



Master's Thesis
Culture, Communication & Globalization (CCG)

EXPATS IN DENMARK: Challenges & Accommodation Strategies

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Abstract

The frequency of international and intercultural encounters is enhanced as an outcome of the increasingly globalized world. This thesis was motivated by an interest in investigating international and intercultural encounters within a workplace. Expatriates in a foreign workplace is an apparent example of how international and intercultural encounters materialize. The purpose of investigating expatriates in a foreign workplace in this thesis is two-folded, due to the recognition of the expatriates' and companies' collective responsibility in facilitating the desirable international and intercultural workplace. Initially, this thesis will investigate the challenges experienced by expatriates in Danish companies with an emphasis on identifying potential causes. Secondly, this thesis will investigate a Danish company's perception and accommodation strategies in relation to expatriates. The literature review acknowledged the importance of a culturally diverse workforce in order to facilitate the companies' international competitiveness, which further substantiates the relevance of this thesis.

The two-folded purpose of this thesis was investigated through the utilization of survey and interview studies. The survey study was utilized in order to identify the challenges experienced by expatriates in Danish workplaces. The interview study was utilized in order to identify a Danish company's perception and accommodation strategies in relation to expatriates. The potential causes pertaining to the challenges of expatriates were investigated through a thematic analysis. The thematic analysis demonstrated similar themes within the survey and interview data, which enabled a comparison of both sets of findings in order to examine the interplay between expatriate and company in relation to challenges and accommodation strategies.

The thematic analysis and subsequent discussion demonstrated the development of expatriate's challenges as outcomes of language- and cultural barriers. The challenges were specifically related to lacking understanding of Danish (workplace) culture, and socialization in terms of establishing friendships. The thematic analysis and subsequent discussion of the interview demonstrated a company's emphasis on social initiatives, such as language classes and a buddy-system in order to accommodate expatriates. However, the survey revealed the ineffectiveness of these initiatives. As a result, this thesis advocates additional emphasis on establishing the matching of expectations amongst company and expatriate prior to employment. Lastly, it advocates for the responsibility of domestic employees in the integration of expats.

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0. Abbreviation List

BASIC: The Behavioral Assessment Scale for Intercultural Competence

CEDEFOP: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Centre Européen pour le Développement de la Formation Professionnelle)

DI: Dansk Industri

DME: Danish Ministry of Employment

EURES: European Employment Service

Expat: Expatriate

HR: Human Resources

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

KL: Kommunernes Landsforening

LMX: Leader Member Exchange

MPO: Mismatch Priority Occupations

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

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2. Introduction

Globalization has brought with it the promotion of global economic growth, which subsequently creates jobs across the world, making companies more competitive and eventually lower prices for consumers. The increased competitiveness of companies has also meant that companies are now keen on hiring expats because they possess know-how that domestic talents do not possess. This means that in order to stay internationally competitive these companies must hire expats, otherwise they cannot keep up with the increasingly competitive global market (Collins 2015). It is in the best interest of companies to facilitate their stay as best they can in order to avoid potentially losing the expats after a few years due to different circumstances that potentially could have been avoided, if the company knew how to accommodate the needs of the expats better. This has been an issue for many companies because it requires a lot of resources to most optimally ensure that expats feel appreciated and integrated in both their working life and social life when moving to a new country (Collins 2015).

The issue of skill shortages is of particular concern to European policymakers. CEDEFOP (2016) have identified Mismatch Priority Occupations (MPOs), where the skill shortage is critical. The potential outcomes of the critical skill shortages are significant implications in regard to national economy, education and training. The top five Mismatch Priority Occupations (MPOs) with critical skill shortage across the EU are: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) professionals, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) professionals, nursery and midwifery, teachers, and medical doctors. The critical skill shortage in the aforementioned sectors are due to insufficient supply of graduates, ageing population, growth and an increasing demand. Education and training are not the only solutions to manage and solve skill shortages. An additional solution is the employment of qualified expatriates in shortage occupations. In recent times, in the case of appointing qualified expatriates, some countries have tried to ease the process (CEDEFOP 2016).

In recent years, the recruitment of qualified expatriates in Denmark has been a desire of Danish companies. Additionally, the recruitment of qualified expatriates has been on the political agenda in Denmark. According to Kommunernes Landsforening's (KL) calculations, based upon data from Statistics Denmark, 37 % of qualified highly paid expatriates left

Denmark within three years of their arrival in the time period of 2008 to 2011 (KL 2015). The aforementioned data is an evident example of past issues with the retention of expatriates in Denmark. In 2014, the Danish government proposed a relaxation of taxes towards highly skilled international workforce. The proposal became effective from January 1st, 2015. This tax deduction is an opportunity to make it easier for Danish companies to attract international employees in order to stay internationally competitive (Skatteministeriet 2014).

According to Nelson (2014), teamwork brings more achievements and is an essential part of organizations. Organizations and teams with diversity in different purposeful ways such as skill set, education, work experiences and cultural orientation have a higher potential for innovation than homogenous organizations and teams. The business case for workforce diversity within Human Resources (HR) has its focus on recruitment, selection, development and retention. These focus points are significant in order to manage labor market shifts, business goals, globalization and competitive advantage (Kossek, Lobel & Brown 2006). Benefits of workforce diversity may include an increased customer demand. A workforce with greater cultural diversity will be better to cover diverse product markets. Furthermore, organizations with workforce diversity have higher-quality group decision making, greater creativity, more organizational flexibility, greater ability to attract and retain the best talent and greater marketing capability (Kossek, Lobel & Brown 2006). According to Scheiblea (2015), in connection to the prior stated, expatriates increase the diversity of work teams. However, the employment of expatriates can potentially cause conflicts and misunderstandings in the workplace due to immediate cultural differences (Green et al. 2002).

2.1 Research Questions

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the challenges experienced by expatriates in a foreign workplace. However, the examination of all challenges pertaining to expatriates in foreign workplaces is impossible. Therefore, it was decided to limit the scope of this thesis to the challenges experienced by expatriates in Denmark. Furthermore, this thesis has its emphasis on investigating how Danish companies accommodate expatriates in order to ensure the desired high levels of retention.

In the pursuit of examining the challenges of an expatriate, the following research question has been developed: **“Why do expatriates experience challenges in Danish companies?”**

In the pursuit of examining the approaches to accommodate expatriates, the following research question has been developed: **“How do Danish companies accommodate expats in order to ensure the desired high levels of retention?”**

2.2 Project Structure

This thesis is divided into seven different sections. The initial section is the introduction, which in addition to the introduction itself, encompasses the research questions, the project structure, the motivation behind the thesis, and this thesis’ definition of an expatriate, as well as a clarification of the thesis’ context. This section will introduce the field of study and contextualize the thesis in order to provide the reader a foundation to read the remainder of the thesis.

The second section is the literature review. The literature review is concerned with pre-existing literature relevant to the topic of expatriates. Firstly, the literature review will discuss the aspect of employee retention in regard to the theories and concepts of job embeddedness, organizational factors, job satisfaction, organization socialization, and employee commitment. Secondly, it will focus on expatriate retention in regard to expatriate adjustment models. Lastly, the aspect of culture will be discussed through theories on intercultural competence, and cultural diversity. Each of the theories and concepts in the literature review will be concluded by a summation of why we chose to include it in the thesis.

Thirdly, the theory of science section will be introduced. Theory of science encompasses the justification of the chosen scientific positioning in regard to our ontological and epistemological stances.

The fourth section is methodology, which encompasses an account of the primary and secondary empirical data, as well as the choice of research design. In addition, the methodology section encompasses the method of data analysis, the aspect of trustworthiness in research, and delimitations.

The fifth section is the analysis. The analytical section will introduce and analyze the findings of the primary data in accordance with the research questions. Furthermore, a comparison of survey and interview findings will be conducted in terms of potential differences and similarities in regard to the identified themes pertaining to expats' challenges and company's approach to accommodate expats.

The sixth section is the discussion. The discussion will relate our findings to the theoretical framework and the secondary data. It will also provide the reader with potential ways to improve the accommodation of expatriate's challenges in Denmark.

The seventh and final section encompasses the conclusion. The conclusion will summarize the findings in accordance with the research questions.

2.3 Motivation

The researchers' interest in the topic of expatriate retention were developed due to a shared interest in potentially finding employment abroad or within an international company. We believe that an acknowledgment and understanding of other cultures in a culturally diverse workplace, is of utmost importance for companies in order to be successful. This is further substantiated by the emergence of globalization, which resulted in how people from across the world are able to find employment anywhere. One researcher's interest in the topic of expatriate retention was further developed due to a previous internship. The internship introduced the researcher to the need and importance of expatriates in the Danish business community. Ultimately, the topic of expatriate retention was also selected due to the noticeable international- and intercultural dimensions, which adhere to the overall emphasis within our study program.

2.4 Definition of Expatriate

There are multiple definitions of an expatriate (henceforth referred to as an expat). Mendenhall and Wiley (1994) argue that an expat is someone who leave their home country to find residence in another country. As opposed to Mendenhall and Wiley (1994), Adler (1984) argues that an expat is someone who has been sent abroad by a company due to professional circumstances. This thesis characterizes an expat as any international employee who have relocated to another country for work-related purposes. Therefore, this characterization of an expat is not limited to international employees who have relocated as

an outcome of a company's decision. Furthermore, this thesis' characterization of expats also encompasses expats who have relocated as an outcome of individual ambitions.

2.5 Context

The context of this thesis will be outlined by an introduction to a perception of Danish workplace culture. The introduction to Danish workplace culture will be followed by a presentation of the current needs, legislations and recommendations in relation to expats in Denmark. Additionally, expat perceptions of life in Denmark will be illuminated in order to outline potential challenges.

Danish workplace culture

This thesis applies the ontological stance of social constructionism, which implies that Danish workplace culture is not definitive, but rather based on subjective interpretations.

According to Workindenmark (n.d.a), which is an organization that facilitates expats in Denmark, the notion of hierarchy within the Danish workplace is perceived as relatively flat and, in some cases, invisible. This perception of hierarchy might differ from the expat's perception of hierarchy. Therefore, it is important for expats to get an immediate understanding of the hierarchy in a Danish company. Workindenmark argues that the Danish way of working is based on teamwork, and that everyone in the team provides the same value in terms of pitching ideas and opinions. However, when assigned with individual tasks it is expected that said tasks gets taken care of. Furthermore, it is expected and perceived as an obligation that when working in teams, everyone helps other members that might struggle with a given task (Workindenmark n.d.a). The Danish work week consist of thirty-seven hours, depending on the company and the position of the employee. Deadlines are very important to Danes and a very high level of punctuality is expected in regard to meeting said deadlines and completion of tasks. The ability to manage different tasks in relation to their urgency is also expected. In some companies, individual planning of working hours is permitted, due to the company trusting employees' awareness of upholding the best interests of the company. The aforementioned is permitted in order to accommodate the work-life balance of employees (Workindenmark n.d.a). Furthermore, Workindenmark argues for a high level of informality within the Danish workplace, which is connected to the

aforementioned flat and often invisible hierarchy. Moreover, humor is often used at a Danish workplace as a way of communication (Workindenmark n.d.a).

To sum up, according to Workindenmark, Danish workplace culture is characterized by a flat hierarchy, informality and teamwork.

The need of expats in Denmark

The need for qualified workers is a contemporary reality for many organizations and companies operating in Denmark. According to Dansk Industri (DI), there is much evidence to suggest that the need for qualified work is going to become one of the biggest challenges to Danish businesses in the future. Moreover, there is an increasing focus upon the value of international personnel, within the Danish business community. In the last few years a number of initiatives and legislative changes have been made, which have made the process of attracting and retaining expats more effortless for Danish businesses and companies. Additionally, a fair number of studies, developed by DI have in recent years arguably determined a correlation between the presence of an international workforce within a corporation, and an increase in productivity and competitiveness. This establishes a substantial agreement upon the value of international employees (Dansk Industri 2016).

DI argues that recruiting internationally would be of interest for any corporation that seeks a level of future growth regardless of their company's size. This assertion is supported by how an international workforce is able to provide access to distinct and unique knowledge and competencies in areas where the domestic workforce is limited (Dansk Industri 2016). This is especially alluring to companies that are specialized in a given area in which uncommon competencies and skills are needed. Moreover, international insight could provide easier access to the global market, which could be a determining factor of export growth, as the expats could retain expertise in regard to the international market's languages, cultures and unique conditions. This might aid in achieving a more substantial international customer base and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, it is argued that diversity functions as a basis for innovation and growth, wherein new perspectives constitute contemporary possibilities. Diverse teams are often superior to homogeneous ones in regard to innovation and performance (Dansk Industri 2016).

Denmark is currently in a period of economic growth and progress within employment. Foreign labor has significantly contributed to the progress of the Danish labor market in the latter years. International recruitment has strengthened the workforce with approximately 32,000 individuals from 2013 to 2016. (Økonomi og Indenrigsministeriet 2018). Highly educated expats have a positive impact on public finances. The average length of stay in Denmark amongst highly educated expats is approximately five and a half years with an average yearly contribution of 130,000 DKK to public finances. The stay of highly educated expats generates, in average, a surplus of 720,000 DKK (DEA 2016).

In summation, according to Dansk Industri, the need of expats must be acknowledged in order to strengthen the international competitiveness of Danish companies. Furthermore, various statistics demonstrated how expats can benefit Denmark financially.

Legislations on international workforce in Denmark

In January 2015, a reform regarding international recruitment in Denmark was implemented. The purpose of the reform was to strengthen Danish companies' international competitiveness by easing the access to highly qualified expats from third countries. Another purpose of the reform was to improve the integration and retention of expats in Denmark. The reform introduced a new legislation of a fast-track agreement to highly qualified international workforce (Damvad Analytics 2017, p. 5). The report by Damvad Analytics (2017) evaluated the aforementioned reform through a survey and interviews with Danish companies. The fast-track agreement was subject to positive reviews from the surveyed companies, as the agreement accelerated and brought flexibility to the recruitment process of international workforce. However, the fast-track agreement excluded companies with less than twenty employees. The aforementioned rule prevented 74 % of the Danish companies who recruit internationally to benefit from the fast-track agreement (Damvad Analytics 2017).

Ultimately, the reform benefited the surveyed companies in terms of increased employment, average salary level and overall revenue. Furthermore, the report demonstrated the surveyed Danish companies' aspirations to acquire international employees. 60 % of the surveyed companies argue that expats enhance the development innovation and diversity. 40 % of the surveyed companies expressed a desire to establish an international work environment aided by expats, who possess superior experience and competencies that were not possible to acquire within the domestic workforce (Damvad Analytics 2017).

An expat can apply for residence- and work permit in Denmark based upon different prerequisites. Firstly, an expat can apply based upon the salary agreement. In 2019, the offered annual remuneration is required to be a minimum of 426,985 DKK based upon the salary agreement. Furthermore, the salary agreement is not influenced by parameters such as education and occupation (Styrelsen for International Rekruttering og Integration 2019a). Secondly, an expat can apply for residence- and work permit in Denmark based upon the positive list. The positive list encompasses occupations with a shortage of qualified domestic workforce. As opposed to the salary agreement, an expat's educational background must correspond to an occupation on the positive list (Styrelsen for International Rekruttering og Integration 2019b).

In 2018, the Danish government enacted a revised law in relation to Danish classes. International employees and students are now obliged to pay 2,000 DKK per module. The rule of partial user charge also encompasses international employees' accompanying partners (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2018).

To sum up, the Danish legislations on expats arguably revealed a hesitant approach in facilitating Danish companies' access to expats. In addition, the salary agreement indicates how a company could face financial difficulties. Furthermore, the positive list demonstrated a favoritism of certain occupations.

Recommendations

Project Welcome developed a handbook in order to help companies to integrate expats as well as providing practical guidelines to companies, who consider hiring expats. The purpose and expectations in relation to the appointment of an expat must be established in order to initiate the practical processes (Project Welcome 2011). The handbook outlined several questions to be taken into consideration prior to the appointment of an expat: "*Why do we select the expats, and what can they bring to the company?*", "*Do we have the resources (material and human) to accommodate the specific needs, an expat might have?*" and "*How do we manage the cultural differences?*" (Project Welcome 2011, p. 1-1). These questions illuminate the awareness of the complex and multi-layered process of recruiting and integrating expats.

