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**THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL
SOCIALIZATION ON FINNISH EXPATRIATES' CROSS-
CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Master's
thesis in
International
Business

VAASA 2013

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Department: Department of management

Major Subject: International Business

Year of Entering of the University: 2007

Year of Completing the Thesis: 2013 Pages: 115

Due to the rapid rise of globalization over the past half century, business has become increasingly international. The demand for competent expatriates is increasing, because they can implement the parent company's strategy and share the knowledge in the host company. Despite the increased need of expatriates and growing interest to work abroad, a large number of expatriates fail. Expatriation can be extremely challenging because of differences in such things as language, cultural values and expectations. Expatriates have to adjust to the new environment and they undergo an international adjustment process, which includes work, general and interaction adjustment. It can be assumed that organizational socialization is also a factor that has an effect on international adjustment. Expatriation has increased especially in Southeast Asia, which is a growing market area and has a great potential in many business fields. However, despite of great advantages there are still serious challenges and risks in doing business in Southeast Asia.

The purpose of this thesis is to present factors that influence international adjustment process and analyze how organizational socialization process happens in the context of expatriates' international adjustment. The intention is to research if organizational socialization is an influencing factor in international adjustment process and what are the possible effects on adjustment. Cultural point of view is also taken into account and the cultural dimensions of Finland and Southeast Asia are presented. The focus is on Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia. This study is phenomenological, theory -based research, which uses IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis) approach. Data was collected through non- standardized semi-structured interviews. There were 9 interviewees, both male- and female expatriates who were working or had been working in Southeast Asia.

It was found that organizational socialization has an effect on expatriates' international adjustment. Especially co-worker support was a positive predictor of successful adjustment. Also training and understanding about culture and one's work was also important in the adjustment process. From the point of view of cross-cultural adjustment model, especially expatriates' individual factors, cultural novelty and logistical support had an effect on adjustment.

KEYWORDS: Expatriate, cross-cultural adjustment, organizational socialization process, Southeast Asia

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of research

Due to the rapid rise of globalization over the past half century, business has become increasingly international. Globalization enables companies to strengthen their market shares and profits globally. Organizations can find new business opportunities abroad and many MNCs expand constantly their operations beyond the domestic borders. At the same time they face new challenges in entering to the new market areas and managing global human resources (Strubler, Park and Agarval 2011). They need to manage, control, coordinate and integrate the operations in different ways than in a domestic context. In order to achieve the goals, parent organizations often send expatriates to host countries as company representatives and ambassadors (Zhou 2006). Expatriation is the most expensive strategy for staffing for the organizations but it is also an effective method for organizations to understand the international operations (Lee and Liu 2006).

The demand for competent expatriates is increasing, because they can implement the parent company's strategy and share the knowledge in the host company (Gregerson, Black and Morrison 1998; Lee and Liu 2006). It is also common that expatriates can work in parent organization's subsidiaries in order to gain new skills, which they can afterwards utilize at home company and which advance their career. Expatriates might want to search for a job abroad independently, when they are managing the search by themselves or maybe using a headhunter. Despite the increased need of expatriates and growing interest to work abroad for a shorter time or even permanently, a large number of expatriates fail. Expatriation can be extremely challenging because of differences in things like language, cultural values and expectations (Shung and Morgeson 2007). Lee and Liu (2006) suggest that especially in the era of knowledge economy, understanding the traditions and identities of locals and other expatriates has become an imperative in business.

Expatriates face many challenges while working in different culture and in different work environment, which can cause the failure of the assignment. Besides working life they need to cope in non-working life and learn how to live in a new culture, which has different values and habits. In working life, every day working situations may be very challenging in a new organization due to different organizational culture, work

community and work role. Expatriates have to adjust to the new environment and they undergo international adjustment process, which includes work, general and interaction adjustment. The adjustment process is affected by various factors, such as job, organizational and individual factors (Black, Mendenhall and Oddou 1991). It can be assumed that organizational socialization is also an issue that has an effect on international adjustment. As every newcomer, expatriates have to socialize to the organization when they start to work there. However, organizational socialization process is more complicated for expatriates than it is for employees working in their home country, because of the different culture and environment.

Expatriates' failure can be seen as premature return or underperformance in the host-country. They may also take a prolonged period of time to adjust, exhibit poor performance, be withdrawn or return home early or completing their assignment in a low state of effectiveness. (Harris and Brewster, 1999) Researches suggest different percentages for failure rates, but they are very high regardless of the research. The estimated range of failure for overseas assignments is somewhere between 16% and 70% or 25%-40%, depending on the relative novelty of the host country (Sims and Schraeder, 2004, Lü and Gao, 2004). Especially emerging countries, such as Southeast Asian countries are considered to be countries where expatriates' failure rates are high. International assignments are very expensive for companies, since just the salary might be three times as much as managers' normal salary (Ratiu, Lazar and Mortan 2011). There are also additional costs such as the cost of the international relocation, additional training and expenses related to the relocation of the entire family (Lueke and Svyantek 2000). In addition to the immediate expatriate costs, failure can have negative effects on host-country business and have a negative psychological effect on expatriate. More specifically, failed assignments can damage firm reputation, disrupt relationships with locals, and negatively affect expatriate's psychological health (Fisher and Hartel 2003). Expatriates might feel the loss of self-esteem, their self-confidence might suffer as managers and they might lose the respect among colleagues (Harris and Brewster 1999; Terence 1995). Consequently, with increasing expansion into global markets, organizations should pay more attention to the selection, training, competency and adjustment of their expatriates (Strubler et al 2011)

1.2 The potentiality of Southeast Asian markets

Southeast Asia is a growing market area and has a great potential in many business fields. The so-called “Southeast Asian tigers” have a very high economic growth, GDP grows about 4,0%-6,8% per year, which stands out especially when European growth continues to fall (Zhang 2013). Emerging markets, such as the five fastest growing economies in Southeast Asia, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam (Parrado, Rima, Ossi and Barna 2012), are attracting more Western MNCs to operate in the area. Laos is also growing fast and it is proposed to be a new emerging economy in Southeast Asia (Philip 2012). Emerging market economies have many opportunities that attract multinational companies and also smaller investors. Southeast Asian economies have great natural resources, large populations and massive potential markets but the demand is not typically filled yet. There is a large number of low-cost labour but also highly literate and skilled labour because of the past investments by state actors and first-mover foreign investors. Organizations entering the Southeast Asian markets are also increasingly using local partners’ market knowledge and relationships with governments and customers to adopt international business and to put Southeast Asia’s manufacturing competitiveness into the service of global demand. (Parrado et al 2012)

