

# Work and non-work adjustment. Are there differences between assignment expatriates and self-initiated expatriates?

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**Abstract:** The result of globalization in the area of human resource management (HRM) is the fact that more and more people work outside their country of origin and more and more people working in their home country are employed in foreign subsidiaries or branches operating there (e.g. Gomółka, et al., 2020). For enterprises, this means the need to adapt to the international context of their operations, including adaptation in the area of personnel activities (Stor, 2011).

Therefore, the main purpose of the descriptive-empirical article is to present the results of the pilot study, which aimed to reveal factors significant for the process of adaptation in the workplace and outside of two groups of expatriates- assignment and self-initiated. It is also worth noting that the study is part of a wider project entitled "Adaptation of expatriates over time. The pre-departure stage during and after arrival in the home country".

**Keywords:** assignment expatriates, self-initiated expatriates, adjustment, work, non-work adjustment

**JEL Classification codes:** F22, J61

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## INTRODUCTION

The literature on expatriation primarily focuses on expatriates as a homogeneous group of employees posted on foreign missions from the corporate headquarters to the host country (Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009). However, critical researchers in the field have begun to look at other types of expatriates as well, such as expatriate NGOs (Fee & Gray, 2012), academic expatriates (Jonasson et al., 2017), foreign executives in local organizations (Lauring & Selmer, 2018), public expatriates (Selmer & Fenner, 2009), flexpatriates (Mayerhofer et al., 2010) or inpatriates (Moeller et al., 2016). However, it should be emphasized that in recent years, there has been more space in scientific publications, not to self-initiated expatriation (SIE) (e.g. Cerdin & Selmer, 2014).

These results, among others, show that self-initiated expatriates are more often employed in international corporations in host countries than delegations of traditional expatriates (AE)<sup>1</sup>.

As evidenced by researchers (e.g. , Andresen et al., 2012; Banai & Reisel, 1993; McNulty & Tharenou, 2004; Richardson & McKenna, 2006), international corporations decide to employ SIEs because of their flexibility and knowledge of the local market. What's more, they have international experience. At the same time, as they independently initiate a relocation,

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<sup>1</sup> According to BGRS research (2013), nearly 65% of highly qualified international employees in corporations are SIEs, and 35% AEs.

international organizations refrain from participating in the relocation as the adaptation process in the host country (which is not the case with corporate expatriates).

At this point, it should be emphasized that in the literature on the subject, one can find many references to the adaptation of traditional expatriates (e.g., Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; McNulty & Selmer, 2017). However, only a few studies focus on comparing the adaptation process of traditional and self-initiated expatriates (e.g., Grelecka, 2016; McNulty & Brewster, 2019).

Therefore, the primary purpose of the descriptive-empirical article is to present the results of the pilot study, which aimed to reveal factors significant for the process of adaptation in the workplace and outside of two groups of expatriates-assignment and self-initiated. It is also worth noting that the study is part of a more comprehensive project entitled: "Adaptation of expatriates over time—the pre-departure stage during and after arrival in the home country.

## 1 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.1 Types of expatriates

About expatriates, despite more than four decades of research on this population of workers (Dabicab et al., 2014), there is still no theoretical consensus on defining this type of workforce (McNulty & Brewster, 2017), although numerous attempts ordering this matter bring researchers closer to terminological clarity. The literature on the subject provides multiple relations to assigned and self-initiated (after, Przytuła & Strzelec, 2019).

**Table 1. Terms in the literature describing assignments and self-initiated expatriates**

<b>Assignment expatriates</b>	<b>Self-initiated expatriates</b>
corporate nomad	self-determined expatriate
professional on a foreign mission	foreign worker on his initiative
organizationally rooted expatriate	highly qualified expatriate
organizational expatriate	mobile international worker
A manager from the country of origin of the headquarters	freelance international worker
global careerist	self-recruited expatriate
corporate expatriate	employee moving on his initiative

Source: (Przytuła & Strzelec, 2019)

The quoted terms indicate that traditional expatriates are associated with the organization that employs them, sends them on foreign missions, provides organizational support, and finances relocation. This definition emphasizes that expatriates were already employees of the organization before being sent abroad and employed by that organization in another country, distinguishing expatriates from people outside the company, e.g., tourists, immigrants, refugees, entrepreneurs, and students (McNulty & Brewster, 2017).