The handbook listed six overall parameters of consideration in relation to successful integration of expats. Firstly, companies must ensure an understanding of their own culture in order to convey it to newly appointed expats. An understanding of own corporate culture encompasses considerations about the tone of the workplace, routines and fundamental company characteristics (Project Welcome 2011). Secondly, the company must prioritize to achieve an understanding of a newly appointed expat's culture. Respect and interest must be demonstrated in order to establish a mutual cultural understanding (Project Welcome 2011). The third parameter has its emphasis on establishing individualized expectations. It is argued that expats experience a major upheaval as an outcome of entering a Danish workplace. Employers must be aware of the aforementioned when adjusting expectations (Project Welcome 2011). The importance of communication is recognized in the fourth parameter. Employers must have openness, explain their actions and attempt to understand the actions of the expats (Project Welcome 2011). The fifth parameter argues for the importance of support from current employees. The expat's adjustment process is individual but also dependent on the extent of support from current employees (Project Welcome 2011). Ultimately, it is argued that conflicts must be faced and precautionary measures in relation to conflicts must be developed (Project Welcome 2011).

Communication and language, the cultural encounter and mentoring arrangements constitute the topics of focus in Project Welcome's perception of challenges and recommendations associated to expats at a Danish workplace (Project Welcome 2011). It has been argued that knowledge of the Danish language is crucial in order to secure successful integration of expats on- and off work. Knowledge of the Danish language fosters an opportunity of understanding Danes and Danish culture. Communication and language have been perceived as a potential challenge due to differences in language skills and ways of communicating. Expats and employers might differ in terms of openness, dialogue, and use of irony and humor (Project Welcome 2011). A positive and relaxed atmosphere, openness, inclusion, curiosity, appreciation and praise bring efficient communication despite potential barriers and misunderstandings pertaining to language. Simple sentences, awareness of body language, avoidance of indirect insinuations and caution in the use of humor and irony are some of the practical advices in order to ensure efficient communication (Project Welcome 2011).

Project Welcome (2011) addressed the topic of cultural encounter through foreign perceptions of Danish culture and the unwritten rules at a Danish workplace. Foreign perceptions of Danish culture have been listed by Fink (2009) as a result of several interviews with expats in Denmark: *“It is not easy to get to know Danes. Many Danes already have extensive networks, thus their interest in getting to know foreigners is relatively low”* (as cited in Project Welcome 2011, p. 8-4). Unwritten rules at a Danish workplace has been outlined by Yükksekaya (2007). Examples of unwritten rules are as follows: *“At a Danish workplace it is considered polite to understand irony and humor, be flexible, participate in social gatherings, and to be aware of the flat management structure”* (as cited in Project Welcome 2011, p. 8-5 & 8-6).

Moreover, the Project Welcome handbook (2011) addressed the strategy of implementing mentor arrangements for newly arrived expats, in the attempt to aid their integration into their new work-environment. The mentoring arrangement entails the employer assigning an employee the responsibility to assist their new colleague with professional as well as personal grievances regarding their new lifestyle as an expat. Project Welcome (2011) argues that mentoring arrangements is an effective tool in the attempt to integrate foreign employees into domestic businesses. However, the effectiveness of this strategy is dependent of several factors. First and foremost, it is of utmost importance that the mentor role is assigned to an employee of adequate competency, as well as having expressed explicit interest and aspiration for the task. Furthermore, it is crucial that the management provides support and encouragement for the parties involved in the mentoring arrangements. Additionally, a concise program for the arrangement is needed, as both the mentor and the expat require a shared understanding regarding the expectations envisioned for both parties. The tasks of the mentor include teaching the expat about their various work functions and providing language support, as the language barrier is arguably apparent. They are also expected to provide an account for the written, as well as the unwritten rules within the workplace. Moreover, the mentor needs to be available for any possible questions the expat might have, and function as the contact link between the expat and management. However, arguably some of the more important functions of the mentor is to provide social and cultural support for the expat (Project Welcome 2011). Furthermore, the mentor must make personal and professional inquiries pertaining to the development of the expat. In addition, mentor arrangements can be viable to implement for larger corporations with the necessary resources

to sustain the strategy. However, smaller businesses would also potentially benefit from mentoring arrangement, as it is possible to apply for financial assistance from both the local authorities, and the Danish job centers (Project Welcome 2011). This financial assistance reimburses the hourly payment and pension that the mentor attains.

In summation, the recommendations of Project Welcome in regard to expats, consist of acknowledging and understanding cultural- and communicative differences and utilizing a mentor arrangement in order to help facilitate the integration of the expats.

Expatriate perceptions of Denmark

The following section is going to investigate how expats perceive life in Denmark. Studies have revealed positive and negative aspects associated to the life of expats in Denmark.

Oxford Research (2014) conducted “The Expatriate 2014” by utilizing survey data encompassing responses from 1,800 expats in Denmark. The main objective of the study is to investigate how expats in Denmark perceive their lives. The study presented career-related factors as expats’ primary motives to relocate to Denmark. In addition to the aforementioned, the three fundamental reasons to obtain a job in Denmark are:

1. To improve their career
2. To have an interesting job
3. To have the opportunity to enjoy a good work-life balance

(Oxford Research 2014, p. 5).

The results of the study revealed that 84 % of the respondents were satisfied with their job. Another key discovery of the study was that 86 % of the respondents were satisfied with life in Denmark. The satisfied expats in the study have a well-functioning non-work social network including Danes and other expats (Oxford Research 2014). According to the study, the likelihood of meeting and socializing with Danes depends on the size of the company. Moreover, expats in small companies, perceive the process of meeting and socializing with Danes simpler as opposed to expats in large companies. The possibility of meeting and socializing with other expats has been perceived as easier amongst expats in larger companies (Oxford Research 2014). 46 % of the respondents expressed a desire to lengthen their stay in Denmark. A minor group of 6 % stated a decision to leave Denmark earlier than intended.

Overall themes amongst the satisfied expats were successful socialization with Danes and other expats outside work, favorable career opportunities and an appealing work culture. Overall themes amongst the unsatisfied expats were the lack of socialization with other expats and Danes, language barriers and the lack of job opportunities (Oxford Research 2014).

InterNations' "Expatriate Insider Survey 2018" ranked 68 countries across the world. The expats, participating in the survey, evaluated the 68 countries based upon five parameters such as "Quality of life, ease of settling in, working abroad, family life, and personal finance" (InterNations 2018, p. 4). The survey revealed that Denmark ranked 64 out of 68 in terms of settling in and cost of living. However, Denmark ranked 6th and 4th in terms of working abroad and family life, respectively. Lastly, Denmark ranked 66 out of 68 in terms of friendliness (InterNations 2018, p. 132). According to the survey, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) share the same challenges in relation to expats.

Expats' perception of life in Southern Denmark was investigated by Work-live-stay southern denmark, in their "Expatriate Life 2019" survey. The survey encompassed topics such as career, family- and leisure life, and social networks. The 239 survey respondents highlighted Danish language proficiency, family adjustment and finding friends amongst the local population as significant challenges (Work-live-stay southern denmark 2019). 71 % of the survey respondents specified a lack of Danish language proficiency as a challenge in order to obtain employment. 63 % of the survey respondents specified a lack of Danish language proficiency as a challenge in relation to establishing a network (Work-live-stay southern denmark 2019). Additionally, merely 32 % of the survey respondents perceive family adjustment as an easy process. Lastly, merely 22 % of the survey respondents expressed ease in terms of establishing friendships amongst the local population (Work-live-stay southern denmark 2019).

To sum up, the pre-existing challenges experienced by expats refer to language barriers, socialization and family adjustment. The challenges indicate an apparent need of expat accommodation strategies.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

The following literature review will introduce previous research within the fields of employee- and expat retention, culture and cultural diversity. The fields of employee- and expat retention enable an understanding of the significant factors and challenges in relation to expats at the workplace. The fields of culture and cultural diversity illuminate differences and possible challenges in a multicultural workplace. In summation, the combination of the aforementioned fields of study provide the theoretical framework in order to investigate the research questions.

3.2 Employee retention

The field of employee retention studies have examined job embeddedness, job satisfaction, organizational socialization and employee commitment. Organizational factors such as policies, support, culture have also been considered in past employee retention studies. The following sections illustrated the complex nature of employee retention and the interconnectedness between distinct factors.

3.2.1 Job embeddedness

Job embeddedness is a three-fold approach developed in order to predict employee turnover. Mitchell et al. (2001) described job embeddedness as a net in which an individual can become fixed into. Individuals can be embedded in several different ways. The critical aspects of job embeddedness are labelled as “fit, links and sacrifice” (Mitchell et al. 2001, p. 1104). “Fit” has its emphasis on how an employee perceive their compatibility and comfort with an organization and the surrounding environment. It is argued that an employee’s personal values, career goals and future plans must be connected with the corporate culture and the job demands (knowledge, skills and abilities). An employee will feel more personally and professionally tied to an organization as an outcome of a great fit (Mitchell et al. 2001). “Links” encompasses the formal and informal connections an employee has. The level of embeddedness, in the aspect of “links”, is determined by the surrounding social, psychological and financial connections. The different types of connections include work and nonwork friends, groups, community and the physical environment. Employees, with many

links to their different surroundings, are more bound to a job and an organization and therefore more likely to stay (Mitchell et al. 2001). “Sacrifice” measures the possible loss of material and psychological benefits that an employee must forego when leaving the organization. The number of sacrifices arguably increase the difficulty of an employee’s decision to terminate employment within an organization (Mitchell et al. 2001). Employee benefits are examples of the sacrifices that employees make, when leaving an organization. Employee benefits are divided into statutory and nonstatutory benefits. Examples of statutory employee benefits are insurance schemes for health, pension plans and accident compensation. Examples of nonstatutory employee benefits are monetary gifts, recreational facilities and subsidies for home ownership (Yamamoto 2011). In Yamamoto’s study (2011), the enrichment of employee benefits and family-friendly policies have a positive effect on employee retention.

Ma, Mayfield and Mayfield (2018) developed a practical model on how organizations can develop job embeddedness based upon the three key aspects (fit, links and sacrifice).

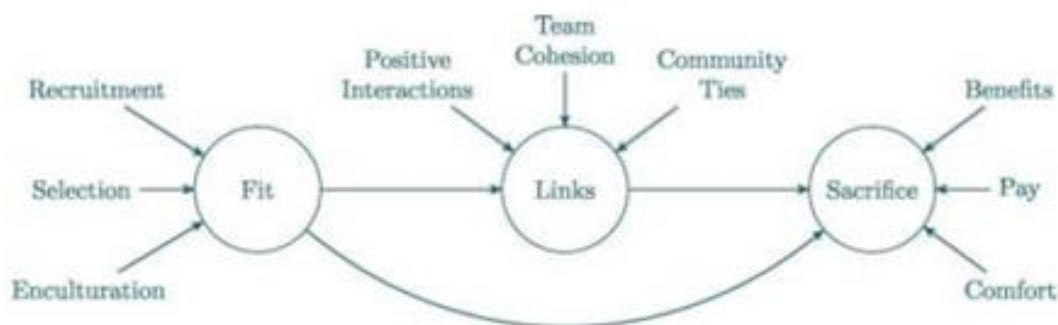


Figure 1: A model of how to develop embeddedness (fit, links, and sacrifice) (Ma, Mayfield & Mayfield 2018, p. 7)

The arrows indicate the interconnectedness between the different aspects. A greater fit will ease the employee’s development of links within the organization and community that supports the organization. Subsequently, a stronger fit with an organization will also increase the sacrifices being made in case of a termination of employment. Strong links will also increase the sacrifices, due to the fact an employee will be giving up relationships developed in the organization (Ma, Mayfield & Mayfield 2018). Organizations can increase fit through recruitment and selection measures in order to screen applications for cultural correspondence and subsequently align people with the culture of the organization. Organizations can increase links by providing opportunities for positive interactions,

increasing team cohesion and to interact with the surrounding community. Organizations can increase sacrifice by ensuring favorable pay, benefits as well as comfortability in the workplace (Ma, Mayfield & Mayfield 2018).

The theory of job embeddedness and appertaining practical model were deemed relevant to include in the literature review as important factors of concern were demonstrated in relation to an expat's incentives to stay within a workplace. Furthermore, the practical model of job embeddedness demonstrated different areas of emphasis in how a company can accommodate their expats.

3.2.2 Organizational factors

Organizational policies, support and culture are significant factors in order to influence an employee's decision to stay or leave. Mishra and Mishra (2013) argue that a fair treatment of employees, in terms of organizational outcomes and procedures, results in employee retention. The organizational outcomes and procedures refer to HR practices such as the recruitment approach, equitable remuneration, and training and development opportunities (Mishra & Mishra 2013). Furthermore, organizations must also emphasize transparency and quality of work life in order to manage employee turnover and ensure employee retention. Ultimately, leadership style has a significant influence in terms of entrusting employees. Leaders empowering their employees will experience a boost of engagement and commitment as well as a mitigation of employee turnover (Mishra & Mishra 2013).

The aspect of organizational factors was deemed relevant to include as it argues for the importance of fair treatment. Fair treatment is arguably essential in order for an employee feel welcome at a workplace.

3.2.3 Job satisfaction

The topic of job satisfaction has been investigated alongside organizational culture. Lund's (2003) understanding of organizational culture had its emphasis on four different types. The four types of organizational culture are known as clan, adhocracy, hierarchy, and market. Clan and adhocracy organizational culture types focus on flexibility and spontaneity. As opposed to the organizational culture types of clan and adhocracy, the organizational culture types of hierarchy and market focus on control, order and stability (Lund 2003). The

results of the study showed a positive relation between clan and adhocracy cultures and job satisfaction. Furthermore, a negative relation between hierarchy and market cultures, and job satisfaction were an outcome of the study. Furthermore, job satisfaction has an impact on the relation between training and development, and employee retention. Fletcher, Alfes and Robinson (2018) studied the relation between training and development, and employee retention through the mediating effect of work attitudes. The results of the study revealed job satisfaction, employee engagement and change-related anxiety (negatively) as mediating the relation between training and development, and employee retention (Fletcher, Alfes & Robinson 2018).

Advocates of Leader-Member Exchange theory (LMX) argue that a successful implementation of LMX will result in higher productivity, job satisfaction and improved motivation among in-group employees (Lunenburg 2010). The foundation of LMX is based upon a division of employees into two groups. Leaders establish an in-group and out-group of employees. In-group employees are allocated additional responsibility, more remuneration and more consideration. The leader's relationship with in-group employees is also characterized by the degree of latitude in work roles. The in-group employees are also working within the leader's inner circle of communication (Lunenburg 2010). As opposed to in-group employees, out-group employees receive less attention and fewer rewards. The relationship between leader and out-group employees is also characterized by formal rules and policies. However, a palpable distinction between in-group and out-group employees bring difficulties. Out-group members might dislike their secondary status and disadvantageous treatment. Additionally, stress is a possible issue to both in-group and out-group employees. In-group employees' stress can be a result of additional responsibility and out-group employees' stress can be a result of being excluded from the inner communication circles (Lunenburg 2010).

The theories and understandings of job satisfaction are arguably linked to the organizational culture, and ultimately employee retention. Furthermore, these theories and understandings illuminated different emphases in terms of parameters influencing the development of job satisfaction. Therefore, the inclusion of the theories and understandings were deemed relevant.

3.2.4 Organizational socialization

Socialization, in addition to recruitment, is recognized as an indicator of employee retention. Mohamed, Nor and Dahalan (2014) recognize the importance of socialization and LMX in psychological contract fulfilment in regard to employee retention. Psychological contract fulfilment is based upon: *“The good-faith relationships between stakeholders and organizations that stipulate an understanding of what is expected of each party”* (Lewis 2011, p. 76). The level of socialization influences the condition of the psychological contract and LMX. A positive outcome of LMX ensures the fulfilment of the psychological contract and employee retention. The psychological contract is maintained by HR practices such as recruitment approach, equitable remuneration, and training and development opportunities (Mohamed, Nor & Dahalan 2014).