Harry Broadman argues in PWC’s Marketmap (2012): “Three decades in the making, Southeast Asia’s economic, political, and market factors, combined with a landscape focused on attracting capital and development, have created an environment ripe with opportunity, but one still fraught with challenges.” This statement points out the important factor that if companies expand their operations in Southeast Asia; despite of great advantages there are still serious challenges and risks in doing business in Southeast Asia. Social, political and economic issues influence the labor relationships and business relations and companies need to understand the special characters of these relations in order to invest successfully in the region. The Southeast Asian governments just recently liberalized trade and investment policies and presented transparent regulations to combat corruption. However, small businesses still tend to operate without well-structured industrial processes. Besides corruption and other political issues, companies face geographic challenges in the area, especially natural disasters, along with a culturally and geographically diverse region. (Parrado et al 2012) In addition to all this, cultural differences bring their own challenges when companies enter the Southeast Asian markets.

Because of these challenges and risks in entering Southeast Asian markets, it also requires a lot from the expatriates who work in the area. Expatriates need to be selected and trained carefully before sending to an assignment. It is also very important that companies would take care of expatriates during the assignments. They should get both emotional and logistical support, training and other things to adjust to the new environment and to be able to perform the job well.

There are also Finnish companies who are entering into Southeast Asian markets or cooperating and having business relationships with Southeast Asian companies. According to Kettunen- Matilainen (2012) Finnish companies consider Southeast Asia as an important and potential market area in their operations. Consequently the number of Finnish expatriates in the area is growing. Besides expatriates who are sent by Finnish companies, there are many Finnish expatriates who are sent to assignment by another multinational company or they apply for a job straight to the host country company. Despite of how they got the job, all Finnish expatriates face new and challenging environment due to very different culture and organizational habits than they are used to in Finland. There should be more information about how Finnish people can adjust in Southeast Asia and how to have a successful assignment.

1.3 Research gap

International adjustment is widely studied by many researchers, but the influence of organizational socialization on adjustment process has reached only a limited amount of researchers. As mentioned, the expatriate failure caused by negative adjustment is a problem for both organizations and for expatriates. Thus, more comprehensive knowledge about international adjustment process would be needed. However, in order to avoid repetition of earlier researches, there should be a new perspective for studying international adjustment. Expatriates undergo a complicated organizational socialization process in a host organization, which can be proposed to affect their whole adjustment process. Researching organizational socialization in expatriate's context would give a fresh point of view for the topic. Also cultural context gives new and more specific information about adjustment. Therefore this study about Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia offers necessary information from this particular cultural area.

According to Lueke and Svyantek (2000): “The socialization process of expatriates into their host country’s organizational culture has been largely ignored in the expatriate literature.” They propose that combining knowledge gained through research in expatriates and organizational socialization would be essential in gaining a theoretical understanding of expatriate turnover. There are some researchers who have studied this topic and Liu and Lee (2005, 2006, 2008) might be the best-known researchers who have included organizational socialization in their studies about expatriates.

In 2005 Lee studied factors that have an effect on cross-cultural adjustment success. He found evidence for the important role of organization socialization. According to Lee, socialization in the host country is an important predictor of cross-cultural adjustment. He proposes that adjustment was enhanced with greater satisfaction and better socialization at the host country. Also Liu and Lee (2006) argue that “expatriates that are better socialized in the host country are likely to adjust more effectively.” Thus, they found prove that organizational socialization influence expatriates’ adjustment, but they concentrate mainly on socialization tactics of the organization rather than the socialization process. Therefore, it is important to study organizational socialization also from a different perspective.

The Black et al’s framework of international adjustment, which is used also in this thesis, includes organizational socialization but as Strubler et al (2011) notice: “Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) argued that socialization must be understood and studied in terms of formal organization tactics and congruent content and the influence of these two dimensions on high or low role innovation.” Furthermore, Black et al (1991) connect organizational socialization to the mode of adjustment more than to the degree of adjustment, which is a focus in this study. Consequently, Black et al’s view of the organizational socialization gives some basis for this thesis but its concentration is very different.

There is a clear gap in the literature, which would concentrate on the international adjustment of Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia. Suutari, Raharjo, and Riikkila (2002) have made one of the very few studies within this topic. They researched Finnish expatriates in Indonesia in the context of the challenge of cross-cultural leadership interaction. This study is probably the only research near of the topic of this study. As argued before, it would be important to have more knowledge about Finns in Southeast Asia, so more research in this area is needed.

1.4 Research questions, objectives and limitations

The purpose of this thesis is to present factors that influence international adjustment process and analyse how organizational socialization process happens in the context of expatriates' international adjustment. The intention is to research if organizational socialization is an influencing factor in international adjustment process and what are the possible effects on adjustment.

The research question is as follows:

How organizational socialization influence Finnish expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in Southeast Asia?

This question is studied through following supporting questions:

1. What factors have an effect on Finnish expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in Southeast Asia?
2. How organizational socialization process happens in international context?
3. What are the effects of organizational socialization on international adjustment?

Consequently, the objective of this thesis is to study, how expatriates experience organizational socialization and how international adjustment is affected by organizational socialization.

The point of view of the thesis is from expatriates' perspective. The objectives are not studied from host or home organization's point of view. However, the results would be important for both home and host organizations, because they would give more information about expatriate's adjustment. Findings could be used to advance adjustment process and furthermore successful assignment of expatriates.

The theoretical approach in this thesis is from cross-cultural adjustment and organizational socialization theory's point of view. Theories about cultural dimensions and cultural distance are also part of the theoretical approach.

The context in this thesis is Finnish expatriates, both male and female, in South-East Asia. Consequently, the results are tied to this context and generalization for expatriates from and in other countries is questionable. However, expatriates who are from similar cultural dimension as Finland and are having assignment in South-East Asia or in culturally similar countries, could probably utilize the results of the study.

1.5 Definition of key concepts

The key concepts of the thesis are expatriate, international adjustment and organizational socialization. These concepts are defined here to have a clear understanding how these concepts are considered in this thesis.