On the other hand, the distinguishing feature of self-initiated expatriates is the lack of attachment and dependence on any organization, decision-making autonomy, and own initiative in organizing and financing trips abroad.

What is typical of SIE is that self-initiated expatriation is not supported by any organization (e.g., (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010; Doherty & Dickmann, 2012; Tharenou, 2013). SIEs go abroad independently of any organization located in their country. Therefore, they are responsible for every stage of their international work. They independently initiate a trip abroad and select the destination country, length of stay, or repatriation. They decide to go to another country before they get a job. They have yet to determine how quickly, if at all, they will find employment (Andresen et al., 2015).

As pointed out by Inkson et al. (1997), Suutari and Brewster (2000), and Thorn (2009) self-initiated expatriates are mobile international workers whose mobility has been combined with travel opportunities or a desire for adventure and career development.

However, there are more differences between AE and SIE; therefore, below are only a few examples of discretion about motives for leaving, socio-cultural adaptation, previous international experience, or "organizational root."

SIE studied by Pinto et al. (2012) showed mainly individual motives, namely: (1) the desire to gain international experience; (2) the personal challenge of international relocation, and (3) the professional development and career benefits of going abroad.

Isakovic and Whitman (2013), researching a group of self-initiated expatriates in the United Arab Emirates, identified significant positive correlations between adaptation and previous international experience and cultural novelty. The analysis showed that countries where foreigners are the majority (such as ZAE) are attractive destination conducive to adapting to the country's new culture of delegation. In addition, previous international experiences (such as short-term trips, including tourist trips) impact the extent to which expats adapt to the host country's environment.

In turn, research by C. Linder (2019) conducted among 98 expats from 34 organizations also shows another critical determinant of undertaking a foreign mission by expats, which is "organizational embeddedness". The results show that organizational rootedness positively affects the work performance of all expatriates, but there are differences in these effects between traditional and self-initiated expats.

Self-initiated expats who seek opportunities to work abroad on their own have a weaker impact of rooting on the results of their work and achieving goals abroad than traditional expats sent on missions by their parent company. Being deeply embedded in the company's reality increases professional satisfaction, because the employee sees himself as a part of it, shares its goals, values, and vision. Deep roots and identification with the corporation increase the likelihood of employees performing tasks that go beyond their contractual requirements and organizational goals.

## **1.2 AE and SIE adjustment**

The area of research in the field of adaptation of foreigners is very complicated, ambiguous, and full of contradictory reports (Thomas, Lazarova, 2006), which results from the diverse methods of measuring adaptation and the criteria of effectiveness. It can be said that the impact of adaptation on an expatriate's work efficiency is neither linear nor direct (Glińska-Noweś, 2017).

It should be emphasized that most of the studies on the adaptation of expatriates were conducted in Asian countries, e.g., in China (Selmer, 1995; Takeuchi et al., 2009; Lee & Kartika, 2014; Rafiq et al., 2019); in Japan, (Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009; Yamazaki, 2010); in South Korea (Froese, 2012).

In recent years, the issues of adjusting expatriates have also been studied in African countries (Okpara, 2016).

The literature indicates a need for more research in Central and Eastern Europe (Brewster, 1991; Horwitz & Budhwar, 2015; Selmer, 1995). In Europe, the adaptation of expatriates in Scandinavian countries was studied: in Finland (Suutari & Brewster, 2000), Norway, and Sweden (Selmer & Luring, 2014), as well as in Germany (Zimmermann et al., 2003). L. Lett and M. Smith researched Polish expatriates working in Great Britain.

On the other hand, studies concerning Polish expats in Poland are very few and represented mainly by: S. Przytuła (2014), A. Poczowski (2012), J. Grelecka (2016), I. Kubica (2017).

Factors facilitating adaptation (facilitators) were indicated in many models, constructs, and adaptation programs. A review of the literature and research in this field shows that these factors can be arranged into a triad of the following dimensions: individual (also referred to as personality or psychological), organizational (related to work and professional experience), and contextual (socio-cultural, external environment, on social interaction in the country of posting).

Based on the literature review in the area of expatriate adaptation, an original table was developed (Table 2), in which 31 individual, 25 organizational, and 13 contextual factors influencing the process of adapting AE and SIE in the country of the delegation were distinguished.

