN	SD	POS	EWT	CQ	KS
POS	3.367	0.889	0.716			
EWT	3.381	0.964	0.667**	0.684		
CQ	3.403	0.850	0.627**	0.659**	0.685	
KS	2.392	0.848	-0.242**	-0.200**	-0.188**	0.642

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

CFA was conducted using Mplus to evaluate the measurement model. The model fit indices indicated a good overall fit (see Table 2). The Chi-square statistic was $\chi^2 = 170.645$ (df = 113), yielding a χ^2/df ratio of 1.51, which is well below the commonly accepted threshold of 3. These results indicate an adequate overall model fit. In addition, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.976) and Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI = 0.971) both exceed the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating a high level of model fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.036) is below the conventional cutoff of 0.08, further supporting model adequacy (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2*Model Fit Indicators*

Indicators	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Criteria	-	-	<3	>0.9	>0.9	<0.10
Value	170.645	113	1.51	0.976	0.971	0.036

Research Findings

Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Hierarchical linear regression analysis was employed to test the research hypotheses. All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below 3, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern.

As shown in Table 3, POS significantly predicts cultural intelligence (CQ) in Model 2 ($\beta = 0.642$, $p < 0.01$). In Model 3, CQ significantly predicts EWT ($\beta = 0.375$, $p < 0.01$). Meanwhile, the effect of POS on EWT decreases from $\beta = 0.650$ in Model 1 to $\beta = 0.409$ in Model 3, although it remains significant, suggesting a partial mediating effect. Accordingly, H1 (POS $\rightarrow$ CQ), H2 (POS $\rightarrow$ EWT), and H3 (CQ $\rightarrow$ EWT) are all supported.

Table 3

The Mediation Effect of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) in the Relationship Between Perceived Organization Support (POS) and EWT

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	EWT	CQ	EWT
POS	0.650**	0.642**	0.409**
CQ			0.375**
R^2	0.452	0.397	0.546
$Aj R^2$	0.445	0.389	0.538
F	$F(5,381) = 62.912^{**}$	$F(5,381) = 50.240^{**}$	$F(6,380) = 76.016^{**}$

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, t-value in parentheses

Moderation Analysis

The moderating effect was tested using hierarchical regression analysis across three models (see Table 4). Model 1 included the independent variable POS, Model 2 added the moderator (knowledge sharing, KS), and Model 3 introduced the interaction term (POS $\times$ KS). The results indicate that POS significantly predicts EWT in Model 1.

A similar procedure was applied in Table 5. The interaction term (POS $\times$ KS) in Model 3 was statistically significant ($\beta = -0.154$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that knowledge sharing negatively moderates the relationship between POS and CQ.

Table 4

The Results of TCFL's Knowledge Sharing Negatively Moderate the Relationship Between TCFL's POS and EWT (Dependent Variable = EWT)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
POS	0.650**	0.643**	0.605**
KS		-0.037	-0.011
POS*KS			-0.179**
R^2	0.452	0.453	0.477
$Aj R^2$	0.445	0.445	0.468
F	$F(5,381) = 62.912^{**}$	$F(6,380) = 52.500^{**}$	$F(7,379) = 49.414^{**}$

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, t-value in parentheses

Table 5

The Results of Knowledge Sharing Negatively Moderate the Relationship Between TCFL's POS and CQ (Dependent Variable = CQ)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
POS	0.642**	0.635**	0.603**
KS		-0.034	-0.012
POS*KS			-0.154**
R^2	0.397	0.398	0.414
$Aj. R^2$	0.389	0.389	0.403
F	$F(5,381) = 50.240^{**}$	$F(6,380) = 41.889^{**}$	$F(7,379) = 38.273^{**}$

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, t-value in parentheses

The results of the test for the moderating effect of marital status on the relationship between POS and EWT indicated that the interaction term (POS $\times$ marital status) was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.179$, $p = 0.332$), indicating that marital status does not moderate the relationship between POS and EWT. Thus, the effect of POS on EWT remains consistent regardless of marital status.