1.5.1 Expatriates

In the largest meaning an expatriate means a person, who lives outside his/her home country, but in business language expatriate is more often described as a person who has an international assignment from their employer (Liu and Lee 2008). In this study expatriate is considered as an employee, who works outside his or her own home country, regardless of how long or by whom they were sent there.

1.5.2 Cross-Cultural adjustment

Cross-cultural adjustment, or international adjustment as it is also called, is generally defined as the process of adaptation to living and working in a foreign culture. It is the perceived degree of psychological comfort and familiarity a person has with the new host culture (Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou, 1991). According to time, expatriate assignment can be divided to three phases: before the assignment, during the assignment and after the assignment. The first is also referred to as an anticipatory adjustment and the second as an in-country adjustment. The process before assignment contains mainly expatriates selecting and training; during the assignment contains adjusting, integrating, appraising and rewarding; and after the assignment contains repatriating and retaining. (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall and Stroh 2005). This study concentrates only on in-country adjustment and on factors, which affect that process. In-country adjustment has two dimensions: the mode of adjustment and the degree of adjustment. Mode of

adjustment refers to the manner in which expatriate actually adjusts to the new environment. (Black et al 1991) This study focuses on the degree of adjustment, which consist work, interaction and general adjustment. Black et al (2005) call work, interaction and general adjustment as dimensions of adjustment instead of degree of adjustment. In this thesis they are named as dimensions of adjustment, because the term “degree” might be misnomer.

1.5.2 Organizational socialization

Organizational Socialization is the process whereby an individual develops an understanding of the value, expected behavior, and social knowledge that are essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member (Chatman, 1991). Taormina (1997) sees organizational socialization process little bit differently: “Organizational socialization is the process, by which a person secures relevant job skills, acquires a functional level of organizational understanding, attains supportive social interactions with co-workers and generally accepts the established ways of particular organization”. This definition is adopted in this thesis.

1.6 The structure of the study

This thesis consists of theoretical and empirical parts. In theoretical part, international adjustment theory and cultural dimensions theory are represented first. They are followed by organizational socialization theory and by chapter, which connects international adjustment and organizational socialization theories.

Empirical part begins with Methodology chapter, which describes the course and method of this research. In the chapter the main findings are presented and they are followed by discussion chapter, which links findings to existing research. Finally there is the conclusion chapter to summarize the research.

2. ADJUSTMENT DURING THE ASSIGNMENT: IN-COUNTRY ADJUSTMENT

2.1 Cross-cultural adjustment

Cross-cultural adjustment is the degree of psychological comfort of an individual with several aspects of a new environment. According to time, expatriate assignment can be divided to three phases: before the assignment, during the assignment and after the assignment. The first is also referred to as an anticipatory adjustment and the second as an in-country adjustment. The process before assignment contains mainly of selecting and training the expatriates; during the assignment contains adjusting, integrating, appraising and rewarding; and after the assignment contains repatriating and retaining. (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall and Stroh 2005)

Cross-cultural adjustment is a very complicated and diverse adjustment, which affects strongly, how successful expatriate's assignment will be. Many expatriates face problems and challenges in adjustment process, which might prevent them from reaching their targets during the assignment. They might need to leave the host country earlier than they were supposed to or they do not achieve the goals that organization has set them. Thus successful adjustment process is important both for an individual and an organization, and also for a host organization. Failed adjustment and consequently unsuccessful assignment is very expensive and useless for organizations. On the other hand, an expatriate gains much more from assignment, both professionally and individually, if he or she adjusts well to work, interaction and general environment. Also a host country organization gets more effective influence from expatriate assignment if he or she adjusts to their organizational and general culture. Better understanding on cross-cultural adjustment can help expatriates and organizations to have more successful adjustment and assignments.

This study concentrates only on an in- country adjustment and factors that have an effect on that process. In-country adjustment has two dimensions: the mode of adjustment and the degree of adjustment. Mode of adjustment refers to the manner in which an expatriate actually adjusts to the new environment. (Black et al 1991) This study focuses on the degree of adjustment, which consists of work, interaction and general adjustment. Black et al (2005) name work, interaction and general adjustment

also as dimensions of adjustment instead of degree of adjustment. In this thesis they are named as dimensions of adjustment, because the term “degree” might be misnomer.

2.1.1 Work adjustment

Expatriates work adjustment in a host country refers to adjusting to the factors that have an effect on working. Work environment and organization are different from what an employee is used to in home country and organization. Managers' responsibilities and performance tasks may be very different in host- country compared to home country due to organizational culture and national culture. Because of these differences managers need to perform another way to achieve the results needed. Daily routines, such as decision-making and giving orders for subordinates, may be very different in host- country and expatriates are not always prepared to those differences. Unpreparedness for these situations causes communication problems between subordinates and managers, which moreover cause problems in completing the work. Consequently adjustment to work is very important for expatriates to have a successful assignment. Even so, researches have proposed that work adjustment would be the easiest of adjustment groups, because there are usually some similarities in procedures, policies and requirements of the job in host country and home country. (Black et al 2005)

2.1.2 Interaction adjustment

Interaction adjustment means adjusting to interacting with host- country nationals. Researchers suggest that this dimension would be the most difficult to adjust, because differences between values and assumptions usually affect interaction. The extent of cultural differences between home and host country and time spent with other expatriates prior to the assignment are significant factors in interaction adjustment. (Black et al 1999) Language is also a significant factor in interaction adjustment, because without language fluency interaction is more challenging and insufficient.

2.1.3 General adjustment

General adjustment refers to adjustment to non-work environment, such as food, weather, transportation, entertainment, health care and daily customs. Previously,

researchers have focused mainly on this dimension of cross-cultural adjustment, but nowadays focus has also been on other dimensions. (Black et al 2005) According to Black et al (2005) it is easier for expatriates to adjust to general environment than interaction with locals but more difficult than adjusting to the job. Furthermore, Takeuchi, Yun and Russell (2002) suggest that general adjustment may have an effect on work adjustment and subsequently on interaction adjustment.

2.1 Factors influencing on cross-cultural adjustment process

Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) have studied factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment process and have made a model of those factors. Main categories of affecting factors in Black et al (1991) model are job, individual, non-work, organizational culture and organization socialization factors. All of these categories have more detailed factors. Organizational socialization factors affect only the mode of adjustment and non-work factors only the degree of adjustment, but the others have an effect on both the mode and the degree of adjustment. Shaffer, Harrison and Gilley (1999) revisited this Black's et al study and expanded the individual category of model to consist two more factors: previous assignments and language fluency. They also added positional factors category, which include hierarchical level, functional area and assignment vector. Shaffer et al (1999) study concentrates on degree of adjustment so they do not analyze organizational socialization factors, because in Black's et al (1991) model socialization factors belong to the mode of adjustment. All of these factors, job, positional, individual, organizational and non-work factors, all affect expatriates' work, interaction and general adjustment.