**Table 2. Individual, organizational, and contextual factors determine the adaptation of AE and SIE.**

<b>Individual</b>	<b>organizational</b>	<b>contextual</b>
1) self-efficacy, 2) relationality, 3) knowledge of foreign languages, 4) previous foreign experience. 5) flexibility, 6) sensitivity, 7) empathy, 8) awareness, 9) intelligence, 10) willingness to work in a multicultural team, 11) willingness to communicate, 12) readiness to go abroad, 13) extraversion, 14) openness to experience, 15) neuroticism, 16) conscientiousness, 17) agreeableness. 18) conflict resolution/coping ability, 19) knowledge about the host country,	1) logistical and organizational support in relocation from the headquarters, 2) support from colleagues, 3) clarity of the role and professional requirements of the mission, 4) autonomy in decision-making, - novelty/differently of professional tasks in a new country, 5) providing a job in the home organization after returning, 6) using the knowledge and experience of expats in the parent unit, 7) role conflict, 8) pre-departure training, 9) mentor at the headquarters, 10) remuneration and benefits package, 11) the level of involvement in the affairs of the local unit, 12) period of operation of the organization on the market, 13) size of the organization,	1) cultural distance between the country of origin of the expat and the culture of the country of secondment, 2) degree of family adjustment, 3) interactions with local employees/residents, 4) adjusting the spouse, 5) family adjustment, 6) the size of the population in the country second. 7) the number of markets in which the company operates, 8) specificity of the place of business. 9) family and interpersonal support, 10) knowledge of the values and norms of the culture of the posting country, 11) climate, 12) geographical location, 13) amenities of everyday life (local transport, availability of medical care services, entertainment).

20) satisfaction with previous foreign experience, 21) knowledge of foreign languages. 22) education, 23) country of origin and system of expressed values, 24) seniority, 25) professional role (type of position held), 26) individual career orientation, 27) cultural intelligence, 28) willingness to learn, 29) appropriate (tolerant) attitude towards cultural issues and differences, 30) developed social competencies, 31) features showing determination and strong motivation.	14) country of origin, 15) employment size, 16) type of applicable organizational procedures, 17) organizational culture, 18) degree of organization of the adaptation process (policies, programs, tools, and responsible units). 19) intercultural training (content, duration, and techniques) 20) length of the foreign mission, 21) distance from the home country, 22) frequency of contact with the home country, 23) issues of family relocation and pre-departure assistance and after arrival at the branch, 24) issues of repatriation and career prospects for expatriates after returning to the head office, 25) the method of "organizing" a foreign mission.	
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Source: own study

Examples of the factors presented in the triad table can be seen in the studies cited below.

Peltokorpi (2008) quantified the adaptation of 179 traditional and self-initiated expatriates in Japan. The analysis showed a positive impact of foreign language skills and emotional empathy on social and professional adaptation in the host country. In addition, the study revealed that the primary dimension of diversity, i.e., gender, is essential for the adaptation process in the case of both surveyed groups of expatriates. This means that male expatriates (AE and SIE) adapt better to Japanese society and culture than female expatriates. This is due to the masculinistic and senior Japanese culture.

Research conducted among 30 expatriate academicians of Western origin who are engaged in a foreign mission in South Korea proves the relationship between the motives for undertaking a foreign mission and adjustment in both professional and non-professional spheres. Froese (2012) emphasized that family reasons, cognitive curiosity, and unfavorable working conditions in the home country significantly impact the level and degree of professional and non-professional adaptation.

The results of research conducted among self-initiated expats in Germany showed a positive correlation between job satisfaction and their adaptation (Cao et al., 2013).

In turn, Shaffer et al. (2017) showed differences in the level of adaptation and the relationship between work and personal life, showing that SIEs are more adaptable to life in the host country than AEs.

S. Przytuła (2014), researching a group of traditional expatriates in Poland, showed that although one-third of the respondents working in Poland was in no way prepared to work and live in the country of delegation, most of them did not experience adaptation problems. This could be because the international experience and practices gained before being delegated to Poland proved helpful in this respect, which was reported by 67% of the surveyed expats. In addition, the respondents indicated environmental factors (similar culture, religion, climate, and geographical location of the country where they previously worked), individual characteristics (motivation and willingness to work in Poland, and work-related factors (similar. Therefore, these were foreign experiences gained in work conditions identical to those in Poland.