Based on the statistical findings, Hypothesis H4a (“Knowledge Sharing positively moderates the relationship between TCFL’s POS and their Cultural Intelligence”) was not supported in the proposed direction. Instead, the results revealed a significant negative moderating effect of knowledge sharing on the relationship between POS and cultural intelligence. Similarly, Hypothesis H4b (“Knowledge Sharing positively moderates the relationship between TCFL’s POS and EWT to Thailand”) was not supported in the proposed direction. Contrary to expectations, knowledge sharing significantly weakened the positive relationship between POS and expatriation willingness. In addition, Hypothesis H5, which proposed a negative moderating effect of marital status on the relationship between POS and expatriation willingness, was not supported because the interaction effect was not statistically significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study represents one of the first empirical attempts to test the proposed model within the fields of international human resource management and higher education, focusing on highly educated professionals (TCFLs) from China. The mean score of EWT exceeded 3, indicating that Chinese language teachers demonstrate a relatively strong willingness to undertake international expatriate assignments in Thailand. According to Chou et al. (2023), Chinese employees demonstrated a medium-high willingness to expatriate to Thailand, which was associated with favorable China–Thailand relations and organizational support. Consistent with this finding, the relatively high willingness among TCFLs in the present study may also reflect the growing demand for Chinese language education and supportive organizational conditions in Thailand. Beyond the overall level of expatriation willingness, the findings further reveal several important factors that contribute to TCFLs’ willingness to undertake expatriate assignments in Thailand. The main findings are summarized as follows:

POS Has a Significant Positive Effects on EWT

POS was found to have a significant and positive effect on EWT, indicating that greater organizational support enhances TCFLs’ readiness to accept expatriate assignments. This finding is consistent with prior research by Chou et al. (2023) on Chinese employees’ EWT. By focusing specifically on TCFLs, the present study extends this line of inquiry within the fields of international human resource management and cross-cultural organizational behavior, confirming that stronger organizational support is associated with higher levels of EWT among internationally mobile professionals in this occupational group.

Mediating Role of Cultural Intelligence

CQ was found to partially mediate the relationship between POS and EWT. This finding is consistent with Lee et al. (2013) and Wang et al. (2024), highlighting the important role of CQ in expatriation-related outcomes. Extending the work of Chou et al. (2023), the present study

identifies CQ as a mediating mechanism through which POS enhances EWT among TCFLs. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of expatriation decision-making within cross-cultural management contexts.

Moderating Role of Knowledge Sharing

The results show that the mean score for knowledge sharing was below 3, indicating a relatively low level of knowledge-sharing behavior among TCFLs. The interaction effect of POS $\times$ KS was significant ($\beta = -0.179, p < 0.01$). Contrary to expectations, knowledge sharing negatively moderated the relationships between POS, CQ, and EWT. These findings are inconsistent with prior research (Wang & Noe, 2010). One possible explanation is that, as knowledge-based professionals, TCFLs may exhibit self-protective motivations and concerns about losing professional advantage, leading them to treat knowledge as personal capital rather than an organizational resource.

Furthermore, informal knowledge sharing attenuated the positive relationship between POS and expatriation intention. Specifically, lower levels of informal knowledge sharing strengthened the instrumental effect of organizational support on expatriation intention, whereas higher levels of informal knowledge sharing enhanced interpersonal trust and organizational identification, thereby reducing the instrumental value attached to expatriation decisions.

Moderating Role of Marital Status

This study finds that marital status does not significantly moderate the relationship between POS and EWT. This result extends prior expatriation research and differs contextually from Lu et al. (2006), who reported that family-related factors influence expatriation decisions; such divergence may be attributable to differences in research contexts, organizational settings, and destination characteristics. The present finding is also consistent with Selmer and Luring (2011), who showed that marital status was positively associated with work effectiveness and performance among self-initiated expatriates, but did not function as a key moderating factor in more complex behavioral or decision-making processes. Similarly, Kim and Froese (2012), in an Asian context, found that marital role commitment had no significant effect on expatriation willingness, suggesting that family-related variables may operate differently across cultural and institutional environments. Taken together, these findings suggest that the influence of marital status on expatriation willingness is context-dependent and may be attenuated when organizational support and career-related factors are more salient. This highlights the increasing importance of organizational and psychological factors over demographic characteristics in explaining expatriation willingness.

Practical and Theoretical Implications

Strengthening Organizational Support

The positive effect of POS on EWT suggests that sending institutions and employing schools should provide TCFLs with adequate training, clear job information, and practical support before and during overseas assignments. Such support may reduce uncertainty and encourage greater willingness to accept teaching assignments in Thailand.

Enhancing Cultural Intelligence

The mediating role of CQ suggests that organizations should strengthen TCFLs' cross-cultural capabilities through cultural orientation and intercultural communication training. Enhancing CQ may help translate organizational support into stronger expatriation willingness.

Managing Knowledge-Sharing Mechanisms

The negative moderating effect of KS suggests that the positive influence of POS on EWT becomes weaker when KS is high. This indicates that organizational support and knowledge sharing may operate differently in shaping TCFLs' expatriation willingness. Therefore, organizations should consider both organizational support and peer knowledge-sharing mechanisms when preparing TCFLs for overseas assignments.