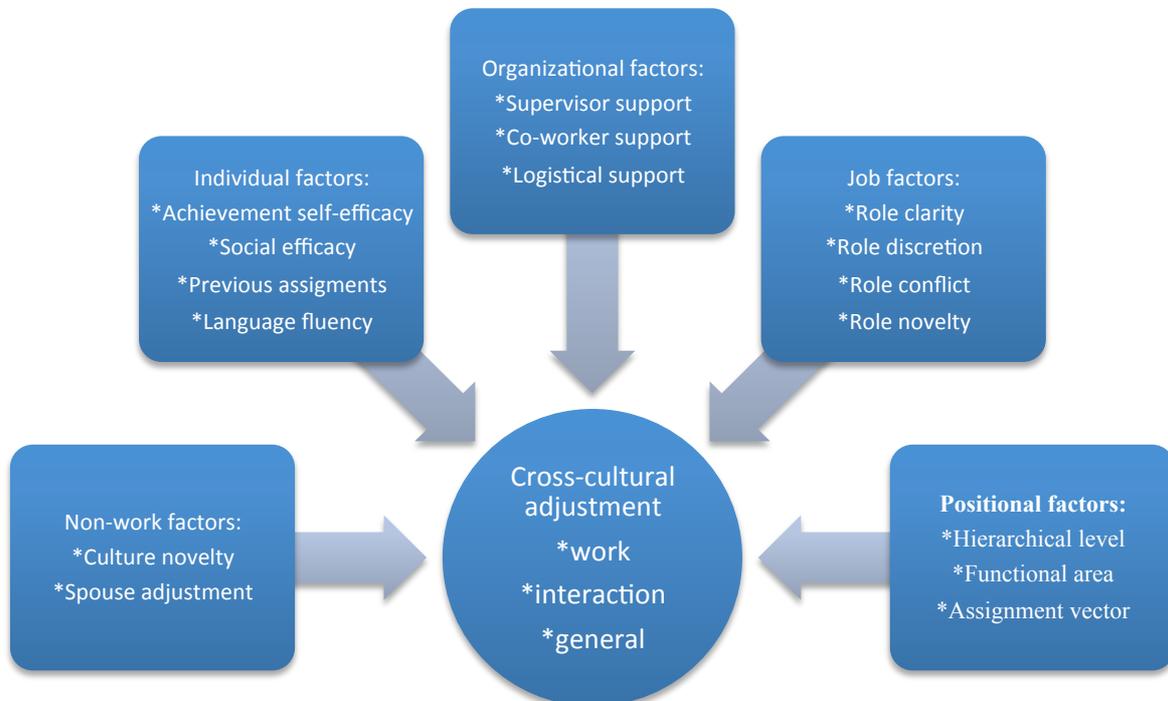


Figure 1. Cross-cultural adjustment (Shaffer et al. 1999 and Black et al 1991)

2.1.1 Job factors

Job factors have the greatest impact on the work adjustment and they can make it easier or more difficult. These factors refer to the duties and tasks, which individual needs to carry out in work position. (Andreason 2003) According to Black et al (1991), job factors that have an effect on cross-cultural adjustment are role conflict, role novelty, role clarity and discretion.

Black et al (1991) defines *role conflict* as “conflicting signals about what is expected of individuals in a new work setting”. Role conflicts inhibit work adjustment, because it creates uncertainty for expatriates in a new environment. Expatriate gets contradictory messages about how they should behave and what is expected from them. They should understand messages and choose which are relevant so expatriates could act according

to what has been told. Expatriate also needs to adapt their behavior to suit the work role, which makes work adjustment process more difficult. (Black et al 1991)

Difficulties arise if expatriates do not have enough cross-cultural training before assignment, because it leads to the situation where they apply the same role in host country that they have had in the home country (Black et al 1991). It is also possible that the parent company determines expatriate's role beforehand and it might be problematic to perform the determined role in the host organization. If role is determined in home country and executed in host country, there may be a contradiction between determined role and required role from host country perspective. (Andreason 2003) This can cause conflicts and inhibit the work adjustment.

According to Black et al (1991) *role novelty* is "the degree to which the current role is different from past roles". Role novelty might increase uncertainty with job issues, which inhibits work adjustment, so it is negatively associated with adjustment process (Black et al. 1991). Also if expatriates do not have sufficient training to an international assignment, role novelty can inhibit work adjustment abroad, because a new role requires new skills and behavior. Duties might be different compared to previous job in home country, which cause higher role novelty. Especially the international environment brings differences in social, legal, economic, technical and physical demands, which affect role novelty and work adjustment (Andreason 2003). Interacting with host country employees makes job novelty higher and might be very challenging for expatriates, due to cultural differences between subordinates in home and host country. Multinational firms should provide more in-country training for those expatriates who are expected to face high role novelty (Shaffer et al. 1999), which would make adjusting to work easier. However, even if expatriates would be trained well, it does not guarantee a successful assignment.

Role clarity and *role discretion* are positively related to work adjustment, because they allow expatriates to adjust their role more easily. Role clarity gives expatriates a clear picture about what is expected from them and how they should behave. Role clarity also decreases the uncertainty associated in work situation, which furthermore facilitates work adjustment (Black et al. 1988; Nicholson 1984; Prinder and Schoeder 1987). On the other hand, greater role discretion lets individuals to adapt work roles that suit themselves and not the other way around (Nicholson 1984). Role discretion allows individuals to use previously learned behavioral models, which decrease uncertainty in the new environment and makes work adjustment easier. It is also important that

expectations toward the expatriates' early stage of foreign assignment are not set too high, so it is possible to fulfill the expected performance (Mendenhall, Dunbar and Oddou 1987).

Shaffer et al (1999) suggest that "multinational firms should place more emphasis on designing global positions such that expatriates have more clearly defined jobs and greater decision-making authority". This would help expatriates to understand better what is required from them so they do not need to use their energy to analyze the work role. On the other hand, greater authority in decision making brings more responsibility for expatriates and decision making is even more challenging in the new organization and culture.