The results of a study conducted by I. Grelecka (2016) on a group of traditional and self-initiated expatriates showed, among others, that cultural intelligence positively affects the adaptation of both groups of employees outside their workplace. Moreover, language proficiency is relevant for the SIE's adaptation process in the workplace but not for AE.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

As it has been emphasized, studies raising the issue of expatriate adaptation are presented by numerous researchers in this area (e.g.), it should be noted that they are based on the expatriate adaptation scale (BMO) by Black, Mendenh, and Oddou (1991).

Although this model is the most often quoted in the literature, it has its limitations indicated by other researchers. Many points at these three dimensions have a weak, or rather "artificial" foundation and theoretical justification (Brewster, et al., 2016). Although this model has been statistically confirmed in subsequent studies (this was a meta-analysis conducted by Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. in (2005), their theoretical basis is a weakness (Hippler et al., 2014; Lazarova, Thomas, 2012; Shaffer et al., 2016).

Researchers also indicate that the dimensions of adaptation proposed in this way do not consider many factors that should be examined (Aycan, 1997; Selmer, 1995).

Black et al. used a 7-factor scale for general adjustment, a 3-factor scale for work adjustment, and a 4-factor scale for interaction adjustment.

Hippler, Caligiuri, and Johnson (2014) drew attention to methodological problems which, according to the researchers, were not included in the BMO scale and are crucial for the expatriate adaptation process. According to the researchers, there is a need to: less ambiguously operationalize expatriate adaptation, identify the factors that make up the person-environment (P-E) relationship, and (3) challenge the assumption that all expatriates (i.e., both SIE and AE) perceive environmental aspects as equally important for their adaptation process. Therefore, taking into account the existing premises and the indicated research inconsistencies, the authors developed a new 35-item scale to measure the adaptation of expatriates, which was initially adapted for the needs of the current pilot.

The target group consisted of employees, foreigners working in international corporations in Poland who were delegated on a foreign mission by the organization's headquarters, and those who independently initiated their expatriate mission.

The quantitative survey was conducted mainly using the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) technique, to a lesser extent CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview), and 63 traditional and 37 self-initiated expatriates participated.

The demographic analysis of the surveyed group of respondents showed that 49% were men and 51% were women. The mean age of the subjects was 38.28 years. On average, the respondents work in the current organization for 7.78 years. The general seniority of

expatriates is 12, 42 years. On the other hand, the total duration of stay in Poland was 4.69 years. The nationality of the surveyed expats came from 12 countries, i.e., Belarus, China, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, UK, and the USA. 76% of the respondents graduated from higher education and obtained a master's degree, 19% have a bachelor's degree, and 5% have a doctorate. Most of the respondents (as many as 68%) came to Poland alone, and 37% of the respondents were on a foreign mission with family or friends. Expats (traditional and self-initiated) are 82% managers and 18% executives. When asked about previous foreign missions, 66% of respondents gave an affirmative answer. For 34%, it was the first expatriate mission.

### 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To find out, among other things, what fundamental factors are essential for adapting both expatriates in the professional dimension and beyond, three research questions were posed, and the analysis is presented below.

To verify them, descriptive statistics were used: average, percentage, frequency, minimum, and maximum.

1. What key factors are essential for adaptation in the workplace for traditional expatriates and SIE?

**Table 3. Critical factors for professional adaptation**

	<b>AE</b>	<b>SIE</b>
<b>Work-related factors</b>	Mean	Mean
The working attitude of the employees	2,00	2,05
The amount of freedom I have in decision-making at work	1,94	2,24
My ability to understand the language used in my work environment	1,86	2,03
The corporate culture of the organization where I work	1,84	2,22
My colleagues' qualifications and skill level (coworkers, direct reports, etc.)	1,87	2,19
The variety of my tasks at work	1,90	1,97
My ability to express me in written language	2,08	2,08
The work climate (i.e., the environment affecting my daily experience on-the-job)	1,95	2,30
My job activities or tasks	1,97	2,00
The autonomy I have in organizing and structuring my tasks at work	2,00	2,19
The employees' method of working, in general	1,95	2,14

My level of professional responsibility	1,83	2,00
How people communicate (e.g., discuss issues, debate)	2,05	2,11
My ability to understand the written language	1,86	2,14
The reliability of the people	2,08	2,08

Source: own study

As can be seen from the analysis carried out for both SIE and AE, work-related factors such as, for example, the work attitude of the employees, the variety of tasks at work, the ability to express myself in written language, the autonomy in organizing and structuring tasks at work or the reliability of the people are equally important. Slight disproportions can be observed among factors such as: level of professional responsibility, ability to understand the written language, the corporate culture of the organization, and the work climate (i.e., the environment affecting my daily experience on-the-job).