Organizational socialization has been theorized in order to comprehend the adaptation processes between employees and organizations. The aforementioned has gained importance due to the increasing job mobility in contemporary society (Miller 2012). The newly employed individuals' socialization process is inevitably defined by turning points such as: *“promotions, changes in job responsibility, or perhaps a new boss or coworker who changes the atmosphere in the workplace”* (Miller 2012, p. 123). Socialization processes are characterized by its individual nature and may not necessarily act in accordance with a recognizable pattern. However, the organizational socialization process has often been studied by the means of phases. The phases aim to encapsulate the experiences pertaining to an individual joining an organization. Miller (2012) considers three phases: *“anticipatory socialization, encounter, and metamorphosis”* (Miller 2012, p. 124). Each stage of socialization demands the employee to obtain two dissimilar types of information. The two dissimilar types of information are role-related and cultural. Role-related information is associated with obtaining knowledge, skills, procedures and rules needed to fulfil the job. As opposed to role-related information, cultural information is not explicit and must be envisioned through observation, narratives and interpretation (Miller 2012).

Anticipatory socialization takes place before an individual's entry in the organization and encompasses the processes of an individual learning about work in general, a particular occupation and about a particular organization. The encounter phase encompasses the process, in which a newly employed individual is learning about the new organization and

making sense of the organization's culture. The encounter phase can bring difficulties, if the newly employed individual's notion of how an organization should be is contradictory to the organization's current practices. The final metamorphosis stage takes place as the newly employed has made a transition in order to be part of the organization as stated in Miller (2012, p. 126): "*During this stage the recruit begins to become an accepted, participating member of the organization by learning new behaviors and attitudes and/or modifying existing ones*". However, it must be noted that an employee's understanding of organizational roles and culture is an ongoing process and requires constant attention.

Communication has a significant role in the three aforementioned stages of organizational socialization. Miller (2012) argues that the role of communication differs in each stage of organizational socialization. The communication processes in employment interviews are significant to the outcome of anticipatory socialization. The employment interview has a threefold purpose. First and foremost, recruitment and quality assessment of potential employees, function as the organization's objective of the employment interview. The organization is able to assess the potential candidate's motivation, communication skills and personality. Furthermore, the employer interview is an opportunity for the candidate to acquire additional knowledge about the organization. The employer interview is also an opportunity of socialization between the organization and candidate (Miller 2012).

The communication processes within a new employee's approach to obtain information is associated to the encounter phase of organizational socialization. An employee's process of obtaining information can be characterized by formal and informal communication processes. Formal approaches include orientation programs and mentoring. Informal approaches pertain to an employee's individual efforts of gaining information. Informal approaches can be divided into straightforward and indirect approaches to seek information (Miller 2012). Examples of straightforward approaches are apparent questions and asking third parties. The notion of third parties refer to the act of asking a coworker as opposed to a supervisor. Examples of indirect approaches are testing limits, disguising conversations, observing and surveillance (Miller 2012, p. 132). The selection of information-seeking approach relies upon the need to decrease uncertainty and the potential social costs. Social costs encompass the possibility of embarrassment about lack of knowledge and the concern of potentially annoying coworkers with ongoing questions (Miller 2012).

Ultimately, role-development processes are continuous during all stages of organizational socialization and emphasized during metamorphosis. Role-development processes are characterized by how employees and supervisors interact in defining and developing the organizational roles of an employee. The desired outcome of role-development processes is a mutual understanding between employees and supervisors in terms of the employee's role and expected behavior. The ongoing nature of role-development processes is arguably due to consistent alterations in personnel, policies and culture (Miller 2012).

The processes within socialization has also been outlined by Myers and Oetzel (2003). Myers and Oetzel (2003) identified six dimensions of organizational socialization (as cited in Miller 2012, p. 128):

- Developing a familiarity with others
- Acculturating - learning the culture of the organization
- Feeling recognized by others
- Becoming involved in the organization
- Developing job competency
- Role negotiation

The first dimension of organizational socialization encompasses processes of learning to interact with co-workers as well as achieving comfortability and friendliness amongst co-workers (Myers & Oetzel 2003).

The second dimension of organizational socialization encompasses how organizations convey their norms. Some organizations emphasize: *"how things get done"*, while other organizations emphasize: *"what they need to watch out for, like what they need to not step into, what are the kinds of things that will get them in trouble"* (Myers & Oetzel 2003, p. 449).

The third dimension of organizational socialization revolves around the importance of employees receiving recognition from supervisors and coworkers (Myers & Oetzel 2003).

The fourth dimension of organizational socialization has its focus on involvement. Employees, who are involved with the organization, look for ways to contribute to the organization in the shape of additional work and/or to acquire increased responsibility (Myers & Oetzel 2003).

The fifth dimension of organizational socialization highlights the importance of job competency in an organization's acceptance of an employee. Job competency relates to the knowledge and success rate of an employee's execution of a job (Myers & Oetzel 2003).

The sixth dimension of organizational socialization revolves around role negotiation. The concept of role negotiation refers to an employee's ability to achieve compromise between individual- and employer expectations (Myers & Oetzel 2003).

Ultimately, it is argued that the six dimensions of organizational socialization are associated to employees developing a sense of membership in an organization (Myers & Oetzel 2003).

The theories pertaining to organizational socialization were deemed relevant to include as the mutual responsibility between employees and management is highlighted. Furthermore, the continuous role development of employees is recognized, which arguably is important to acknowledge. These theories were both deemed relevant as different aspects of organizational socialization were emphasized.

3.2.5 Employee commitment

Employee commitment is also a predictor of employee retention. According to Khan (2018), effective training and development programs contribute to employee retention and establishing a more stable workforce. However, a lack of employee commitment to an organization can be the decisive factor in a potential decision to leave. The role of employee commitment has also been recognized in terms of internal branding, brand orientation, brand identification and brand commitment. Dechawatanapaisal (2018) revealed the relation between brand identification and commitment to employee retention amongst sales professionals. The study argues for the importance of organizations to influence their employees towards a certain brand in order to ensure value and understanding of each role in the workplace.

Employee commitment has been subject to many and various definitions. However, three overall themes are reflected throughout the many and various definitions: "*affective attachment to the organization, perceived costs associated with leaving the organization, and obligation to remain with the organization*" (Meyer & Allen 1991, pp. 63-64). Meyer and Allen (1991) conceptualize employee commitment into a three-component framework. The

three components are referred to as: “*affective, continuance and normative*” (Meyer & Allen 1991, p. 67). Affective employee commitment comprises of an employee’s level of emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees, with a high level of affective commitment, maintain employment with their organization as a result of their own preference (Meyer & Allen 1991). Continuance commitment emphasizes an employee’s consciousness about the expenses associated to leaving the organization. Employees, with a high level of continuance commitment, maintain employment with their organization as a result of having too much to lose (Meyer & Allen 1991). Lastly, normative commitment reflects an employee’s sense of obligation to maintain employment with their organization (Meyer & Allen 1991).

The findings and theory on employee commitment were included as they provide different perspectives on developing employees’ sense of commitment in order to further facilitate employee retention.

3.3 Expat retention

Expat retention studies have particularly investigated expat retention in relation to adjustment processes. As opposed to domestic employees, expats have relocated in order to commence their job. The aforementioned requires adjustment, which is an equal responsibility of expats and organizations as recognized by the following expat retention studies.

Expats have different reasons in the decision to leave their native countries. Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) focus on self-initiated expats and divides them into two groups with fundamental differences. Some expats decide to leave their home country for career purposes, defined as: “*career expatriates*” (Howe-Walsh & Schyns 2010, p. 261). Other expats make the decision to leave their home country due to personal reasons, defined as: “*private expatriates*” (Howe-Walsh & Schyns 2010, p. 261). Organizations are aware of their responsibility in the adjustment processes of “*career expatriates*”. However, they may already consider “*private expatriates*” as similar to domestic employees. Furthermore, Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) recognize the importance of organizational responsibility in expat adjustment processes, regardless of the type of expat.

3.3.1 Expat adjustment models

Another approach to expat retention underline how expats and their respective organizations mutually can ensure successful adjustment. Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) developed a model known as “The Framework of International Adjustment”. Theoretical and empirical work of both international and domestic adjustment literature, focusing on American experiences abroad, has been integrated in order to develop the model. “The Framework of International Adjustment” employs a two-folded approach focusing on anticipatory- and in-country adjustment. Furthermore, individual- and organizational factors are examined within the two categories of adjustment. The components of the model illustrate that the individual and organization must share responsibility in order to carry out adjustment processes successfully. In connection to expats, their employers must be aware of their responsibilities in adjustment processes rather than placing the responsibility solely on the expats.

Anticipatory adjustment, on the individual level, focuses on the individual’s ability to form accurate expectations on their new job, organizational culture, host-country nationals, general culture and daily life in the foreign country. The higher level of accuracy in these expectations reduces uncertainty and improves the anticipatory adjustment process (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991).

Anticipatory adjustment, on the organizational level, emphasizes the necessity of in-depth selection processes. A great fit between the selected individual and the needs of the organization ease the individual’s adjustment (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991).

In-country adjustment, on the individual level, highlights the importance of an individual’s relational- and perceptual skills. Relational skills are crucially needed to interact with host nationals in order to attain knowledge about the host country culture. Perceptual skills are crucial in order to understand and interpret host culture (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991).

In-country adjustment, on the organizational level, emphasizes socialization and support in the workplace (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991).

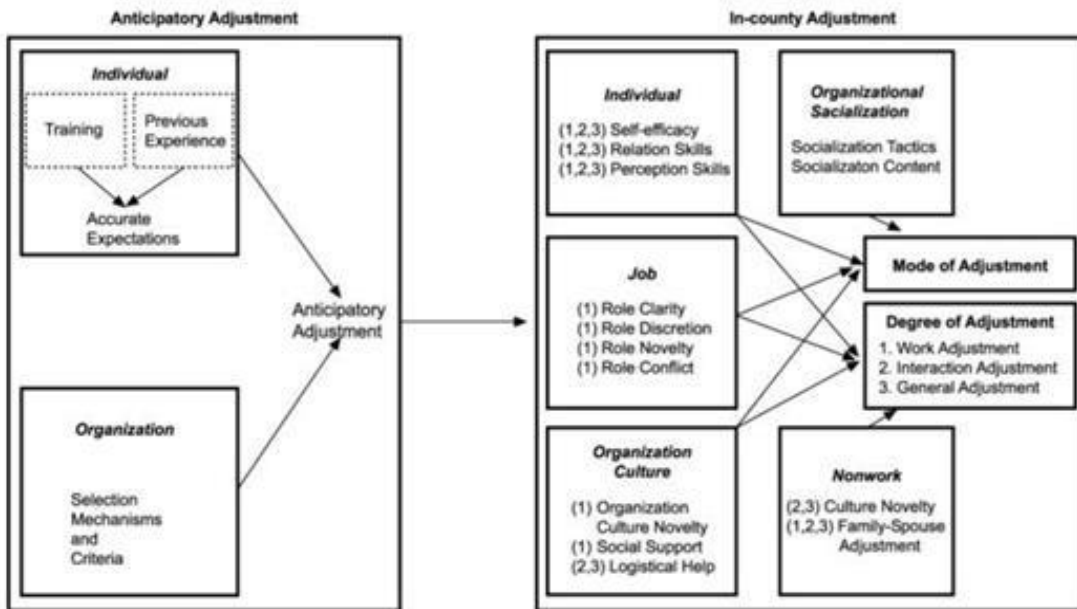


Figure 2: *The Framework of International Adjustment* (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991, p. 303).

Strubler, Park and Agarwal (2011) revisited "The Framework of International Adjustment" by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991). Cross-cultural work interaction and effectiveness testing must be provided by the organization in order to ensure the specific needs for training and to identify any deficiencies prior to arrival. "The Framework of International Adjustment" model must be enlarged by the additions of language-, diversity-, cultural-, interpersonal communication- and skill training (Strubler, Park & Agarwal 2011). The organization must review the past experience and competencies of an individual. The aim of adjustment is to improve to the ability to successfully work and live within the host culture, as opposed to assimilation (Strubler, Park & Agarwal 2011).

Another model of international adjustment is known as the "U-curve theory of adjustment". The "U-curve theory of adjustment" employs four stages, which the expat will encounter in a timespan of forty-eight months or four years following arrival (Liu & Lee 2008).

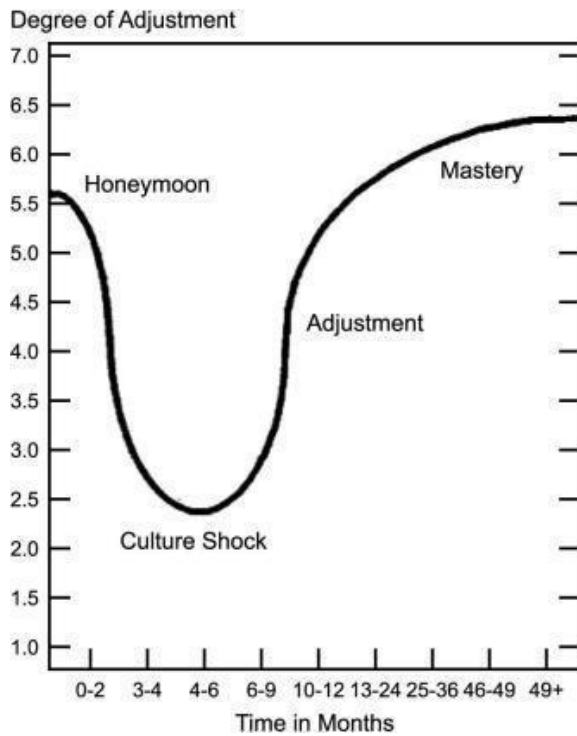


Figure 3: U-curve Theory of Adjustment (Liu & Lee 2008, p. 181)

In the honeymoon stage, during the first week of arrival, the newly arrived expat finds the new and different cultural surrounding fascinating. The culture shock stage encompasses the expat beginning to cope with the realities of the host country. Another characteristic of the cultural shock stage is the sense of frustration and hostility targeted towards the host-country and nationals. In the adjustment stage, the expat experiences a gradual adjustment to the new norms and values of the host country. Lastly, in the mastery stage, the expat is capable of functioning effectively in the host country and amongst host nationals. The different stages portray a transition in the newly arrived expat's comfortability with their new cultural surroundings (Liu & Lee 2008).

The two expat adjustment models were deemed relevant to include, as they provide awareness of important factors and prerequisites in relation to an expat's adjustment process in a new unfamiliar working environment and society.

3.4 Culture

The literature within employee- and expat retention demonstrated the role of culture. The following section aims to provide a theoretical understanding of culture, cultural diversity and the significant role of communication within the aforementioned.

3.4.1 Intercultural competence

According to Koester and Lustig (2010), it is impossible to formulate a fixed set of guidelines in order to ensure intercultural competence. The impossibility of a fixed set of guidelines is due to the complexity of intercultural communication. However, it is possible to be competent in different ways in intercultural interactions. Koester and Lustig (2010) aim to outline the fundamental characteristics to improve competence in intercultural communication based upon the following statement: *“The summary of previous research suggests that competent intercultural communication is contextual; it produces behaviors that are both appropriate and effective; and it requires sufficient knowledge, suitable motivations. and skilled actions”* (Koester & Lustig 2010, pp. 66-67).

Intercultural competence depends on the context, the relationship between the communicating individuals and the situation. An individual might be perceived as highly intercultural competent in some situations, but less competent in others. Accepted behavior is determined by the settings and situations in which individuals communicate. A certain type of behavior can be recognized as competent in one cultural setting, but significantly less competent in another (Koester & Lustig 2010). In connection to the aforementioned, behaviors must be appropriate and effective to be measured as interculturally competent. As prior stated, appropriate behavior is determined by a given culture, the restrictions of a particular situation and the character of the relationship between communicating individuals. Effective behavior refers to the accomplishment of an intended outcome of an interaction (Koester & Lustig 2010).