2.2.2 Organizational factors

Organizational factors refer to the factors, which influence adjustment from inside of the organization. These factors are organizational cultural novelty, social support and logistical support (Black et al 1991). It is expected that organizational culture novelty and social support affect mainly work adjustment and logistical support interaction and general adjustment (Andreason 2003).

Organizational culture refers to a set of shared values, beliefs, assumptions, and practices that shape and guide members' attitudes and behavior in the organization (Wilson 2001). *Organizational cultural novelty* depends on how different organizational culture in home country is compared to host country. Organizational cultural novelty affects expatriates' work adjustment and the higher the cultural novelty is the more challenging is the adjustment (Black et al. 1991). However, it has been difficult for expatriates to identify problems, which have been caused by organizational culture or general culture, so there is not yet much evidence to prove how much organizational cultural novelty affects work adjustment (Shaffer et al. 1999).

Social support refers to the source and quality of helping relationships with co-workers and superiors (Cohen and Wills 1985). This can decrease uncertainty in the unfamiliar culture and environment, because relationships provide information of how expatriates should behave and what is expected from them in the new organizational culture (Andreason 2003; Shaffer et al. 1999). Thus social support has a significant positive effect on adjustment (Shaffer et al. 1999). Social support is not limited to the co-worker

support but expatriates can naturally create also non-work social relationships, which give them social support.

In expatriate adjustment context, *logistical support* refers to the compensation and benefits packages that multinational companies offer for expatriates. Logistical support aims to attract and retain staff, to provide an intensive for managers to leave the home country on a foreign assignment, to facilitate the transfer to the foreign location and back, to maintain an acceptable standard of living in foreign location and to provide the expatriate with opportunities for financial advancement through income or savings. (Dowling 1999) All of these factors are necessary for expatriates to have a successful assignment, even though in many cases expatriates feel a lack of support, which can cause unsuccessful assignment.

Organizations differ in the degree and types of *logistical support* they provide for their expatriates. Usually they offer logistical support in basic issues such as housing, finding grocery stores and a suitable school (Shaffer et al 1999). Strong organizational support can facilitate interaction and general adjustment while reducing uncertainty in a new environment (Black et al.1991).

2.2.3 Positional factors

Shaffer et al (1991) added positional factors to Black et al (1991) model of adjustment. They did research concerning these subjects and found evidence that hierarchical level and assignment vector are clearly moderating factors in cross-cultural adjustment, but functional level does not have as much effect on the assignment. Martin 1980 and Menon and Achilles (1994) confirm that differences in the nature of work, stress at varying hierarchical levels and functional positions cause differences in the work adjustment.

The nature of work varies between different hierarchical levels. Top managers' work concentrates usually on more conceptual and strategic decision making activities than middle managers, thus role clarity may not be such an important factor for them. (Shaffer et al.1999) Role discretion has also great impact on expatriates in high level positions (Shaffer et al.1999), therefore the better the role discretion and role control match job demands, the easier the adjustment is to expatriates (Karasek 1979).

Hierarchical level is related to previous assignment experience to influence work adjustment: previous assignment experiences have different effect on different hierarchical stages, which affect work adjustment. Previous assignment experience enhances middle-level managers' work adjustment, so it has a positive effective for them. On the contrary, previous assignment experience affects negatively upper-level managers, because experience complicated their work adjustment. (Shaffer et al. 1999)

According to Shaffer et al (1999) *functional area* does not have as much impact on adjustment process as other positional factors, but however, it is significant. Functional area has an effect on language fluency of host country- issue, because studies show that language fluency is more important for technical expatriates than it is for managerial expatriates, when they interact with host-country employees. (Shaffer et al. 1999) This might be caused by the reason that technical experts have an important role in transferring knowledge to host country national when they work together.

Expatriates can be classified into three different vectors: parent country national, third country national and inpatriates (Briscoe 1995). Parent country national are expatriates who are from the home country of the international firm, third country national are non-parent country nationals in host country and inpatriates are employees from foreign subsidiaries but they are assigned to work in parent country. According to Shaffer et al. (1999) all of these *assignment vectors* are involved in important interaction with at least one of each of the job, organizational, non-work and individual factors. However, patterns of adjustment differ between expatriate types due to different relationship with host and parent country (Shaffer et al. 1999).

2.2.4 Individual factors

Individual factors are individual's characteristics and traits, which have an effect on expatriate's adjustment. Researchers (Black et al 1991, Shaffer et al (1999) have found that especially self-efficacy, relational and perceptual skills, previous international assignment and language fluency are individual skills that affect international adjustment.

According to Bandura (1977) *self- efficacy* is a concept that predicts an individual's ability to adjust to an unfamiliar environment. Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) identify self-efficacy as the ability to believe in oneself and one's ability to deal efficiently with

foreign environment, even facing great uncertainty. Black et al (1991) suggest that individuals with strong self-efficacy are more willing to try to maintain new learned skills than individuals with low self- efficacy. Therefore high self-efficacy persons are able to use feedback more effectively to reduce uncertainty and correct their own behavior toward expectations. They usually also get more feedback, both positive and negative, so they have more possibilities to improve their behavior to match the requirements. Consequently this self-efficacy process facilitates adjustment, because then individuals have an edge to learn and maintain new behaviors, which help them to adjust better to the culture (Black et al.1991).

Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs and Rogers (1982) see self-efficacy as “an individual’s past experiences with success and failure in a variety in situations which should result in the general set of expectations that individual carries into new situations.” Accordingly self-efficacy has two different dimensions; the other concentrates on performance achievement and the other on interpersonal relationship development (Sherer et.al 1982).

Self- efficacy has also an effect on how individuals behave when they have to choose between changing their own behavior or trying to change the environment. Thus, Black et al. (1991) suggest that high self- efficacy individuals tend to associate with modes of adjustment that prefer to change environment while low self-efficacy individuals are likely to associate with mode of adjustment which change more the individual than the environment. If expatriates do not adjust themselves at all to the environment it might create mistrust and disrespect among subordinates if they feel that expatriate does not respect their culture and habits. On the other hand, expatriates should not lose themselves and change their personality to match the environment.