As J. Bonache (2005) points out, in contrast to local workers, expatriates 'value more work characterized by various tasks and autonomy, providing learning opportunities, allowing them to apply their knowledge and giving them sufficient responsibility.'

According to V. Koteswari and M.S. Bhattacharya (2007), organizational support contributes significantly to adaptation in the workplace. The authors perceive the organization's support through the prism of the quality of superior-subordinate relations and psychological acceptance of local co-workers. In addition, the management style in the organization affects the quality of the superior-subordinate interaction. Organizational support is perceived through employee interactions with management, supervisor, co-workers, and subordinates. If the reflection of these interactions is positive, then the corporate support perceived in this way supports the expatriate's adaptation to the work environment.

2. Which factors are crucial for adaptation outside the workplace (e.g., life, the culture of the posting country, interaction with the local community) for assignment expatriates, and which for SIE?

**Table 4. Critical factors for adaptation outside the workplace**

<b>Active outside of work</b>	<b>AE</b>	<b>SIE</b>
	Mean	Mean
The way I spend my leisure time	2,06	2,11
Contact with my friends in my home country	1,89	2,05
My family's cohesion	1,98	1,89
The number of friends I have locally	1,90	2,05
The level of environmental pollution	1,90	2,32
My sense of balance between my professional/work and private/home life	1,94	2,14



The street traffic	1,97	2,19
My working hours	1,92	1,97
The size of my house or flat	1,95	2,19
The punctuality of the people	1,89	2,22
The opportunities to play the sports I enjoy	1,90	2,08
My ability to express myself in written language	2,08	2,08
The harmony of my relationship with my spouse or partner	2,25	2,22
The natural beauty of my local environment	2,02	2,30
My ability to actively communicate in my non-work environment	2,03	2,00
Opportunities for spending my leisure time	1,90	2,11
The depth/quality of my friendships locally	1,94	2,14
Contact with my extended family/relatives	1,87	2,08
My ability to understand the language used in my non-work environment	1,98	2,05
My accommodations (e.g., detached house, flat, gated community)	2,05	2,03
My ability to understand the written language	1,86	2,14
Opportunities for practicing hobbies I enjoy	1,84	1,97

Source: own study

Also, this analysis showed no significant discrepancies between adaptation and non-work-related factors for corporate and self-initiated expatriates.

This means that, on average, factors such as e.g., contact with my extended family/relatives, opportunities for practicing hobbies, the harmony of my relationship with the spouse or partner, the natural beauty of the local environment, ability to communicate in a non-work environment actively, are essential for the process of respondents' adaptation to life, interaction with the local community or culture, attitudes, and behavior in Poland.

According to Puck et al. (2017), interactions with residents, general differences (including cultural differences), size of the population in the country of posting, and degree of novelty/differently (national) affect the level of adaptation of expatriates in three dimensions of adaptation from the BMO model.

Mol et al. (2005) postulate that work-live-balance significantly impacts the "well-being" of an expat, which, in the authors' opinion, is related to its adaptation.

Respondents also provided answers to open questions in the survey questionnaire.

This means that the research indicated, in their assessment, the most important barriers or what they lacked in their adaptation in Poland.

3. What are the critical barriers to adaptation for assignment expatriates and for self-initiated expatriates at the preparation stage and carrying out a foreign mission?