Providing Inclusive Support Practices

The non-significant moderating effect of marital status suggests that organizations should avoid assuming that support mechanisms need to differ substantially between married and unmarried TCFLs. More broadly accessible support practices may be more appropriate in this context.

Research Limitations and Suggestions

In addition to its novel findings, this study acknowledges several important limitations. First, the data were collected from two provinces in mainland China. Although the sample size met statistical requirements and the selected provinces, Sichuan and Yunnan, are geographically closer to Thailand and are generally associated with higher willingness toward Thai expatriation, this geographic proximity may introduce potential bias into the findings. Therefore, future research is encouraged to extend the sampling frame to other regions of China to examine whether regional economic development, labor market conditions, and geographic distance influence expatriation willingness.

Second, this study employed a quantitative research design. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, could provide deeper insights, particularly regarding the unexpected negative moderating effect of knowledge-sharing behavior on EWT. Future research could explore TCFLs' lived experiences with knowledge-sharing practices and platforms, and examine whether concerns about competitive pressures in China's increasingly "involutional" labor market contribute to reluctance in sharing knowledge. This would help unpack the underlying mechanisms driving the observed negative moderation effect.

Finally, future studies should consider incorporating additional variables to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of expatriation willingness. For instance, perceived cultural differences between China and Thailand and the perceived adequacy of expatriation incentives may play important roles in shaping teachers' willingness to accept overseas assignments. Including such variables may yield more nuanced and context-sensitive findings.

Despite these limitations, this study provides a useful foundation for future research on expatriation willingness among knowledge-based professionals.

Author Contributions

IWC: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Visualization, Writing—Original Draft Preparation, Writing—Review and Editing, Supervision, Project Administration; GJ: Resources, Data Curation, Writing—Review and Editing, Visualization.

Declaration of the Use of Generative AI

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT to assist in language editing and polishing of the draft. The tool was used solely to improve clarity, grammar, and overall readability of the manuscript, and did not contribute to the intellectual content or interpretation of the study. All AI-generated suggestions were carefully reviewed, revised, and integrated by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the content of the manuscript.

Ethics Statement

This study was conducted with ethical approval from the Committee for Research Ethics, The Human Research Ethics Office, Dhurakij Pundit University (Protocol Number: DPUHRECO22/66EX; COA No. 038/67; Title: *Exploring the Role of Perceived Organizational Support, Cultural Intelligence, and Marital Status in Influencing TCFLs' Expatriate Thailand Willingness*).

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Appendix A. Research Instruments

Response Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Table A1. Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

No.	Dimension	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Metacognitive CQ	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Metacognitive CQ	I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Metacognitive CQ	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Metacognitive CQ	I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Cognitive CQ	I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Cognitive CQ	I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Cognitive CQ	I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Cognitive CQ	I know the marriage systems of other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Cognitive CQ	I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Cognitive CQ	I know the rules for expressing nonverbal behaviours in other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Motivational CQ	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Motivational CQ	I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	Motivational CQ	I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Motivational CQ	I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15	Motivational CQ	I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	Behavioral CQ	I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	Behavioral CQ	I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	Behavioral CQ	I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	Behavioral CQ	I change my nonverbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	Behavioral CQ	I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Table A2. Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The organizational system ensures that I receive the necessary funding for my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	The organizational system ensures that I have access to the necessary facilities and equipment for my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	The organizational system ensures that I receive the necessary training for my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	The organizational system provides financial support for my further education and training.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	The organization has developed a detailed career development plan for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	The organization provides me with a good working environment and conditions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	My supervisor makes reasonable arrangements regarding personnel allocation and workload.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	My supervisor is willing to listen to the difficulties and problems I encounter in my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	My supervisor pays attention to my opinions and ideas about work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	When I encounter difficulties in life, my supervisor tries their best to help me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Colleagues are willing to help me solve problems encountered in my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12	Colleagues are willing to provide me with the necessary work information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	When I encounter difficulties in life, colleagues help me find solutions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	When I am not present, colleagues protect my interests.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Table A3. Willingness to Expatriate to Thailand

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	I have seriously considered pursuing a career in Thailand or even globally.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Given a choice between two similar jobs, one in Thailand and one domestically, I would prefer to stay in Thailand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Working in Thailand would accelerate my success.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Even if I work domestically, I wish to spend 40% of my time traveling to Thailand for work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I hope to have the opportunity to work in Thailand at some stage in my career.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Being posted in Thailand would make my career more challenging and meaningful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Working in Thailand can develop a broader range of management skills and gain more practical experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Working in Thailand can expand my horizons and enhance my professional capabilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Being posted in Thailand would provide me with a second job choice opportunity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I believe that working in Thailand is valuable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Working in Thailand would enrich my personal life and make it more interesting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