Expatriates need many skills to cope in foreign country and especially *relational and perceptual skills* are important. Relational skills (e.g. cultural empathy, adaptability, diplomacy and emotional stability) help expatriates to interact with local people. Thus, the better the relational skills of a person are, the easier it is for them to communicate with locals (Mendenhall and Oddou 1985). Good relational skills facilitate expatriates to receive more information about what is expected from them and how they will succeed in reaching those expectations. Relational skills also provide expatriates facts about what is appropriate behavior and what is not in the particular culture and organization. (Black et al. 1991) It is difficult to define what kind of skills are needed from expatriates, because the skills are complicated to measure and they also vary from

culture to another. However, studies show that there are similarities in which skills are relevant for expatriates and which factors predict expatriate to have those competences (Andreason 2003).

Like relational skills, also perceptual skills are important tools in recognizing what is appropriate and what is inappropriate in a host culture. Therefore those skills help expatriates to understand and interact properly in the host culture. (Black et al.1991)

Shaffer et al (1999) have used anticipatory adjustment variables to identify needed skills to cope in foreign environment, which are, for example, previous international assignments and language fluency. On the other hand, Black and Gregersen (1999) define five relational and perceptual skills that they found to be important for expatriate: drive to communicate, broad-based sociability, cultural flexibility, cosmopolitan orientation and a collaborative negotiation style. Furthermore Phatak (1995) has found seven relational and perceptual skills, which are significantly related to the success of international adjustment and especially the interaction adjustment of expatriate: cultural empathy, adaptability, diplomacy, language ability, a positive attitude, emotional stability and maturity.

Previous international assignment experience, especially in the particular country (Selmer 2002), might be useful for an expatriate in two ways. First, it is proposed that an expatriate can predict what to expect from assignment so anticipatory training can be more accurate, which helps the assignment to be successful. Secondly, expatriates have already trained their relocation skills, which decreases uncertainty in a new environment and therefore facilitates adjustment process. (Black et al. 1991) However, previous assignment experience might be also a negative factor, if expatriate believes that he or she knows what to expect and how he or she needs to act in a new culture. Rarely situations are going to be the same than before and supposing that they would be, could cause worse culture shock and feelings about failure. Though, Bell and Harrison (1996) bring different aspect to the subject. They argue that the process of having learned a different culture is more important than knowledge about particular culture, which facilitate adjustment. This can be seen as a useful skill, if expatriate has learned how to adjust the new and unexpected culture.

Studies have shown that international experience facilitates adjustment process (Church 1982) and that experienced expatriates need less local support than new expatriates. Experienced expatriates tend to rely more on on-site management and less home

country management. On the contrary, inexperienced expatriates rely less on co-workers in host country than experienced expatriates. Therefore Shaffer et al. (1999) suggest that companies should concentrate on improving global support networks, because it seems that there is a lack of home office support for expatriates. (Shaffer et al. 1999)

Language fluency in the host country language is naturally an important factor for expatriates to communicate with host employees. It improves individuals' communication and perceptual skills (Nicholson and Ayako 1993) and therefore the lack of language fluency may be a major barrier in the interaction adjustment (Victor 1997).

However, there are differences between work positions in how important language fluency in host country language is. Therefore, language fluency is related to the functional area. Studies suggest that technical expatriates (Shaffer et al.1999), operative jobs and functional head (Tung 1982) need more host country language fluency than managerial expatriates. On the other hand general communication skills are more important for expatriates in managerial position than for those in technical jobs. Shaffer et al. (1999) argue that language fluency and role conflict would have a surprising connection: host-country language fluency would increase role conflicts. Shaffer et al. (1999) explains that one reason for this might be that expatriates with language fluency have better ability to understand contradictory demands from host and home country than others.

In spite of the importance of host-country language fluency, firms do not seem to consider it as an important attribute for selection of expatriates (Price Waterhouse 1997). Although, firms should take into account that the more expatriate interacts with local employees the more they should receive training in language (Andreason 2003). Due to globalization the ability to speak English has expanded almost all over the world. Many MNCs use English as their daily language, even when it is not the mother tongue of the particular country. This might decrease the importance of host-country language fluency and language training, if host employees and expatriates speak fluent English. However this is country bounded, because in less educated countries it is not self-evident that employees speak English well or at all. Thus, in order to get close interaction with local employees, host- country language fluency is very important.

2.2.3 Non-work factors

Non-work factors refer to expatriates' adjustment, which is not related to work, such as the culture of the host country. Non-work factors affect directly expatriate's interaction adjustment and general adjustment. They are divided into two categories: culture novelty and spouse/family adjustment (Black et al. 1991; Shaffer et al.1999).

Expatriates need to learn how to adjust to the new cultural environment and how to interact with local people. Like role novelty and organizational novelty, also *culture novelty* increases uncertainty in the host country and therefore affects mostly interaction adjustment and general adjustment. (Black et al.1991) The higher the culture novelty is compared to home country the more challenging the interactions adjustment and general adjustment are. Thus the perceived distance between home and host country cultures effect the expatriate's adjustment to the new culture. (Andreason 2003; Shaffer et al. 1999) Hofstede's theory of cultural distance can be useful while analyzing how well expatriates are expected to adjust to culture. They can be also trained more specifically, when cultural distance is known. Even though it is proposed that the higher cultural novelty, the more difficult adjustment, there are probably exceptions. Adjustment might be very challenging even in low culture novelty country, because in those cases expatriates are not usually prepared as well. They might assume that adjustment would be easy when culture is near of home culture and therefore face unexpected challenges and problems to which they are not trained.

Expatriates usually face a culture shock-phenomenon, which refers to expatriates' reactions to a new, unpredictable and uncertain environment (Black et al 1991). Expatriates experience different emotional and psychological reactions, and how strong those reactions are, depends on how high the level of culture novelty is in the host country. (Andreason 2003; Black et al 1991)

Shaffer et al (1999) found that *spouse adjustment* affects expatriate's general adjustment process and the success of adjustment. Because of this, it is important that firms pay attention also to spouses, when they help expatriates to adjust in the new environment. Spouses also need support and training in foreign environment and it would be useful for them to have a contact person in the firm, who would help to reduce uncertainty in settling to new culture. Many spouses want to work and it needs to be taken into account and firms should provide help when needed in that issue. (Shaffer et al. 1999)

2.3 Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede (1984) defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another.” National culture consists of common values, identity, ideology, language, ethnic background and history, the collective appearance of these factors in psychological and behavior level and their inheritance from generation to generation (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman and Gupta (2004). Cultures always always both similarities and differences and culture has an effect on individual’s ability and willingness to understand and adopt the other culture (Torbiörn 1982).