**Table 5. Barriers to adaptation at the preparation stage**

What was missing while preparing for your trip to Poland?		Percent
AE	Better preparation	6,30
	I was missing my family	4,80
	Learning Polish	8,00
	Money	9,50
	Nothing	34,90
	Time	9,50
SIE	Better preparation	4,80
	Learning Polish	4,80
	Money	4,80
	Nothing	15,90
	Time	3,20

Source: own study

As can be observed, both AE and SIE, at the preparation stage for a foreign mission, did not follow key barriers that would be important for their adaptation process (34.90% and 15.90%, respectively). However, money, time, learning Polish, or better preparation are less critical for AEs in their adaptation process. In turn, SIE pointed out that other vital barriers affecting adaptation in Poland are: better preparation, learning Polish, money, and time.

Although both groups of respondents indicated similar barriers, the hierarchy of their importance is different for AE and different for SIE.

At this point, it should be emphasized that the adaptation process begins at this preparation stage, i.e., before leaving for the host country.

Preparing for departure to another country has been studied much less often than the other stages of the expatriate cycle. The research results so far do not indicate its suitability for a foreign mission. Some authors (e.g., Waxin & Panaccio, 2005) postulate a high added value of preparation for a foreign mission, while others emphasize low effectiveness.

The expats themselves usually positively assess the value of the preparation (Brewster, Ehnert, 2008) (in fact, its significance depends on the type of preparation and when it was performed). The most significant value can be obtained by receiving information from the so-called—source, i.e., directly from an employee who has been or is on a foreign mission.

The increased use of social media such as Facebook or WhatsApp has often replaced the need for formal training. Pre-departure support can be found online by connecting directly with an expat (often completely unknown) in the host country.

More and more expats are experienced travelers (e.g., experiences gathered during holidays abroad, they also use information collected on the Internet about various destinations), and they know a lot about the world and the differences they can experience. Many willingly share their experience on blogs, vlogs, and other discussion forums.

In turn, at the implementation stage, the results are as follows:

**Table 6. What you missed at the implementation stage**

<b>What did you miss during your stay in Poland?</b>		<b>Percent</b>
AE	Family	61,90
	Nothing	15,90
SIE	Family	43,20
	Nothing	18,90

Source: own study

For both groups of respondents at the implementation stage, the critical barrier in the adaptation process was the lack of a family. Interestingly, at this stage the respondents indicated the lack of obstacles to a high degree (it is 15.90% in the case of AE and 18.90% in the case of SIE)<sup>2</sup>.

In addition, the respondents were asked how they would assess the organization of the adaptation process in the current organization (subsidiary) in Poland<sup>3</sup>. Traditional expatriates evaluated the organization of the adaptation process as good and very good (corresponding indications at the level of 23.80%). In turn, SIE assessed this process in 29.70% as very good.

In addition, the analysis showed that the professional adaptation process of traditional expatriates took an average of 11 weeks. In contrast, self-initiated expats adapted to the work environment after an average of 13 weeks. On the other hand, AE adapted to life, culture, and interaction with Poles in 9 weeks, and SIE in 10 weeks on average.

## **CONCLUSION**

Although the literature indicates significant differences in the adaptation process among traditional and self-initiated expatriates, the pilot study conducted in Poland did not show such differences. Therefore, work and outside work factors are essential in the adjustment process of both surveyed groups of international workers in Poland.

The pilot study has limitations that affect the interpretation and generalization of the results. The most important, according to the author, is the research tool. The scale by Hippler et al. (2014) used to measure the adaptation of traditional expats in host countries did not consider

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<sup>2</sup> It should be recalled that this is an open question, and the answers indicated in the table accounted for the most significant percentage.

<sup>3</sup> All respondents have worked in the current organization for an average of 7.78 years.

some factors specific to Poland, Polish culture, and social conditions, which were not asked about.

This limitation is also a postulate towards the triangulation of research methods (Stańczyk, 2013) and supplementing the obtained quantitative research with qualitative methods (Cresswell, 2012).

It should also be emphasized that the pilot study is only a part of a more comprehensive project, which may be a call for further future exploration. The project refers to adaptation to the entire cycle of expatriation, i.e., preparation, implementation, and repatriation, and is set in time. According to the authors of the 3D model (Haslberger et al., 2014), adaptation is a dynamic process (it occurs dynamically over time). At the same time, the expatriate may be adapted to the working conditions or professional environment but needs more time to adjust to interaction with the local community. According to the authors of this model, adaptation occurs in various areas and dimensions and is subject to changes over time. This may mean that the length of the expatriate's stay in the country of posting can be independent of their adaptation process.

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