A combination of knowledge, motivations and actions is needed in order to gain intercultural competence. Knowledge is needed in order to engage in appropriate and effective behavior in relation to the people, context and given culture within an intercultural interaction. However, knowledge and awareness of one’s own culture must also be established. It is argued that knowledge about one’s own culture will benefit the

understanding of other cultures (Koester & Lustig 2010). Motivations are the feelings and intentions of an individual in intercultural interactions. Feelings relate to attitudes towards other cultures in relation to one's own. Examples of feelings in intercultural interactions are: "*happiness, sadness, eagerness, anger, tension, surprise, confusion, relaxation and joy*" (Koester & Lustig 2010, p. 70). It is argued that eagerness and willingness are important motivational aspects in order to achieve intercultural competence. Intentions are the objectives that influence behavior in intercultural interactions. Stereotypes result in pre-made perceptions of other cultures, which limits the options to achieve intentions. Positive intentions, uninfluenced by stereotypes, will possibly improve intercultural competence. Actions refer to the actual outcomes of appropriate and effective behavior. One may have the required information and be motivated by appropriate feelings and intentions. However, there might be a lack of concrete skill in order to achieve competence. An example of lack of concrete skills are language barriers (Koester & Lustig 2010).

The Behavioural Assessment Scale for Intercultural Competence (BASIC) was developed by Jolene Koester and Margaret Olebe in order to present the fundamental aspects of intercultural competence and to function as a guide to improve intercultural competence. The BASIC model has its emphasis on eight types of behavior within communication. The eight components of the BASIC models are: "*Display of respect, Orientation to knowledge, Empathy, Interaction Management, Task Role Behaviour, Relational Role Behaviour, Tolerance for Ambiguity and Interaction Posture*" (Koester & Lustig 2010, p. 73).

The notion of respect differs between cultures. Respect can be expressed verbally and nonverbally. Verbal actions, such as language which shows interest and understanding of other individuals, might be perceived as respectful. Furthermore, a positive tone of voice and an emphasis on politeness will express respect. Nonverbal signs of respect encompass the use of body language, facial expressions and eye contact. Orientation to knowledge explores how individuals articulate their experiences and interpretations to others. It is argued that individuals must recognize that personal experiences and interpretations are not necessarily universally applicable. Empathic individuals are perceived as more interculturally competent. Empathy is conveyed by communicating a recognition of another individual's thoughts, feelings and experiences. Interaction management refers to an individual's ability to maintain a discussion and ensure that all participants in an interaction are able to speak and contribute.

Lack of intercultural competence is evident in interactions with a dominant and/or nonresponsive participant (Koester & Lustig 2010).

Task- and relational role behavior encompass the management of tasks and the personal relationships within a group. Task role behavior refers to: “*initiating new ideas, requesting further information or facts, seeking clarification of group tasks, evaluating the suggestions of others, and keeping a group on task*” (Koester & Lustig 2010, p. 75). Task role behavior bring different cultural expectations. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge that tasks are carried out differently due to culture. A social activity might be defined as a task and vice versa, depending on the cultural perspective. Intercultural competent relational role behavior encompasses processes of establishing harmony amongst group members, participation encouragement, conflict mediation and willingness of compromise. Lastly, tolerance for ambiguity and interaction posture, refer to an individual's response and manner of response to the uncertainty in intercultural interactions. Interculturally competent individuals are able to adapt and respond in a nonjudgmental manner (Koester & Lustig 2010).

The theory of intercultural competence was included as it argues for the importance of being interculturally competent within a workplace in order to avoid potential cultural confrontations or misunderstandings.

3.4.2 Cultural diversity

The previous sections have outlined theoretical considerations about cultural differences and how to interact within these situations. The following section will focus on strategies in managing cultural diversity, potential advantages, potential disadvantages and the importance of communication from an organizational perspective.

An increasing international workforce justifies the importance of managing cultural diversity. Adler and Gundersen (2007) introduce three distinct strategies in managing cultural diversity. The three strategies are parochial, ethnocentric and synergistic.

In parochial organizations, the assumption of parochial managers is: “*our way is the only way*” (Adler & Gundersen 2007, p. 107) and the notion of cultural diversity is completely disregarded.

In ethnocentric organizations, the notion of cultural diversity is solely recognized as a source of problems. The assumption of ethnocentric managers is: *“our way is the best way”* (Adler & Gundersen 2007, p. 107).

In synergistic organizations, managers recognize both the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity. Managers with synergistic beliefs emphasize the following: *“our way and their way differ, but neither is inherently superior to the other”* (Adler & Gundersen 2007, p. 107).

A combination of different ways results in the best approaches to organizing and working. Furthermore, organizations with a synergistic approach aim to train their employees to recognize cultural differences in order to turn them into possible advantages for the organization (Adler & Gundersen 2007).

Cultural- dominance, accommodation, compromise and avoidance are four other strategies in managing cultural diversity at the workplace.

In a cultural dominant strategy, managers hold on to their own cultural beliefs and values (Adler & Gundersen 2007).

In a cultural accommodation strategy, the opposite of cultural dominance, managers imitate the cultural practices of international co-workers. (Adler & Gundersen 2007).

Cultural compromise applies both the dominance- and accommodation strategy. Everyone involved has to concede something in order to work better together (Adler & Gundersen 2007). The cultural avoidance approach disregards any cultural differences. Managers employ the cultural avoidance approach, when a minor unsolved issue is less important than long-term business relations (Adler & Gundersen 2007). In addition, Adler & Gundersen (2007) argue that communication is essential, and that effective communication can unlock the advantages that cultural diversity brings to a workplace and mitigate the disadvantages of it.

Potential advantages

A culturally diverse workforce can result in a competitive advantage due to the different know-how people from different cultures/countries bring. Adler and Gundersen (2007) believe that organizations with a culturally diverse workforce have an advantage in terms of achieving a better understanding of national employees, local clients, customers, as

well as the local-, social-, political- and economic environment. In addition to the aforementioned external advantages, Adler and Gundersen (2007) argue that a culturally diverse workforce brings internal advantages. The internal advantage is the improvement of organizational rationality through new ideas, perspectives and interpretations. The improvement of organizational rationality potentially helps to increase problem-solving skills, flexibility, and the creativity within the organization. All of the above requires free and open interpersonal communication (Adler & Gundersen 2007).

The advantage of a culturally diverse workforce is further reinforced by Al-Jenaibi (2011). Al-Jenaibi (2011) studied the impact and scope of culturally diverse organizations in the United Arab Emirates. In this study, the majority of the workers agreed that group work with a culturally diverse party aided to overcome cultural differences through shared experiences when working together within a group dynamic (Al-Jenaibi 2011). Moreover, it is suggested that an organization with a strong knowledge base created by a variety of cultural experiences, as well as in-house resources of cultural trainers and informers have a greater tendency to expand their business in foreign cultures, which subsequently promotes organizational growth. The effects of cultural diversity in the workplace depend upon the management of the organizational leaders. Proper strategic planning and management would be able to enhance the positive, as well as reduce the negative effects of a culturally diversified personnel (Al-Jenaibi 2011).

Potential disadvantages

A culturally diverse workforce brings potential disadvantages. Overgeneralization and ethnocentrism are causes of many of these cultural disadvantages. The increase of intercultural skills and competency can decrease the aforementioned overgeneralization and ethnocentrism. Intercultural skill is defined as the ability to understand and appreciate other cultures (Adler & Gundersen 2007). Yu (2012) suggests that multicultural organizations should focus on the issues of cultural sensitivity, awareness and behavioral skills as the first steps towards increasing the general intercultural competency.

Moreover, specific communication related disadvantages that potentially come with a culturally diverse workplace can arguably increase ambiguity, complexity and confusions due to misunderstandings. A poor quality in the communication process significantly impair the aspects of problem-solving and decision making (Adler & Gundersen 2007).

Organizations experience barriers in managing diversity as a result of violation of its ethics. According to Dhiman, Modi and Kumar (2019), the violation of ethics potentially bring barriers such as stereotypes and prejudice, harassment, envy, discrimination and injustice, a toxic environment, organizational politics (unethical ways of attaining influence), an unsupportive work environment and backlash. These barriers arguably cause cultural declines within an organization and prevent the benefits of cultural diversity.

Communication is the key

The benefits that come with having a multicultural and diverse workforce can be realized through good communication. In order to achieve good communication, there needs to be an understanding of the other culture and its norms, values, preferences as well as social practices. Paying attention to those elements of a specific culture is what communicates both respect and appreciation to the people from that culture. Therefore, if said elements are ignored the barriers to good communication will become immovable, which illustrates the importance of acknowledging and understanding other cultures. A potential way of breaking barriers could be through the use of focus groups, support groups and informal networks between those of the various cultures throughout an organization. This could help to break barriers and build relationships that foster open communication (Cox & Blake 1991).

Multinational organizations that employ a culturally diverse workforce should know that the differences between people from different cultures are far less than the similarities, because there are a lot of universally understood values such as trust, respect, humility, openness and graciousness. However, understanding how these more basic values are expressed in a given culture, as well as caring enough to modify behavior in order to correspond to the ways of more cultures than one, will help to build a solid foundation for communication as well as the potential benefits and advantages of a culturally diversity workforce (Cox & Blake 1991).

There are different arguments connected to the aspect of cultural diversity within a workplace and whether managing cultural diversity can provide a competitive advantage (Cox & Blake 1991).

The first aspect is the cost argument. Organizations are generally becoming more diverse, which means the cost of a poor job in integrating workers will increase. The importance of this is becoming ever so vital. The companies that handle this well, will therefore more likely create cost advantages over those who do not (Cox & Blake 1991).

Secondly, the argument of resource-acquisition. Companies develop reputations on favorability with regard to managing the aspect of cultural diversity within the workforce. This means that the companies with the best reputation will win the battle of attracting the best personnel. The availability of qualified international workforce becomes restricted, due to the ever-increasing number of companies wanting the experience and competencies of international employees. It is argued that the companies with the best reputation in regard to the integration of expats will arguably attract the most competent employees (Cox & Blake 1991).

Thirdly, the marketing argument is of significant relevance. As more companies become multinational, the acknowledgement of cultural sensitivity becomes increasingly essential. Studies show how a shared culture and ethnicity amongst people is able to facilitate cooperation. Therefore, companies are assigning management positions based upon cultural- and ethnic backgrounds. The appointment of managers with different cultural and ethnic background enable access to different markets (Cox & Blake 1991).

Fourthly, the argument of creativity. An increasingly diverse workforce brings more perspectives on how to do things, which means less emphasis on conformity to norms. This should help improve overall levels of creativity within the workforce (Cox & Blake 1991).

The fifth aspect is the argument of problem solving. It is commonly known that heterogeneity in decision making and problem solving bring greater potential to produce better decisions compared to that of homogenous groups. This is due to a wider range of perspectives to address the issues at hand, because of the group being culturally diverse (Cox & Blake 1991).

Lastly, the sixth aspect, the system flexibility argument, focuses on the fact that companies become less standardized and more fluid. The decrease of standardization arguably eases a company's process of adapting to potential environmental changes (Cox & Blake 1991).

The inclusion of the aspect of cultural diversity was justified as it provides a more in-depth understanding of the advantages and disadvantages pertaining to a culturally diverse

workforce. Furthermore, it argues for companies to recognize the need of having expats in order to help ensure future success.

3.5 Summary of Literature Review

The literature review has focused on topics within employee- and expat retention, culture and cultural diversity. Employee- and expat retention studies illuminate different areas of concern which expats face following arrival. The review of the existing literature elucidates a development within these fields of study. With the increase of globalization in the last few decades, these aforementioned fields of study have become a necessity to consider for organizations and businesses looking to take advantage of the potential resources made available through the rise of globalization. The examination of previous employee- and expat retention studies will potentially substantiate this thesis' analysis and discussion in terms of identifying potential challenges associated to expats. In the pre-existing literature regarding employee- and expat retention, the aspect of culture has only been briefly recognized. Therefore, the inclusion of theoretical concepts on culture and cultural diversity will potentially contribute to the aim of this thesis, which is to comprehend the challenges associated to expats. Furthermore, strategies within managing cultural diversity has been reviewed in order to potentially substantiate this thesis' analysis and discussion of how Danish companies accommodate expats. Ultimately, in the process of collecting and analyzing the empirical data, we will not presume that all features of the different theories and concepts will be relevant. The aforementioned is due to the fact that our analysis and subsequent discussion is based upon the findings of our empirical data.

4. Theory of Science

The following chapter will outline this thesis' selection of theory of science. The theory of science encompasses choices of ontological and epistemological positions.

4.1 Scientific positioning

The scientific paradigm is the frame of understanding that characterizes a specific scientific discipline (Holm 2013). Any scientific paradigm consists of set methods for data collection and analysis (Epstein 2012). Therefore, the scientific paradigm must be selected before deciding the methods of data collection and analysis. There are two components that delineate the scientific positioning - ontology and epistemology. The relevant positions utilized in this thesis will be elaborated on below.

4.1.1 Ontology

Ontology is concerned with the different nature of social entities, and also focuses on the philosophical rationale for conducting research (Bryman 2016). There are two predominant positions within ontology; **objectivism** and **social constructionism/social constructivism** (Bryman 2016).

Objectivism is an ontological position which argues that social phenomena and the meaning of it are independent of social actors, and not governed by individuals. It implies that social phenomena and the discourses pertaining to them exist independently and separately from the actors that inhabits the world. Moreover, objectivism that operates within social sciences regards certain categories as being fixed structures (Bryman 2016). However, this thesis argues that the social phenomenon in relation to expat retention is dependent of social actors. In this case, the recognized social actors are expats and employers in Denmark.

The distinction between **social constructionism** and **social constructivism** must be acknowledged (Bryman 2016). Social constructionism focuses on knowledge created through shared production with others, whilst social constructivism focuses on individuals and how the learning of said individuals take place as consequences of individual interactions, rather than that of groups (Bryman 2016). As opposed to the aforementioned, the two terms of social constructionism and social constructivism have also been argued to be different terms

representing a similar assumption (Pernecky 2012). The unification of both positions recognizes meaning creation as something occurring both individually and collectively. Moreover, a distinction between weak and strong constructionism must be recognized. Weak constructionists believe that only knowledge pertaining to social facts is created and that the knowledge regarding physical facts can be objective. As opposed to weak constructionists, a strong constructionist believes that both social and physical facts are created by social interactions. In this thesis, the weak constructionist approach is applied due to an aspect of the expats' situation being an objective reality. The aspect of objective reality is the expats living and working in Denmark. In this thesis, the social facts are the expats' perceptions about living and working in Denmark, and said perceptions are the results of the expats' different interactions. Furthermore, companies' strategies and recommendations on expat retention are also results of perceptions and interactions. Ultimately, researchers operating with a constructionist/constructivist view always present a specific version of social reality, rather than one that can be regarded as definitive (Bryman 2016).

4.1.2 Epistemology

Epistemology focuses on the question of what is regarded as being acceptable knowledge, as well as the methodological rationale for conducting research. In relation to the aforementioned, the three predominant positions within epistemology are: **positivism**, **realism** and **interpretivism** (Bryman 2016).

The epistemological stance of **positivism** supports the idea of research being conducted objectively without bias, interpretation and impact of a theoretical framework in order to provide generalizable explanations of human behavior (Bryman 2016). Furthermore, positivists are committed to the notion of an external reality, independent from our own interpretation if it. **Realism** seconds the positivist belief of an external reality. However, in this thesis, the epistemological stances of positivism and realism are non-existent due to our incorporation of a biased theoretical framework utilized in order to provide interpretations of our findings. As prior stated, reality is constructed by social actors which contradicts the existence of an external reality.

The epistemological stance of **interpretivism** is predicated on understanding subjective meaning of different social interactions. Interpretivism attempts to understand human behavior, as opposed to the positivist aim of explanation. Furthermore, interpretivism

rejects absolute facts, and instead proposes the idea that said facts are based on social interaction and not an objective truth (Bryman 2016). The interpretivist approach of this thesis is manifested by the acknowledgement of how individuals and organizations are different. Furthermore, this thesis takes place within a certain context and therefore arguably not absolutely generalizable in other contexts. The interpretivist approach is relevant to apply in this thesis, due to the examination of differences in terms of expat perceptions of their challenges in Denmark.

5. Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodological approach. The methodological chapter encompasses accounts for the use of primary and secondary data. Furthermore, the research design will be elaborated on, which includes the methods of data collection, mixed methods- and the iterative approach. Furthermore, methods of data analysis will be outlined, which includes the use of thematic analysis of the primary data. Ultimately, the trustworthiness and delimitations of the thesis will be accounted for.

5.1 Empirical Data

This section will introduce how the primary and secondary data have been gathered and utilized in this thesis.

5.1.1 Primary Data

Initially, the expat survey was constructed and aimed towards expats within the same two companies in order to conduct a comparative case study. Danish companies were contacted in order to share our survey amongst their international employees and to participate in an employer interview. However, the majority of the contacted companies declined participation, which eliminated the possibility of conducting a comparative case study. Ultimately, a Danish company agreed to collaborate in terms of distributing the survey amongst their international employees as well as participating in an employer interview.

Survey

The survey was constructed in the online survey tool “SurveyXact”, due to one researcher’s previous experience with the tool. Furthermore, the choice of an online survey tool was deemed appropriate due to the ease of distribution. The survey was distributed to the company’s international employees through e-mail correspondences with an HR employee. The international employees’ survey responses were gathered within ten days of distribution due to the number of responses being limited to two. The company also agreed to participate in an employer interview, which justifies the inclusion of two international employees’ survey responses. It can be argued that the employees’ survey responses are results of the company’s strategies in relation to international workforce. The inclusion of a company’s international employees’ survey responses is an example of purposive sampling technique.

The *purposive sampling* technique refers to the selection of participants based upon their usefulness to the purpose of a study (Babbie 2012). In this case, the international employees' survey responses were purposeful in order to investigate the outcomes of a company's strategies in relation to international workforce. Additionally, the survey responses were purposeful in order to identify the challenges experienced by expats in Denmark.

The expat survey was also distributed to other expats in Denmark to ensure further examination of the challenges pertaining to expats in Denmark. The aforementioned was also decided, due to the absence of a second company. Therefore, a comparative case study was deemed impossible. The survey targeted towards other expats in Denmark was distributed after the collection of responses from the two expats from the company. The survey was also distributed amongst Facebook groups. The Facebook groups were targeted towards expats in Denmark, therefore it was expected to achieve responses from a broader group of expats. Furthermore, the survey was shared on one researcher's LinkedIn profile. The aforementioned was decided, due the researcher's previous internship. The researcher gained a large LinkedIn network, including expats in Denmark, during the internship. The inclusion of an overall group of expats in Denmark is an example of the snowball sampling technique. *Snowball sampling* is a data collection technique in which the researcher(s) initially tries to get samples from a smaller group of relevant participants. The relevant participants suggest other relevant participants, and so on (Bryman 2016). The survey was distributed sixty-seven times (Appendix I), which is an apparent example of how it has been shared between expats. Ultimately, the survey amongst expats in Denmark was concluded after a month. The survey gathered seventeen complete responses and twenty-three partially complete responses (Appendix I). The response rate illuminated the difficulties in collecting responses, despite the large online exposure.

Interview

The interview was made in order to gain insight in how Danish companies perceive their interactions with expats and how they accommodate the challenges. Initially, several companies were contacted without success. The aforementioned company, who agreed to collaborate, is a large Danish company with more than 2,000 employees and subsidiaries in more than thirty-five countries worldwide. The initial e-mail correspondences illuminated an apparent interest to participate, and an interview was scheduled following a phone call with a employer representative.

Transcript

The interview was recorded and transcribed in order to carry out a thematic analysis and to ensure the credibility of the thesis. Interferences and overlaps in talks are not incorporated in the transcript. Furthermore, instances with a lack of understanding have been labelled as (inaudible) in the transcript. The company name has been omitted from the transcript and labelled as (company name), due to the interviewee's request of anonymity (Appendix III). The interview was conducted in Danish, due to the researchers and the interviewee being native Danish speakers. The aforementioned was implemented in order to avoid potential misunderstandings of the researchers' questions and interviewee's answers. Therein, the transcription of the interview will be conducted in Danish, to ensure the validity of the data by eliminating the possibility of mistranslation. However, the analysis section of this thesis will include interview quotes, which have been subject to English translations.

5.1.2 Secondary Data

The following sources of secondary data is included in this thesis in order to identify past recommendations and potential challenge areas in relation to expats in Denmark. Furthermore, the secondary data is included alongside the primary data and theoretical framework in order to strengthen the discussion. The secondary data includes Workindenmark's perception of Danish workplace culture and Project Welcome.

Workindenmark is part of the Danish Ministry of Employment (DME), and member of the European Employment Service (EURES). Workindenmark's vision is to facilitate a diverse and balanced workforce in Denmark. The main purpose of Workindenmark is to match expats with Danish employers (Workindenmark n.d.b).

The reason for utilizing the perception of Danish workplace culture by Workindenmark, as mentioned in the section regarding context, is due to their experiences with Danish companies and expats. Albeit, as acknowledged in our section regarding theory of science, the perception of workplace culture is not a definitive reality, but instead a subjective interpretation. However, it can be argued to support our research of why expats experience challenges in Denmark.

Project Welcome (2011) was a part of the executive project "Welcoming and retaining of international workforce" in the Central Denmark Region. The advices in the handbook are constructed in order to function as guidelines on a national scale (Styrelsen for

International Rekruttering og Integration n.d.a). The executive project “Welcoming and retaining of international workforce” in the Central Denmark Region, conducted from 2008 to 2012, was implemented in order to enlarge the workforce in the region. The aforementioned is desired in order to strengthen the conditions for growth, innovation and welfare. Two subsidiary goals were identified in order to achieve the main objective of the project. Firstly, companies’ processes of welcoming and integrating international workforce must be facilitated. Secondly, the welcoming and integration of international workforce in local communities must be supported and developed (Styrelsen for International Rekruttering og Integration n.d.b).

5.2 Research Design

The purpose of this thesis is to interpret why challenges associated with expats at a Danish workplace occur, as well as how Danish companies accommodate expats in order to ensure the desired high levels of retention. As prior stated, the purpose of our thesis is investigated through a questionnaire-based survey and employer interview. Our survey has been distributed to expats in Denmark and to expats employed within the interviewed company. The survey responses from various expats in Denmark and the expats from the interviewed company are applied in order to establish an insight to expats at a Danish workplace and the potential challenges within. The interview with an employer representative is conducted to illuminate their challenges, strategies and recommendations associated to expats.

5.2.1 Mixed Methods

Our choice of research design refers to the application of mixed methods. Mixed methods research encompasses the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative sets of data. The aim is to deduce conclusions at a stage in the research by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative results (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2004; Tashakkori & Creswell 2007). Moreover, it is argued that the utilization of mixed methods is a contribution to an improved comprehension of a research topic. Furthermore, a mixed methods approach is potentially able to provide more exhaustive answers to research questions and to identify new areas of investigation (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011). Moreover, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods has been argued to provide the greatest understanding of various social science problems. The application of mixed methods results in qualitative

narratives providing meaning to quantitative statistics. Another outcome of mixed methods is quantitative statistics providing accuracy to qualitative narratives (Kuada 2012).

The following sections introduce the content of our survey and interview in order to illuminate the application of mixed methods.

Survey

Our expat surveys employ both quantitative and qualitative elements. Questionnaire-based surveys are a common quantitative data collection method. The questionnaire-based survey, as a quantitative data collection method, enables an opportunity to test hypotheses obtained from theories. The objectives of a survey must be consistent with the research question(s), theories, concepts and models included in a research paper. Furthermore, it is argued that wording in a survey may produce different meanings to different respondents (Kuada 2012). The questions of our expat surveys have been established based upon our theoretical framework. Furthermore, the quantitative element of our survey is evident in the use of closed-ended questions. The utilization of closed-ended questions eases the researcher's processing of answers. Furthermore, the closed-ended questions ease the opportunity to establish correspondence between answers. Another advantage of the closed-question is the easiness of completion. Respondents are not expected to provide long and comprehensive replies, which ensures an expeditious and uncomplicated process of answering (Bryman 2016). The significant disadvantage of closed-ended questions is the possibility of difference in respondents' interpretation of a question (Bryman 2016).

Another quantitative element of our expat surveys is the use of a Likert scale in order to differentiate the responses to the closed-ended questions. The closed-ended questions of our survey contain various statements. Likert (1932) established the standard of measuring attitudes by asking participating individuals to respond to a series of statements regarding a specific theme/topic, in terms of the extent to which they agree with them. The five specific possible responses to the survey statements (Strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) are an example of a Likert scale. This example of a Likert scale was utilized in our surveys in order to derive interpretations of replies to measure the attitudes of the survey respondents. It can be argued that these answers serve as indications of generalization, due to the limited number of survey respondents.

A survey can also be applied qualitatively. The aim of the qualitative survey is to identify differences, as opposed to frequencies, amongst the survey respondents within a population (Jansen 2010). The qualitative aspiration of our expat surveys is the identification of different challenges pertaining to expats in Denmark. The qualitative element of our surveys is further evident in the utilization of open-ended questions. The utilization of open-ended questions allows respondents to provide answers without any premade restrictions (Bryman 2016). Furthermore, it allows the researchers to potentially investigate new themes derived from the survey respondents' answers. These are apparent advantages of utilizing open-ended questions. A significant disadvantage of utilizing open-ended questions relates to the issue of effort. Open-ended questions require more effort and longer replies from respondents. There is an evident risk of respondents being discouraged due to the increased effort and need of longer replies as an outcome of an open-ended question (Bryman 2016).

The expat surveys have questions pertaining to five different themes that all focus on different aspects concerning expats in Denmark (Appendix I). These themes were selected based on our theoretical framework. The themes are job embeddedness, job satisfaction, organizational socialization, employee commitment and cultural diversity.

The first five questions of the expat surveys focus on the level of compatibility to the Danish companies in regard to aspects such as job demands, personal values, as well as the expats' network. The first four questions are closed-ended in order to accompany the quantitative aspect of the survey. The last question of these first five is open-ended to accompany the qualitative aspect. The question asks if the expats have been faced with any challenges so far in regard to job compatibility and network. This specific question gives the expats an opportunity to specify their own personal challenges they might have faced, in order to gain more in-depth insight in how they perceive working in Denmark (Appendix I).

The following six questions of the expat surveys focus on aspects of job satisfaction and socialization in regard to expectations and recognition. The first five of these six are closed-ended questions, whilst the last of these six is an open-ended question that asks the expats if they have faced any challenges in regard to work-life balance and satisfaction (Appendix I).

The next four questions are concerned with the expat's level of commitment to the company in regard to staying for a long period of time. The first three of these four questions are closed-ended and the last of the four is open-ended and asks if the expat believe the company could do more to facilitate the expats' length of stay (Appendix I).

The last two questions are both open-ended and is concerned with the cultural diversity that is apparent in Danish companies with expats. These two questions ask if cultural differences are addressed, as well if any cultural barriers are yet to be broken (Appendix I).

Lastly, the expats were given the opportunity to add any additional comments in regard to the questions in the surveys (Appendix I).

Interview

The topic of the qualitative research interview is the interviewee's subjective worldview. The interview is a delicate, yet capable method for gathering saturated data pertaining to the experiences and lived meanings of the subject. This method allows the subjects to accurately convey their specific situations and perspectives, which is beneficial to others seeking to gain an unbiased understanding of the aforementioned. Moreover, the interview offers understanding of the meaning of themes that are central to the subjects lived world (Kvale 2007). Interviews can be characterized as explorative. The exploratory interview aims to obtain new perspectives on a given subject matter based upon the interviewee's responses (Kvale 2007). Our interviewee revealed several answers, which were followed up in order to achieve additional insight into the subject matter of expats in a Danish workplace. Furthermore, the employer interview was semi-structured in order to enable the possibility of uncovering rich descriptive data on the personal experiences of the participant (Doyle 2018). The personal experiences of the interviewee in our semi-structured interview were in relation to a company's challenges, strategies and recommendations in relation to expats.

The interview was with an HR employee of the company and was conducted through Skype on the 26th of April 2019 at 09.00 am and lasted approximately thirty-five minutes. The interview was comprised of questions pertaining to themes that were deemed relevant in the attempt to gain appropriate and comprehensive data relevant to the perspective of the company (Appendix II).

The first theme was concerned with the company's attitude towards expats in general and focused on questions in regard to how they perceive the advantages and disadvantages of hiring expats, as well as how long they have had expats (Appendix II).

The second theme focuses on their recruitment process when hiring expats and asks questions regarding why they initially decided to hire expats and the effect it has had (Appendix II).

The following theme was concerned with the different integration efforts the company has towards helping the expats properly integrate in the company. The questions asked focused on what they deem the most important in regard to integrating the expats in the workplace. The questions also focused on whether the company hires expats from specific countries, as well as potential areas in which they see room for improvements in regard to the integration of expats (Appendix II).

The fourth theme was culture, with questions focusing on what the company has done in order to prevent potential cultural clashes between Danish and international employees. The questions also focused on what the company is currently doing in order to facilitate the best working conditions for a culturally diverse workforce (Appendix II).

Lastly, the employee was asked to provide examples of successful and challenging cases of expat integration, in order to get more in-depth insight (Appendix II).

5.3 Data Analysis

This section encompasses the process of data analysis. The process of data analysis refers to the compilation of primary data into codes, sub-themes and overall themes through the technique of thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a systematic method of data analysis that allows for patterns of meaning, in this context, themes, to develop across data sets based upon the findings. This helps the researchers to better grasp collective or shared meaning across the findings. Moreover, the researchers' capability to identify the most important themes in relation to the studied topic is strengthened by the utilization of a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2012). The reason for utilizing the thematic analysis in this thesis is due to the ease of access in finding the overall themes and to better organize the survey and interview findings through the thematic tables (Appendix IV & Appendix V). Furthermore, it allows for a strengthened interpretation of the data if several answers in the surveys indicate similar perspectives.

The thematic analysis can be conducted in different manners. Two dominant approaches of thematic analysis are the inductive- and deductive approach. The inductive

approach has its emphasis on the collected data. Therefore, the codes and themes are outcomes of the findings within the collected data. As opposed to the inductive approach, the deductive approach has its emphasis on developing codes and themes as results of pre-determined theories, concepts, ideas or topics (Braun & Clarke 2012). In this thesis, the inductive approach has been utilized in the thematic analysis of survey and interview findings. The codes and themes have been developed as an outcome of the findings. However, according to Braun & Clarke (2012), it is important to acknowledge that in reality it is impossible to be exclusively inductive or deductive, as the researcher(s) always bring something to the analysis of the data.

According to Braun and Clarke (2012), the approach to conduct a thematic analysis is based upon six phases. However, the sixth phase will not be elaborated on below as it focuses on the production of the analysis itself.

The first phase encompasses the researchers familiarizing with the collected data (Braun & Clarke 2012). In this thesis, the collection of survey and interview data was followed by the preparation of survey reports and transcription of the interview. The familiarization of the aforementioned collected data was ensured by multiple readings. Furthermore, the researchers wrote down cues of reappearing arguments/perceptions.

The second phase encompasses the establishment of codes (Braun & Clarke 2012). In this thesis, the codes are direct quotes from both the surveys and the interview. The quotes were included as codes due to the relevancy in regard to the research questions. The codes are illustrated in the thematic tables of the surveys and the interview (Appendix IV & Appendix V).

The third phase encompasses the development of themes derived from the codes (Braun & Clarke 2012). In this thesis, the themes were developed as outcomes of the relevant quotes from the surveys and the interview. The relation between codes and sub-themes to the overall themes is illustrated in the thematic tables of the surveys and the interview (Appendix IV & Appendix V).

The fourth phase encompasses the reassessment of themes (Braun & Clarke 2012). In the process of reassessing the themes it became apparent that the initial theme of “network and socialization” needed to be separated as the codes regarding network referred to aspects of socialization. Network became a sub-theme under the overall theme of socialization due to the identified codes. Similarly, the initial sub-theme “family and relationships” was renamed

to “family” and placed under the overall theme of living adjustments, as the identified codes pertaining to this sub-theme focused on the aspect of living adjustments.