Cultural differences can be identified by “cultural distance”- concept (Hofstede 1984), which describes how different cultures are from each other. Chen, Kirkman, Kim, Fahr and Tangirala (2010) suggest that cultural distance is not just individual’s impression about cultures but expatriates’ common opinion about how different their host country is from their home country. There are several ways to measure culture distance. Schein (1983) proposes five basic underlying assumptions about cultures, “cultural paradigms”, which appear differently in different cultures. These are: 1. The organization’s relationship to its environment. 2. The nature about reality and truth. 3. The nature about human nature. 4. The nature about human activity. 5. The nature of human relationships.

This study utilizes Geert Hofstede’s research about dimensions of national cultures in order to research cultural distance between Finland and Southeast Asian countries. He conducted one of the most comprehensive studies on how values in the workplace are influenced by culture. Hofstede’s work has been widely cited in many different management related academic studies and it is typically used as the basis for cross-cultural analysis in university management courses (Kirkman, Lowe & Gibson 2006). The values that distinguished countries from each other can be grouped statistically into four groups. These four groups became the Hofstede dimensions of national culture: Power Distance (PDI), Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS) and Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI). (Hofstede 1984) These dimensions are briefly represented in this chapter and it is mentioned how Finland and Southeast Asian countries score in these dimensions of national culture. Naturally, each Southeast Asian country has different characters in dimensions but since they have a lot in common, the average about how these countries score in cultural dimensions is discussed here. Consequently, there might be some qualities, which are claimed here to

belong to Southeast Asian countries, but there can be exceptions and differences between these cultures. Therefore, qualities discussed below belong to most Southeast Asian countries, but there might be exceptions in every dimension. Especially countries, which have different religions, such as Buddhism versus Islam, typically have different characters because of the strong influence of religion.

2.3.1 Power Distance (PDI)

Power distance is defined as: “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.” (Hofstede 1984) The essential issue in this dimension is that all individuals are not equal in societies and how a society handles these inequalities among people. Finland and Southeast Asia are quite opposite to each other in this dimension, since power distance in Finland is low but in South East Asian countries power distance is high.

In societies with low power distance, such as in Finland, people try to equalize the distribution of power and require justification for inequalities of power. The typical characters of these countries are: being independent, hierarchy for convenience only, equal rights, superiors accessible, coaching leader, management facilitates and empowers. In work environment, relationship between subordinates and managers is quite informal and managers are treated on first name basis. Power is normally decentralized and managers are expected to rely on their team members at work. (Hofstede 1984) Finnish workers do not like that they are too controlled at work and they expect to be consulted in work related issues.

On the contrary, people in societies with a high degree of power distance, such as Southeast Asian countries, accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification. These countries are dependent on this hierarchy and there are visible unequal rights between power holders and non- power holders. According to Hofstede (2012), in Southeast- Asian countries inequalities between people are accepted and consequently there is wide unequal disparity between rich and poor. Relationships between managers and subordinates are formal and there can be seen clear protocol and command between them. Managers are highly respected and employees show loyalty and obedience for their managers. Thus, power is centralized and management style can be described even as paternalistic management. Southeast Asian workers expect that they are clearly directed and controlled by their

boss and they are told what to do and when. Hofstede (1984) suggests that in countries with high power distance information flow is hierarchical and communication is indirect. It is also typical for these countries that negative feedback is hidden, which is probably related to the fear of losing face. (Hofstede 1984)

2.3.2 Individualism versus collectivism (IDV)

Individualism versus collectivism dimension describes how people see themselves in a society and what is the degree of interdependence the society maintains among people. A society's position is reflected in whether people's self-image is defined as "I" or "we." Finland and Southeast Asia are opposites also in this dimension; Finland is considered as an individualistic country while South East Asian countries are collectivist cultures. (Hofstede 1984, 2012)

Individualism is defined as a preference for a loose social framework in which individuals are expected to take care only of themselves and their immediate families. In Finland people's self-image is defined in terms "I", as it defined in individualistic countries. Accordingly, people tend to take care only of themselves and their close family. There are some qualities that can be seen in organizations in individualistic countries. The relationship between employer and employee is based on the contract of common advantage, in the other words, both want to gain something from the relationship. Management is managing individuals rather than a bigger group and when hiring or promoting workers, it is supposed to be based on employee's merit at work. In individualistic countries, if people offense each other it usually causes quilt and a loss of self-esteem. (Hofstede 1984, 2012)

Collectivism is an opposite of individualism and it represents a preference for a tight framework in society in which individuals are expected to agree with the ideas of the society and of the "in- groups" where they belong. Furthermore they can expect their relatives or members of a particular group to look after them in exchange for loyalty. Family is extremely important and in contrast to individualistic societies, family is more than the instant family, it contains also grandparents and other relatives. This can be seen in Southeast Asian families as they take care of elders, such as grandparents, at home rather than sending them to the nursing homes. Parents are committed to their children all their life and children committed to their parents, which means that taking care of each other is both-sided. The importance of family is emphasized also when a daughter wishes to marry. It is extremely important that before formalizing the

relationship, the man introduces himself formally to the parents and informs them about his attempts. Also other long-term relationships are highly valued and Hofstede (1984) suggests that loyalty to one's group over-rides other societal rules and regulations. It is important to preserve the in- group, which takes care of each other within the society. In order to do that, Southeast Asians are not aggressive in their communication so they will not end to the situation of the loss of face. It is intolerable to feel ashamed in front of their group and consequently they avoid conflict situations. (Hofstede 1984, 2012) The importance of personal relationships affects also in business life, because in order to conduct business partners need to have personal relationships. This takes time and patience, since it is not appropriate to even discuss business issues on the first meetings.