The fifth phase encompasses the definition of themes. The definition of themes must describe the exclusive aspect of each theme (Braun & Clarke 2012).

1. **Language**

The theme of language encompasses the communicative competencies of both the employer and the employee. Moreover, it includes the process of the expat in regard to learning the Danish language and domestic employees’ level of English. In addition, the theme of language refers to the various aspects of communication, both internal and external.

2. **Culture**

The theme of culture includes the various subset of variables pertaining to the culture of an individual, along with the different perceptions in relation to the influence of culture in a Danish work environment. Moreover, this theme encompasses the notions of multiculturalism and diversity, both within a company, as well as within societies and communities.

3. **Socialization**

The theme of socialization encompasses expat experiences of their interactions with domestic and international co-workers. This theme illuminates the challenging aspects, recommendations and employer initiatives in order to facilitate the socialization of expats.

4. **Career**

The theme of career has its focus on significant career-related aspects. The aspects range from financial to professional concerns, as well as the future career opportunities for the expats. Furthermore, this theme is also concerned with the perspective of companies.

5. **Legislations**

The theme of legislations encompasses Danish legislations and government actions, which have a direct effect on companies utilizing expats, as well as the expats themselves. However, legislations were not mentioned by the interviewee. Therefore, legislations was omitted as a theme in the thematic analysis of the employer interview.

6. Living Adjustments

The theme of living adjustments refers to the practical adjustments experienced by the expat, when attempting to integrate into a different country, as well as what companies could do to help facilitate said adjustments. This includes aspects such as the costs of living, in regard to housing, expenses, and costs of domestic travelling.

In the two expat surveys, thirty-six codes were deemed appropriate to incorporate in the analysis. The thirty-six codes were divided into nineteen relevant sub-themes. The sub-themes were established based on the identified codes in the survey responses. The sub-themes were subsequently divided into six different overall themes, as illustrated below.

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Sub-theme</u>
Language	Language barriers
	Danish classes
Culture	Cultural bias
	Danish culture
Socialization	Friends
	Network
Career	Career prospects
	Training and development
	Salary
	Recognition
	Responsibility
	Ambition levels
Legislations	Sick leave legislations
	Taxation

	Vacation legislations
	Government
Living Adjustments	Expenses
	Travel time
	Settling in

Table 1: An overview of the overall themes and subsequent sub-themes of the expat surveys (self-made) (Appendix IV).

In the employer interview, twenty codes were deemed appropriate to incorporate in the analysis. The twenty codes were divided into nine relevant sub-themes. These sub-themes were established based on the relevant codes in the interview. The sub-themes were subsequently divided into five different overall themes, as illustrated below.

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Sub-theme</u>
Language	Language barriers
Culture	Organizational culture
Socialization	Responsibility of integration
	Danish classes
	Social initiatives
Career	View on international workforce
Living Adjustments	Settling in
	Collaborators
	Family

Table 2: An overview of the overall themes and subsequent sub-themes of the employer interview (self-made) (Appendix V).

The process of determining the sub-themes and overall themes for both the surveys and the employer interview were facilitated through the use of the iterative approach. The iterative approach insinuates a reflexive process. The reflexive process has its emphasis on evaluating and re-evaluating data in order to establish connections to recent insight. The aforementioned results in an improved focus and understanding (Srivastava & Hopwood 2009). The reflexive process of evaluating and re-evaluating the survey and interview data provided overall themes, which facilitated a refined understanding of the important aspects in relation to challenges and expat accommodation strategies. As prior stated, sub-themes were redefined as a result of evaluating and re-evaluating data. Furthermore, significant overall themes of the expat surveys and employer interview were revisited in our discussion section in order to examine the empirical data alongside our theoretical framework and secondary data.

5.4 Trustworthiness in Research

The trustworthiness of the research will be addressed through the lenses of Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four principles of trustworthiness, which are; *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*.

The aspect of *credibility* is predominantly centered on assessing the quality of the empirical data (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The surveys enabled the expats to present their personal perceptions in relation to the survey topics. The interviewed employee representative forwarded the survey to the two expat co-workers, which might have influenced their responses to be less critical. This potential issue was accommodated by ensuring anonymity. Anonymity was ensured by the omission of demographic questions in order to prevent potential identification of respondents. Furthermore, anonymity was ensured in order to facilitate truthful and comprehensive responses. However, in the survey targeted towards expats in Denmark, the demographic question pertaining to nationality was asked. The aforementioned was done in order to control that the survey was taken by expats and not Danes. The survey responses revealed many different nationalities, as well as four Danish respondents. However, after cross-checking the answers of each respondent, it was identified that the four Danish respondents did not answer any questions besides the aforementioned question in regard to nationality. This ensures the credibility and trustworthiness of the survey as it only focused on the opinions of expats. In the employer interview, the semi-

structured technique was applied as it allows the interviewee to freely express personal experiences and perceptions of, in this case, expats at their workplace and in Denmark. Furthermore, the employer interview revealed the company's opinion on expats, challenges and their current strategies of accommodating expats. Therefore, it can be argued how the interview data was credible in relation to examining the research questions.

Transferability has its emphasis on in-depth investigations in order to accommodate the context of research (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The surveys illuminate the challenges of expats in Denmark. In this thesis we ensured to contextualize how we examine expats and their employers in Denmark, through the emphasis on challenges and accommodation strategies. This was done in order to facilitate future researchers to potentially draw comparisons to their own research. The semi-structured interview with the employer representative ensured an in-depth understanding of their challenges and strategies in relation to expats at a Danish workplace. Their challenges and strategies are not necessarily generalizable to all Danish companies, however it can be argued that some companies will experience similar challenges and make use of similar strategies.

Dependability focuses on the collection and analysis of empirical data in regard to transparency and cohesion, which refers to the overall accountability of the thesis (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The various components of the methodological section describe the research process in terms of data collection, which justifies the relevancy of the appendices. The cohesion of the analyses of empirical data was ensured by the application of the same overall themes.

The last principle of *confirmability* focuses on researcher bias, as well as ensuring objectivity in the findings (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The researchers' dense cooperation ensured the elimination of any potential researcher bias. The elimination of potential researcher bias relates to the pursuit of establishing credibility. As prior stated, the survey and interview were both constructed in a way to facilitate truthful and objective findings, to ensure said credibility.

5.5 Delimitations

A disadvantage of survey research is the potential lack of detail and depth of responses in relation to the research topics (Kelley et al. 2003). Especially, the survey questions relating to cultural differences and barriers resulted in a lack of in-depth answers. The placement of these questions at the end of the survey might discourage respondents to provide in-depth answers. Furthermore, it can be argued that question sixteen: “*Do you feel your company is addressing and accommodating cultural differences, if so how?*” (Appendix I) and question seventeen: “*Do you feel that some cultural barriers are yet to be broken?*” (Appendix I), might have caused confusion amongst some respondents. The confusion is arguably due to the researchers’ formulation of the questions. As alluded to earlier, the survey received twenty-three non-complete responses. The non-complete responses are examples of how time and effort have functioned as issues in our survey research. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that the findings of this thesis are made in an attempt to understand expats’ challenges and companies’ accommodation strategies in Denmark. However, it can be argued that expats in other countries face similar challenges and that the ways of accommodating these challenges are also similar. Therefore, this thesis can potentially be of use to not only Danish companies but perhaps also international companies.

6. Analysis

Initially, the analysis will illuminate the findings of our surveys in order to identify the challenges pertaining to expats in Denmark. Secondly, the analysis will examine the findings of our interview with an HR employee in order to identify how a Danish company have accommodated their expats. Lastly, the aforementioned findings will be compared in order to identify potential similarities and differences in relation to the overall themes introduced in the methodology section. To sum up, the three-fold analysis is conducted in order to answer the research questions and assist the subsequent discussion.

6.1 Presentation of Findings - Surveys

The responses of the expat surveys (henceforth referred to as the general expat survey and the company expat survey) illuminated several significant findings. The findings were divided into overall themes and sub-themes in order to identify the respondents' challenges within a Danish workplace. The various responses are distinguished through numerical classifications in each question (e.g. R1 = Respondent 1). Six overall themes emerged from the surveys; language, culture, socialization, career, legislations, and living adjustments (Appendix IV). Each of the six overall themes and appertaining sub-themes will be elaborated upon below.

Theme 1: Language

Language was identified as an overall theme in the surveys. The survey respondents emphasized the theme of language through the sub-themes of language barriers, and Danish classes.

Survey participants commented on the potential issue of language barriers, which often occurs between individuals who do not share the same native language. This is a potential cause of disconnect between the expat and the domestic employees. Furthermore, participants highlighted the importance of English as a choice of corporate language in order to prevent potential language barriers pertaining to the use of Danish.

In the general expat survey, R6 commented the following in relation to question 5 that asks about job compatibility and network: *“Danish language barrier when it comes to small*

talks & socialising at work” (Appendix I). This was also evident in the company expat survey, as R1 commented a similar opinion in relation to question 5: *“Language and cultural barriers, usually the people rather keep within their boundaries, specially the older they are. Either you step in or you are just left outside. And stepping in takes time because stuff like a language doesn’t gets learnt in 1 week”* (Appendix I). These statements indicate the negative role of language barriers in terms of socializing. Domestic employees neglecting expats in the context of small talks and socializing at work arguably has a negative effect on how expats perceive domestic employees’ willingness to facilitate an international environment within the company. Furthermore, the inability to communicate properly in the same language in a professional setting, could effectively serve as a factor for exclusion, which would alienate the expat from socializing with colleagues. In addition, R12 from the general expat survey provided insight regarding question 16 that asks: *“Do you feel your company is addressing and accommodating cultural differences, if so how?”* (Appendix I) to which the response was *“Language classes”* (Appendix I). This further reinforces the need for proper, inclusive communication, as the value of communicative integration is being demonstrated in this particular response. It can be argued that the implementation of language classes is an appropriate way to accommodate the need of integrating expats. R14 from the general expat survey addresses the role of English regarding the aforementioned question 16: *“English now required spoken when non Danes present at meetings”* (Appendix I). This statement is an example of English language functioning as an employer’s potential solution to accommodate language barriers.

To sum up, the theme of language identified significant communicative challenges at a Danish workplace, according to the expats. Furthermore, the expats’ comments indicate language as a significant challenge that must be continuously considered by Danish companies and domestic employees.

Theme 2: Culture

Culture was identified as an overall theme in the surveys. The survey respondents emphasized the theme of culture through the sub-themes of cultural bias, and Danish culture.

Responses from both expat surveys point out the role of culture in relation to various challenges. In the general expat survey, R9 responded the following to question 11 regarding job satisfaction and work-life balance: *“I have just started, but I can say that in my previous*

workplace there was a huge difference of treatment between internationals and Danes” (Appendix I). One could argue that this particular statement indicates a potential cultural bias, as they have potentially experienced some form of favoritism from either management or colleagues. Experiences of differences in treatment in the workplace can be argued to directly affect employee morale, which can foster conflicts between the employees. The potential favoritism can be argued to be unintentional, or unconscious. As individuals not trained to take into consideration the cultural differences, manners, and language of the international workforce might succumb to favoring their domestic employees/colleagues simply as it requires less of them. In addition, in the general expat survey, R5 responded the following to question 5: *“Tolerating casual, borderline racist remarks that stem from a narrow minded, prejudiced, albeit understandable mindsets of locals who spent most of their lives in a homogenous society with little assimilation policies encouraged by the government”* (Appendix I). This statement indicates the cultural issues that can arise from expats attempting to integrate into the smaller, and perhaps more rural communities of Denmark. Furthermore, the statement is arguably an example of how misunderstandings occur in a culturally diverse workplace. Danes might perceive these remarks as harmless and as a part of socializing. However, the expat might perceive these remarks as a way of establishing further distance and thus affecting the expat’s sense of job compatibility and opportunities to develop networks. The previous statements are arguably indicators of a cultural bias within the workplace. It can be argued that prejudiced, and even racist remarks reflect partiality from the domestic host culture. The favoritism expressed by R9 could potentially be connected to the experienced prejudice expressed by R5. However, as stated in the statement by R5, the prejudiced mindset might not stem from hate or ill-intention, but rather from ignorance.

To sum up, the theme of culture identified significant challenges in relation to the expats’ perception of the Danish culture. The expats’ comments demonstrated limited awareness about cultural differences, which arguably resulted in the aforementioned challenges. Furthermore, the expats’ comments indicate the importance of acknowledging cultural differences in order to bring success to a diverse workforce.

Theme 3: Socialization

Socialization was identified as an overall theme in the surveys. The survey respondents emphasized the theme of socialization through the sub-themes of friends and network.

Socialization is a dominant theme in both expat surveys in terms of encountered challenges. In the general expat survey, 39 % of the respondents expressed disagreement to having a large network of work- and nonwork friends in question 4 (Appendix I). The survey responses indicate how challenges within socialization is associated to the themes of culture and language. In the company expat survey, R1 responded the following to question 17 that asks about cultural barriers: *“Indeed. People is so kind and friendly, if I need help, they’ll provide. But they won’t try to become my friends, they already have their lives over here with their Danish friends. I was warned about this by other person from my home country, but I didn’t believe until I come here. Right now, several months after coming here I have made some friends from several countries, but none of them is Danish.”* (Appendix I). This statement is an example of the challenges associated to establishing friendships, especially with Danes. Furthermore, R1 seemingly perceives the challenge as a result of a cultural barrier between expats and Danes. Moreover, it is noteworthy that R1 was warned about the difficulties of establishing friendships and social networks in Denmark. The previous argument is further substantiated by R4, R7, and R11, in the general expat survey, in regard to question 5 as stated in the following: *“It was surprising that colleagues wanted no personal relationships (earlier). Its harder to make friends with locals so unfortunately, my international network is bigger”, “It’s hard to make friends when moving to Denmark for a job”, “Difficulty making spontaneous friends especially when not yet speaking Danish”* (Appendix I). The third statement is an example of how language proficiency influences the outcome of socialization. Furthermore, R1 commented the following, in the company expat survey, in regard to question 11: *“The bureaucracy is higher”* (Appendix I). This statement is an indication of how socialization arguably can be hindered by a perception of high bureaucracy in the workplace.

Another perspective that is important to acknowledge in socialization is the establishment of a work-related network for the expat. R8 commented the following to question 5: *“Finding a job without a proper network and living in Odense. I am a marketer and it seems that only job positions for marketers are in CPH”* (Appendix I). This statement indicates the difficulties involved with getting work-related connections in general. Difficulties in achieving a work-related network is arguably a challenge in terms of career development, which could serve as a hindrance if the expat value career prospects highly. Moreover, it can be argued that the job competencies and the expat’s field of work, as well as

the area of residence correlate to the expat's ability to gather a satisfactory work-related network.

To sum up, the theme of socialization identified expats' significant challenges in terms of establishing a network both inside and outside of work. Expats' comments indicate the importance of friendship with colleagues, however the perceived unwillingness of Danes to engage in friendships is arguably a hindrance for expats in order to feel comfortable and welcome.

Theme 4: Career

Career was identified as an overall theme in the surveys. The survey respondents emphasized the theme of career through the sub-themes of career prospects, training and development, salary, recognition, responsibility, and ambition levels.

The many sub-themes connected to the theme career are indicators of the wide range of career-related challenges that expats experience. R4 commented the following to question 11: *"Career prospects are unclear. People don't want to invest in internationals as they believe their stay is temporary(...)"* (Appendix I). This statement can be related to the sub-theme network in the section above, as it further substantiates the potential difficulties of expats in relation to establishing work-related networks. A potential domestic perception of expats as a temporary addition to the workforce potentially functions as an impediment in facilitating expats' future professional development.

Furthermore, the lack of investment into the international workforce is expressed in R1's response to question 11: *"Lack of investment in personal training and future education"* (Appendix I). This statement indicates the importance of training and development. It can be argued that satisfactory training and development is connected to the certainty level of career prospects. Furthermore, R5's response to question 15 that asks about what the company could do in order to keep the expat committed: *"Keep allowing and supporting my personal and professional development"* (Appendix I), indicates the emphasis on the importance of the continued development of the expats' competencies. Ultimately, in question 9, 23 % of the general expat survey respondents expressed disagreement in relation to having received satisfactory amounts of training and development (Appendix I).

The sub-theme of salary is expressed through several statements of the respondents. R1 commented: *"Increase salary or give bonus"* (Appendix I), which was validated by R4's

statement: *“Better monetary benefits...”* (Appendix I). In regard to question 11, R4 elaborated: *“My job is highly demanding but monetary returns are much lower than standards”* (Appendix I). The statements of R4 indicates a sense of dissatisfaction and disagreement in the matching of expectations in regard to the monetary aspect.

In addition, general expat survey respondents emphasized recognition as an important aspect. However, there are evident challenges, as R3 and R4 commented the following to question 15: *“Value my potential”, “Recognition of past experience”* (Appendix I). Firstly, R3’s response demonstrated the need of satisfactory appreciation of potential in order to strengthen commitment. Secondly, R4’s response demonstrated the need of recognizing past experiences in order to strengthen commitment. These statements indicate a lack of recognition in the work environment, which can have a negative influence on the respondents’ overall performances.

Moreover, the sub-theme of responsibility is acknowledged by R4 in the statement pertaining to question 11: *“Responsibility is rarely given, it’s usually dependent on the individual to take it”* (Appendix I). This statement is an example of different perceptions in relation to job responsibility. It can be argued that R4 prefers job responsibility to be assigned and to be the task of the employer, as opposed to relying on the employees obtaining responsibility themselves.

The last sub-theme ambition levels is addressed by two respondents. R2 commented the following to question 5 in the general expat survey: *“Ambition levels are quite low in Denmark”* (Appendix I). This is an example of R2 being used to higher levels of ambition within the workplace. Furthermore, the statement is substantiated by the following comment by R1, from the company expat survey, to question 11: *“The pace is far slower to what I was used to(...)”* (Appendix I). It can be argued that R2 and R1 both value ambition and career prospects, which is in contrast to their perceptions of the low ambition level of Danish workplaces.

To sum up, the theme of career identified significant challenges in relation to a lack of continued training and development, a lack of monetary incentives, and unclear career prospects. These challenges are an indication of how expats perceive differences in valuation between themselves and domestic employees.

Theme 5: Legislations

Legislations was identified as an overall theme in the surveys. The survey respondents emphasized the theme of legislations through the sub-themes of sick leave legislations, taxation, vacation legislations, and government.

The respondents' reasoning to the legislations challenges are arguably similar. Therefore, the following examination of the responses have been unified.

In the sub-theme sick leave legislations R10 commented the following to question 11: *"Danish sick leave legislation"* (Appendix I). The response is an indication of a R10 having faced challenges associated with sick leave legislations.

Regarding the sub-theme taxation, R11 commented the following to question 5: *"Costs of living, taxes (emergency tax 70 % at first payslip), pensions (taxed 60 % for expats)(...)"* (Appendix I). This statement indicates that R11 is overwhelmed with the legislations associated with taxes and pensions.

In the sub-theme vacation legislations, R2 from the company expat survey, commented the following to question 11: *"It takes a full year to earn vacation for the next. So the first year I am here I have little vacation time"* (Appendix I). This indicates a lack of information provided to the expat or obtained by the expat, in regard to vacation legislations.

In the sub-theme government, R2 from the general expat survey, commented the following: *"Main challenge for the expats who are non-EU citizens is hostile approach from Danish government(...)"* (Appendix I). This statement indicates a negative perception of the Danish government in terms accommodating non-EU expats.

To sum up the four sub-themes, it can be argued that the potential challenge pertaining to the different Danish legislations and Danish government all refer to the expat's unawareness or dissatisfaction. The unawareness can be argued to be caused by a lack of communication between the company and the expats. Their dissatisfaction is an apparent indication of the need to moderate regulations pertaining to expats working in Denmark.

Theme 6: Living Adjustments

Living adjustments was identified as an overall theme in the surveys. The survey respondents emphasized the theme of living adjustments through the sub-themes of expenses, travel time, and settling in.

In both expat surveys, the respondents commented on different challenges pertaining to the aspect of living adjustments that comes with living in Denmark. In the sub-theme expenses, R11 commented the following to question 5: *“Costs of living(...)”* (Appendix I). This statement is an indication of how the general costs of living in Denmark is perceived to be expensive, which arguably has a negative impact on the motivation of the expat in order to facilitate a long-term stay.

In the sub-theme of travel time, R5 and R3, in the general expat survey, both commented similarly to question 11: *“So many travels”, “Distance from work”* (Appendix I). These statements are indications of how expats perceive travel and distance as a challenge, which can have a negative impact, as a result of a potential lack of willingness to sacrifice their time.

In the sub-theme, settling in, R1 in the company expat survey commented the following to question 15: *“Immersion paid course before coming here for my family and I so we could have come with a strong foundation”* (Appendix I). This particular statement emphasizes the importance of initiating the learning of the language and the culture prior to arrival, as well as the family aspect. Ultimately, the argument of R1 refers to the importance of emphasizing integration processes prior to arrival.

To sum up, the theme of living adjustments identified practical challenges pertaining to moving to Denmark and illuminated the importance of initial integration processes.

6.2 Presentation of Findings - Interview

The employer interview illuminated several significant findings. These findings were divided into overall themes and subsequent sub-themes in order to identify how a company accommodates their expats' challenges. Five overall themes emerged from the interview; language, culture, socialization, career, and living adjustments (Appendix V). Each of the five overall themes and sub-themes will be elaborated on below.

Theme 1: Language

Language was identified as an overall theme in the employer interview. The interviewee emphasized the theme of language through the sub-theme of language barriers.

The interviewee stated language barriers as a significant challenge. The issue of language barriers was recognized both in terms of expats and domestic employees. Initially, the interviewee addressed the potential challenges in relation to English proficiency. An apparent concern is expressed in relation to managers' and domestic employees' level of English: *"Not all managers are equally skilled in English", "Employees, who are not skilled in English, might struggle and think that they are not a part of the company anymore"* (Appendix III, l. 78 & ll. 69-73). However, expats' potential inadequate levels of Danish is also recognized. The recognition of issues in relation to English and Danish language barriers results in a dilemma as stated in the following: *"We are 1,200 and we have production operatives, who does not speak a word of English. Well, should we change everything and speak English or should they also learn some Danish? It is a delicate balance"* (Appendix III, ll. 235-239).

To sum up, in the theme of language, the interviewee emphasized the role of language in order to ensure balance amongst their employees. The issue of language does not only pertain to expats, but also the domestic employees. The vast majority of the employees are Danish, which makes it difficult to justify English as the corporate language in order to accommodate a minority of expats. Therefore, the company's approach to optimal accommodation of their expats is through the use of Danish classes.

Theme 2: Culture

Culture was identified as an overall theme in the employer interview. The interviewee emphasized the theme of culture through the sub-theme of organizational culture.

The interviewee mentioned their key company values: *"Loyalty, transparency and honesty"* (Appendix III, ll. 300-301). It can be argued that an ideal outcome of their key values is the reinforcement of expat integration. Moreover, these key values are substantiated by the acknowledgement of changes and adaptation in order to ensure continued success: *"We are open towards changes. We know that success is only achievable as a result of constant optimization and changes"* (Appendix III, ll. 287-289). Furthermore, the interviewee emphasized the company's emphasis on relations. The interviewee argued that the relations between managers and employees are strengthened by the level of intimacy: *"The intimacy within the company is something we focus on a lot. Especially between management and employees. The fact that we see each other everyday and rarely have people work from home"*

or go abroad is something that helps to bring us together. To feel that we are there for one another is really important” (Appendix III, ll. 348-356).

To sum up, in the theme of culture, the interviewee emphasizes how the company is seemingly open towards changes in order to optimize processes, which indicates how the company accommodates expats through the willingness to incorporate their opinions, in relation to the company’s work processes.

Theme 3: Socialization

Socialization was identified as an overall theme in the employer interview. The interviewee emphasized the theme of socialization through the sub-themes of responsibility of integration, Danish classes, and social initiatives.

In the sub-theme responsibility of integration, the interviewee states the company’s awareness of their responsibilities in order to facilitate the integration of their expats. Furthermore, the interviewee emphasizes how the company takes on responsibility when it comes to ensuring the integration of expats. Furthermore, they realize the importance for expats to not only be integrated within the company, but also in the local community: *“What can we do to make sure they feel welcome and integrated, both in the company but also in the local community. We feel that there is a bigger responsibility to integrate them in the local community compared to facilitating the same integration for Danes”* (Appendix III, ll. 41-47).

The interviewee mentioned the following pertaining to the sub-theme of Danish classes: *“For example in the Danish classes, the expats they meet and get to know each other better, which serves as the foundation for further socialization outside of work related activities(...)”* (Appendix III, ll. 564-573). The statement indicates how attending Danish classes also function as a place of socialization amongst the expats. Furthermore, the socialization amongst the expats occur due to their shared purpose of learning Danish in order to facilitate integration in the workplace and the Danish society.

The interviewee described different social initiatives that the company employs in their reception of expats. In the following statement, the interviewee emphasizes the importance of a buddy-system: *“A lot of focus on a buddy, or an uncle, as we call it. A co-worker or a mentor is helping people to settle in.”* (Appendix III, ll. 105-108). It can be argued that the implementation of a buddy-system eases the expat’s initial adjustment

process. Additionally, the interviewee elaborates upon how the company utilizes a consultant in connection to the expats' well-being: *"We have a consultant, who helps us, and have been down here to interview our international employees about how it has been"* (Appendix III, ll. 102-105). It can be argued that the consultant-interviews promote transparency, which potentially encourages the expat to provide truthful narratives about his/her experiences. Lastly, the interviewee mentioned the role of the company's younger and recently qualified employees in connection to the expats' socialization process. The following statement is also an example of how the management of language barriers facilitates socialization: *"Our young newcomers are often open towards expats, since they are used to speaking in English at the university. We have matched our recently qualified with our international employees"* (Appendix III, ll. 507-514).

To sum up, in the theme of socialization, the interviewee emphasized the company's recognition of their additional responsibility to facilitate the integration of expats as opposed to the integration of domestic employees. The awareness of additional responsibility is indicated in the different above-mentioned initiatives, which shows their approach to accommodating expats.

Theme 4: Career

Career was identified as an overall theme in the employer interview. The interviewee emphasized the theme of career through the sub-theme of view on international workforce.

The sub-theme, view on international workforce, encompasses the interviewee's acknowledgement of how expats potentially benefit companies by possessing different and applicable know-how, and competencies compared to the domestic workforce. The following statements solidify the company's view on the need of acquiring international workforce: *"There is a need of international workforce in order to be internationally competitive"* (Appendix III, ll. 29-31), *"Their skillset is crucial. They must bring experience, that we can use. They can improve processes and the way we work"* (Appendix III, ll. 151-155).

In the theme of career, the company's initial focus of accommodating expats is concerned with the expat's ability to benefit the company, as opposed to a focus on the company's ability to develop the expat.

Theme 6: Living Adjustments

Living adjustments was identified as an overall theme in the employer interview. The interviewee emphasized the theme of living adjustments through the sub-themes of settling in, collaborators, and family.

In the first sub-theme, settling in, the interviewee stated the company's emphasis on a thorough welcoming process. However, the company have faced issues as illustrated in the following statement: *"Welcome material, translated to English, about how to read a payslip and taxation (...) the newcomer service are helping, but I do experience issues. We, as a company, must focus on this"* (Appendix III, ll. 212-218). This statement indicates that the company acknowledge they can do more in order to eliminate possible confusion and misunderstanding.

In regard to the sub-theme of collaborators, the interviewee elaborated upon how the company have engaged in collaboration with the local municipality. The local municipality function as an important partner in order to assist the accomplishment of a successful expat integration process, as seen in the following statements: *"A lot collaboration with the municipality, who have a newcomer service. The sole purpose of the newcomer service is to assist with anything non-employment related"* (Appendix III, ll. 123-130), *"The municipality has major focus on integrating newcomers in the local community"* (Appendix III, ll. 130-133). This is an indication of the company's major focus on initiatives to ensure the integration of their expats outside of work.

In the final sub-theme of family, the interviewee expressed awareness of the importance of family in terms of expat adjustment. The following statements indicate the family's influence in significant decisions, which potentially could result in expats returning to their home countries, due to a lack of family adjustment in Denmark: *"(...)it is the entire family that needs to feel safe and welcome in order for it to last. If not it is only a matter of time before the rest of the family will want to go home"* (Appendix III, ll. 399-406), *"Our experiences with the expats we have lost have been due to family reasons. For example a wife of an expat was homesick(...). They simply were too far from home, from what they knew."* (Appendix III, ll. 389-395). However, there might be complications should the family of the expat be unwilling to partake in the integration process: *"We have heard from others, that accompanying partners may have a lack of interest in learning Danish."* (Appendix III, ll. 465-466). It can be argued that the company should discuss the family situation of the expat prior to employment, in order to avoid family-related challenges.

To sum up, in the theme of living adjustments, the interviewee emphasized the company's involvement with the local municipality in order to accommodate the integration of the expats. The different initiatives indicate the company's awareness in relation to the importance of local community and family in the integration process of expats in Denmark.

6.3 Comparing Survey and Interview Findings

The findings of the surveys and interview show areas of compliance, as the majority of the overall themes in relation to expats at a workplace are mutually recognized. However, the two sets of data are not perfectly correlated, due to differences in perspectives. The differences in perspectives are results of the different positions within a workplace. Therefore, a comparison of surveys and interview findings is needed in order to identify similarities and differences.

Theme 1: Language

Survey respondents recognized language barriers as an important challenge at a Danish workplace. Furthermore, according to the survey respondents, language barriers are a significant hindrance to facilitate socialization in a diverse workforce. Survey responses indicate language barriers as a reinforcer of boundaries between Danish and international employees. In addition to the survey respondents, language barriers were recognized as a challenge by the interviewee. However, the interviewee acknowledged language barriers as a challenge in relation to work processes and workplace cohesion. Furthermore, the interviewee mentioned domestic employees' and managers' difficulties with English, which arguably affects workplace cohesion.

Ultimately, the survey and interview findings demonstrated the complexity of language barriers. The expats experience language-related challenges due to lack of Danish proficiency regarding socialization with domestic employees. The company's approach of accommodating the aforementioned is by means of Danish classes.

Theme 2: Culture

Survey respondents recognized the importance of acknowledging cultural differences in a diverse workforce. The expats' perception of Danish workplace culture indicates a cultural bias toward Danes. The perception of a difference in treatment arguably have a

negative effect on morale and can be the cause of exclusion. Another challenge is connected to the perception of Danish humor as being inconsiderate of other cultures or sensitive topics. As opposed to the survey responses, the interviewee emphasized the company's openness towards optimization and changes and their own values such as loyalty, transparency and honesty, as well as their efforts to facilitate an intimate and comfortable working environment. However, a company survey respondent's perception of high levels of bureaucracy at Danish workplaces, contradicts the company's proclaimed values. It can be argued that the expats' challenges in relation to culture develop as an outcome of lacking information about Danish (workplace) culture prior to arrival.

Ultimately, the survey and interview findings demonstrated the complexity concerning culture. The expats experience culture-related challenges due to a perceived difference in treatment and a lack of understanding of the Danish (workplace) culture, whereas the company focuses on attempting to culturally accommodate their expats through their own values.

Theme 3: Socialization

Survey respondents recognized the challenge of building friendships with colleagues and establishing a work-related network. A survey respondent illuminated how he/she believes that Danes perceive an expat's stay as temporary. It can be argued that an expat might experience an unwillingness from domestic employees to develop friendships, as a consequence of domestic employees potentially viewing the expat's stay as temporary. Another respondent stated how domestic employees tend to stay in pre-existing domestic groups of friends. These perceptions arguably function as hindrances for expats in order to feel comfortable and welcome in Danish workplaces. In the employer interview, the interviewee acknowledges the company's responsibility to help the integration of expats both in and outside of the workplace. The company accommodates the integration of their expats through initiatives, such as the use of a buddy-system, the implementation of Danish classes, and by matching expats and young recently qualified domestic employees.

Ultimately, the survey and interview findings demonstrated the complexity concerning socialization. The expats' challenge pertaining to socialization revolves around negative perceptions of domestic employees, which can be argued to be an outcome of lacking openness. The company has a major emphasis on accommodating their expats in

terms of socialization, however the effectiveness of the initiatives can be argued due to the aforementioned perception of high bureaucracy levels.

Theme 4: Career

Survey respondents recognized different challenges in relation to career. As prior stated, the lack of training and development was a challenge, substantiated by 23 % of the general survey respondents (Appendix I). The challenge of a perceived lack of training and development could disincentivize expats to stay longer. A respondent in the general expat survey commented on how he/she perceives that the monetary returns are low in Denmark, which is an indication of a mismatch in expectations. The same respondent alluded to the challenge of how responsibility is obtained and not assigned. It can be argued that the aforementioned challenge is an outcome of difficulties in the adjustment to a Danish workplace. Another challenge is the company expat survey respondent's perception of the slow pace in a Danish workplace, which can be argued to equal low levels of ambition. This is further substantiated by a perception of a respondent from the general expat survey, who argues that Danish ambition levels are low. It can be argued that low ambition levels are a potential cause to an expat's career-related challenges at a Danish workplace. In the employer interview, the interviewee mentioned how the company emphasized the recruitment of expats as an essential factor in relation to the company's future growth. The interviewee outlined the importance of acquiring expats with a compatible skill set and experience. As prior stated, the company's emphasis is on the expat's ability to benefit the company.

Ultimately, the survey and interview findings demonstrated the complexity in regard to career. The expat's challenges pertaining to career are focused on how they feel undervalued and arguably a dissatisfaction in regard to ambition levels and monetary returns. This is arguably due to a lack of information about the Danish work culture, prior to coming to Denmark. It can be argued that the company should put additional emphasis on expat's individual development and needs.

Theme 6: Living Adjustments

Survey respondents recognized challenges in regard to living adjustments. In the company expat survey, a respondent commented on how immersion paid courses would have helped to facilitate a strong foundation prior to coming to Denmark. A respondent in the general expat survey argues that the costs of living in Denmark is high, whilst another argues

that there are many travels associated with working in Denmark. These are both indications of the expats not being fully informed about life in Denmark, and these challenges can have a negative impact in regard to the willingness of adapting to life in Denmark. The interviewee mentioned the utilization of the local municipality in order to facilitate a smooth transition period for the expats. However, the interviewee also mentioned that they do experience issues pertaining to the English translation of welcome material, in collaboration with the newcomer service in the local municipality. This is an indication of how expats experience challenges as a result of miscommunication or confusion during the initial process of integration. Furthermore, the family aspect is acknowledged by the company. The company's experiences pertaining to an expat's family indicate the importance of family.

Ultimately, the survey and interview findings demonstrated the complexity concerning living adjustments. Expat challenges pertaining to living adjustment are focused on finances and travels. However, the importance of family is mutually recognized by the expats and company in order to ensure adjustment. The company accommodates expats by providing welcome material in collaboration with the local municipality. It can be argued that welcoming information regarding life in Denmark, should be distributed to expats prior to arrival in Denmark, in order to ensure transparency and prevent potential future misunderstandings.

7. Discussion

The discussion will build upon the most prevalent themes in the survey and interview findings. Throughout the analytical sections, the themes of language and culture were identified as common denominators in regard to the challenges of the expats. Additionally, language and culture were identified as essential areas of focus in order to ensure a company's optimal accommodation of their expats. The themes of language and culture illustrated the interconnectedness between the examined themes, which justifies the inclusion of other themes within the themes of language and culture in the discussion. The discussion of the themes of language and culture will also encompass our secondary data and theoretical framework in order to discuss why expat challenges occur, and ways of accommodating said challenges.

The analysis demonstrated the different challenges pertaining to expats in Denmark. The major challenges refer to the Danish (workplace) culture and socialization.

7.1 Danish (workplace) culture

Danish humor, and low ambition levels were emphasized as challenges pertaining to Danish (workplace) culture.

It can be argued how Danish humor is a challenge due to a lack of acknowledgement of cultural differences and language barriers. A survey respondent expressed dissatisfaction with Danish humor, due to racist undertones. Humor is a part of the informality, which characterize Danish workplaces as argued by Workindenmark (n.d.a). The aforementioned use of Danish humor was arguably made in an attempt to include the expat in the informal Danish work environment. The misconception in relation to the use of humor is a potential outcome of inadequate intercultural competence. According to Koester & Lustig (2010), intercultural competence is characterized by the recognition of cultural differences and the relationship between the communicating individuals in a given situation. Furthermore, intercultural competency is strengthened by an in-depth understanding of other people's knowledge, motivations and actions during interactions. The importance of intercultural competency in order to accommodate potential challenges is further substantiated by Yu (2012), who advocates cultural sensitivity, awareness and behavioral skills as measures of

intercultural competency. Therefore, it can be argued that the misconception about the use of humor occurred due to a limited understanding of other people's knowledge, motivations and actions. Language is significant during interactions in order to achieve the aforementioned understanding of others. As a result, the management of language barriers through Danish classes is a possible approach to prevent future misunderstandings. Additionally, the misconception about the use of humor also indicated domestic employees' lack of caution. The use of humor with great caution is also emphasized by the Project Welcome (2011). The Project Welcome (2011) argues for the significance of cautious use of humor in order to ensure effective communication.

The interview findings illuminated the emphasis on accommodating their expats through the use of Danish classes, but a lack of focus on preparing their domestic employees for the addition of expats in the workplace. The challenge of humor indicated domestic employees' lack of intercultural competency. Therefore, it can be argued that the preparation of domestic employees to work in a culturally diverse workforce is of equal importance. Domestic employees will arguably experience a culture shock due the aforementioned lack of preparation and intercultural competency. In the case of humor, it can be argued how domestic employee's culture shock is a potential outcome of limited awareness pertaining to the pitfalls of their own culture. The emergence of a culture shock is recognized by the U-curve theory of adjustment (Liu & Lee 2008). However, the U-curve theory of adjustment defines culture shock as an expat's experience. Therefore, domestic employees' potential culture shock is a possible addition to the U-curve theory of adjustment. The challenge of humor solidifies the importance of acknowledging cultural differences. The importance of acknowledging cultural differences is further substantiated by the strategy of cultural compromise. The strategy of cultural compromise maintains the argument of all parties conceding something in order to facilitate an improved working environment (Adler & Gundersen 2007). It can be argued that the management of the challenge of humor is a collaborative effort between company, expats and domestic employees.

To sum up, the expat experienced a challenge pertaining to Danish humor due to domestic employees' lack of intercultural competency. Therefore, an approach to prepare domestic employees for the arrival of expats is to ensure a comprehensive understanding of their own culture in order to accommodate the culture of the expats.

The ambition level in Danish workplaces was perceived as low in both expat surveys as alluded to in the analysis. Challenges such as unclear career prospects, a lack of training and development, a slow pace at the workplace, and a lack of responsibility, arguably derive from the perception of the low ambition levels at Danish workplaces. The unclear and flat hierarchy, in most Danish companies, as well as a work week consisting of thirty-seven hours characterizes the Danish workplace, as argued by Workindenmark (n.d.a). The ambition-related challenges can be related to unawareness and/or misinterpretations of an organizational culture. The unawareness and misinterpretation of an organizational culture arguably creates a negative relation to job satisfaction as further argued by Lund (2003). Therefore, it can be argued that companies must prioritize clear communication of their organizational culture in order to potentially reinforce their expats' sense of job satisfaction. Furthermore, the aforementioned challenges emerge as outcomes of mismatches in expectations in relation to work processes within a Danish workplace. The mismatches can be linked to an expat's limited understanding of how hierarchy is approached by a Danish workplace. The challenge of matching expectations is substantiated by "The Framework of International Adjustment" by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991), as it emphasizes the importance of accurate expectations between an expat and a company. The formation of accurate expectations in the anticipatory stage is fundamental in order to reduce uncertainty levels for the expat.

The interview findings illuminated the company's emphasis on the expat's ability to benefit the company in terms of skill set. However, the multifaceted challenge of low ambition levels indicates the importance of emphasizing the expat's individual aspirations in terms of career prospects, responsibility, training and development. Furthermore, these challenges indicate the complex process of achieving the element of fit within the theory of job embeddedness by Mitchell et al. (2001). The element of fit emphasized the importance of connecting an employee's personal values, career goals and future plans to the corporate culture and job demands (Mitchell et. al 2001). It can be argued that expats experience the ambition-related challenges as outcomes of a mismatch in expectation. The mismatch in expectations possibly materialize due to language barriers and a lack of cultural understanding. Additionally, the ambition-related challenges demonstrate the significance of acknowledging the shared responsibility between expat and company in order to avoid the mismatch in expectations as argued by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991). Ultimately, a mismatch in expectations can affect the retention levels of the company. The importance of

maintaining high levels of retention is further substantiated by Cox and Blake (1991), who argue that as companies are becoming more diverse, the cost of a poor job in accommodating the needs of expats is higher than before.

To sum up, the expats experienced ambition-related challenges, due to a mismatch in expectations between the expat and the company. Therefore, an increased emphasis on accommodating the matching of expectations between company and expat is essential, prior to employment, in order to establish a shared understanding of what either party can expect.

7.2 Socialization

Differences in treatment between Danes and expats, and difficulties in establishing friendships with Danes were emphasized as challenges pertaining to socialization. Language barriers and cultural bias were referred to as the main causes to the challenges of socialization.

Survey findings illustrated differences in treatment. It can be argued how the aforementioned challenge have resulted in expats experiencing a cultural bias in favor of Danes. A potential outcome of differences in treatment is the division of employees. The division of employees bring difficulties as recognized by the Leader-Member Exchange theory (LMX). LMX argues how out-group employees experience stress as a consequence of being omitted from inner communication circles (Lunenburg 2010).

The interview findings illuminated the company's emphasis on openness towards changes and optimization, as well as creating an intimate working environment between employees and management. However, the effectiveness of the aforementioned can be argued, as the survey findings revealed a perception of lacking responsibility and boundaries between expats and domestic employees. These negative perceptions indicate how the inclusion of expats in the inner communication circles should be subject to additional attention. The opportunity to obtain information from domestic colleagues in order to facilitate the socialization process is important as argued by Miller (2012). However, the aforementioned boundaries arguably hinder the expat's ability to obtain said information. The importance of being able to obtain information is further substantiated by Myers and Oetzel (2003) in their six dimensions of organizational socialization. Moreover, the challenge of

differences in treatment can arguably be accommodated by the enforcement of fair treatment. This is substantiated by Mishra and Mishra (2013), who advocate fair treatment as an enhancer of employee retention. In the case of expats, it can be argued that fair treatment can be accomplished through transparent communication, which can be facilitated by language classes or strictly enforcing the use of English in the workplace. Fair treatment and inclusion of expats within the inner communication circle in the workplace could ultimately encourage the facilitation of a heterogeneous working environment as opposed to a homogeneous working environment. The advantage of a heterogeneous working environment is that it allows for better decision making and problem solving due to the wider range of perspectives provided by the workplace being diverse, as argued by Cox and Blake (1991). Furthermore, according to Al-Jenaibi (2011) culturally diverse groups aid to overcome cultural differences in the workplace, which is another reason to enforce a heterogeneous working environment in order to prevent differences in treatment.

To sum up, the challenges indicated a perceived difference in treatment between expats and domestic employees. The importance of accommodating the facilitation of a heterogeneous working environment in a culturally diverse workplace is essential. An approach, to accommodate the potential issue of difference in treatment, is to improve the enforcement of transparent communication and fair treatment within a company.

Survey findings revealed a perceived domestic unwillingness to establish friendships with expats. Additionally, survey findings revealed that expats arguably perceive that the domestic employees view expats merely a temporary addition to the workforce. It can be argued that the view of expats as a temporary addition can function as an impediment to establish friendships between expats and domestic employees. The importance of establishing friendships at work is substantiated by the element of links within the theory of job embeddedness (Mitchell et. al. 2001). Links emphasizes the importance of establishing relationships both inside and outside of the workplace. According to Ma, Mayfield and Mayfield (2018), an employer emphasis on developing positive interactions and team cohesion facilitates employees' development of links. The last element of job embeddedness theory known as sacrifice is influenced by the level of links (Mitchell et. al. 2001). It can be argued how the establishment of friendships produce comfortability, which relates to sacrifice. Furthermore, the establishment of friendships arguably enhance the notion of

emotional attachment as emphasized by Meyer and Allen's (1991) concept of affective employee commitment.

The interview findings revealed an emphasis on social initiatives such as the implementation of a buddy-system, how Danish classes work as a foundation of socialization between expats, and pairing expats with young and recently qualified domestic employees. However, survey findings indicate expats' desire to develop friendships with domestic employees in addition to friendships with other expats. The importance of establishing a social network is also recognized by Project Welcome (2011). Project Welcome (2011) emphasizes mentor arrangements, which the aforementioned buddy-system is an example of, in order to aid the integration of the expats. It can be argued that the aforementioned perception of expats being a temporary addition to the workforce, can cause different expectations regarding the buddy-system. The expat might consider the buddy-system as a social approach to facilitate friendships. However, the assigned buddy might consider the process as a work-related task. The assigned buddy's potential perception of the buddy-system as a work-related task arguably causes the expat's difficulties in establishing friendships. The potential different expectations to the buddy-system relate to the BASIC model by Koester and Olebe. The BASIC model's component of task role behavior elaborates how a social activity might be defined as a task and vice versa, depending on the cultural perspective (Koester & Lustig 2010). The development of different interpretations pertaining to the buddy-system are possible outcomes of lacking and/or ineffective communication in relation to the buddy-system's purpose and expectations of it.

To sum up, expats experience challenges regarding the establishment of friendships with domestic employees. These challenges arguably materialize due to different perceptions pertaining to socialization at a Danish workplace. A well-functioning buddy-system depends on the company, buddy and expat aligning their expectations through clear communication. Ultimately, a well-functioning buddy-system could potentially facilitate the establishment of further friendships between expats and Danes, should the initial friendship between the Danish buddy and the expat be successful. Furthermore, friendships between expats and Danes arguably develop an improved mutual understanding of cultural differences.

8. Conclusion

This thesis investigated the following research questions: **“Why do expats experience challenges in Danish companies?”** and **“How do Danish companies accommodate expats in order to ensure the desired high levels of retention?”**

The research questions were investigated by the application of expat surveys, an employer interview alongside secondary data and a theoretical framework pertaining to employee retention, expat retention and culture.

The expat surveys revealed different challenges. A major challenge encompassed expats’ difficulties in relation to Danish (workplace) culture. Another major challenge encompassed expats’ difficulties in socializing with domestic employees. Throughout the analysis and discussion, language- and cultural differences were identified as the predominant barriers in regard to why expats experience challenges in Danish companies.

The employer interview revealed different initiatives to accommodate expats. The initiatives emphasized the integration of expats in the local community and the workplace through the application of external collaborators, a buddy-system and openness towards changes at the workplace. However, the company expat survey revealed difficulties in regard to establishing a network of work- and nonwork friends, as well as dissatisfaction in terms of responsibility. These difficulties were substantiated by the general expat survey. The apparent challenges indicate the importance of additional emphasis on the individual needs of an expat in order to facilitate improved accommodation.

Ultimately, this thesis argues how companies should initiate the process of expat integration prior to employment in order to establish the matching of expectations. The matching of expectations should encompass a clarification of organizational culture, career prospects and about life in Denmark in order to potentially achieve high levels of retention. Moreover, companies need to recognize their domestic employees’ responsibility and impact in relation to expat integration. It can be argued that this can be achieved through the domestic employees getting a comprehensive understanding of their own culture in order to better accommodate the culture of the expats.

9. Outline of Appendices

Expat surveys

Appendix I: The company expat survey and the general expat survey.

Interview

Appendix II: The interview guide.

Transcript

Appendix III: The transcript of the employer interview with the HR employee.

Thematic Table of the Expat Surveys

Appendix IV: An overview of the overall themes, subsequent sub-themes and codes of the expat surveys.

Thematic Table of the Employer Interview

Appendix V: An overview of the overall themes and subsequent sub-themes and codes of the employer interview.

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