2.3.3 Masculinity versus femininity (MAS)

The main factor in this dimension is what motivates people; masculine societies want to be the best and feminine societies want to like what they do. Finland is considered as a feminine society and Southeast Asian countries as low masculine societies. (Hofstede 1984, 2012)

Major values in feminine societies are quality of life, which is considered to be the sign of success, and caring for others. Femininity symbolizes also preference for cooperation, modesty and consensus- orientation. Also caring for the weak and quality of life are important in feminine societies. Traditional roles of males and females are reinforced in feminine societies more than in masculine societies. At work place these values can be seen in that Finns focus on "working in order to live", not the other way round. As a result, people in feminine societies value well- being and free-time. People value equality, solidarity and quality at work and it is the manager's duty to strive for consensus. Managers are expected to be supportive and to involve employees in decision- making. Negotiating and making compromises are proposed to be important in organizations, especially if there are conflict situations. (Hofstede 1984, 2012)

The society with a strong masculinity is more competitive than the society with a stronger femininity side. Masculinity represents a preference in society for achievement and material reward for succeed. Masculine societies value also heroism and assertiveness both in work and everyday life. (Hofstede 1984) Since Southeast Asian countries are considered low masculine, with the exception of Thailand being feminine society, these characters of masculine societies are not seen very clearly in Southeast Asia. However, they are the factors and values influencing the society, even if they

affect in a lesser degree. Status and visible symbols of success are important in Southeast Asia, but material reward from these positions is not the factor bringing the motivation. It is more desired to have a clear appearance of one's high position and status. (Hofstede 1984, 2012) In other words, what can be seen and what the visible status symbols' position brings is more important than the material gain.

2.3.4 Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)

The uncertainty avoidance dimension describes how the members of a society feel about uncertainty and ambiguity. It reflects how threatened people feel by ambiguous or unknown situations and how they have created beliefs and institutions to try to avoid these situations. The principal issue in this dimension is how a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known; whether people are trying to control the future or they just let it happen. Finland has characters of both high and low uncertainty avoidance cultures, so it has medium high uncertainty avoidance while Southeast Asian countries have medium low or low uncertainty avoidance, with the exception of Thailand, which is high uncertainty avoidance country. (Hofstede 1984, 2012)

Countries with strong uncertainty avoidance are intolerant of untraditional behavior and ideas. They also try to sustain inflexible codes of belief and behavior. In order to eliminate or avoid unexpected, strict rules, politics and regulations are adopted and implemented. According to Hofstede (1984) emotional need for rules is strong with Finns and they feel that security is an important element in their individual motivation. He continues that innovation may be resisted, which is a common feature among countries with strong uncertainty avoidance. Finns are suggested to have an inner urge to work hard and to be busy (Hofstede 1984, 2012), which can be proposed to be related to so-called "Lutheran work moral". Traditionally Finns were raised to work hard and to have a high work moral, as it was taught in religion, in Lutheran teaching. Punctuality and precision are also very highly valued and it is not tolerated if people do not live according to these qualities.

On the contrary, societies with weak uncertainty avoidance maintain a more relaxed attitude, schedules are flexible and practice is considered more important than principles. People in low uncertainty avoidance countries believe that there should be no unnecessary rules and if those regulations are not appropriate, they should be changed or even abandoned. (Hofstede 1984, 2012) In the countries with medium low preference

for avoiding uncertainty, such as some Southeast Asian countries, there is a strong preference to separate internal self from external self. This means that, it is common not to show negative feelings or anger externally, even if person would feel that way inside. They will still be polite and smiling, whether they feel that way or not. This kind of attitude affects also at work place, because harmony in relationships at work is very important. For example, people do not wish to be in the position when they have to give bad or negative news or feedback. Conflict resolution has also special characters because of these values; direct communication is avoided and intermediates are used to solve the problems. This way people can maintain harmony better at work place and they can exchange views without losing face. It is also important to satisfy the manager, because workers can avoid economic or status uncertainty better if managers are content with workers and consider them as valuable members of the company. (Hofstede 1984, 2012)

2.3.5 Long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO)

Long-term orientation dimension expresses how a society deals with searching for virtue. It measures whether people have more future-oriented point of view or conservative short-term perspective. Finland is a short-term orientation culture while South-East Asian countries are long-term orientated. Consequently, especially the perception of time is especially different. (Hofstede 1984, 2012)

Societies with a short-term orientation usually have a strong concern with establishing the absolute truth. Hofstede (1984, 2012) suggests that Finns show great respect for traditions and a relatively small propensity to save for the future. It is important to achieve quick results and there is a social pressure to succeed. People in short-term orientated countries tend to think normatively and it guides their behavior.

In societies with a long-term orientation, people believe that the truth depends on situation, context and time. Furthermore, since they do not need to look for only one truth, Southeast Asians are flexible and pragmatic in negotiations. Relationships and networks are very important and people want to maintain non-confrontational behavior in order to avoid the loss of face. These societies respect traditions but Hofstede (1984) suggest that they are able to adapt old traditions to changed conditions. Long term-orientated societies also have an ability to save and invest, they have thriftiness and perseverance in achieving results. The dominant values within these societies are

working hard and having a sense of moderation. They also respect inequality between people. (Hofstede 1984, 2012) Long- term orientation point of view affects strongly the concept of time and therefore timescales and deadlines are very fluid in Southeast Asia.

2.4 A summary of cross- cultural adjustment.

A large amount of expatriate adjustment literature bases on Black et al (1991) model of cross-cultural adjustment, so it has been widely studied and proved to be useful in researching expatriate adjustment process. However much it has, it lacks certain issues, which Shaffer et al (1999) have tried to fill. Even if they did not find support for all their hypotheses, their study brought some new knowledge about expatriate adjustment. Especially language fluency is a significant factor to expatriates, because it defines strongly, what kind of interaction adjustment they have. Without a common language or with a weak common language, interaction is very difficult compared to the situation where expatriates and subordinates speak the same language. The relations between expatriate and other employees are greatly dependent on the language for many reasons. It is naturally a very essential issue in a relationship if parties understand each other or not. If expatriate does not speak local employees' own language, they might have negative attitudes towards the expatriate, especially if he or she came to the organization to be in a management position. They might feel that expatriate is an outsider who came to tell them what to do without respecting their own culture, including language. Also if local workers have not used to use English as their work language, it probably does not increase work motivation, if they have to change their language because of the expatriate.

Shaffer et al (1999) also bring up another important issue of expatriate adjustment; the hierarchical position. Expatriate have very different adjustment, depending on what position they have in the host organization. The purpose of this study is to focus more on expatriates in management positions and their adjustment differs for example from technical expatriates. Co-worker support is one main concern for expatriate managers, because they cannot wait much support from their subordinates. Especially in countries, where the hierarchical features are important, such as in South East Asia, managers cannot wait the same kind of support from their subordinates as in less hierarchic countries. In these cases, it would be important to have co-workers from the same or higher level to receive co-worker support. For manager expatriates leadership style

issues are also significant, but they do not come up in Black et al (1991) or Shaffer et al (1999) studies, but they could be included in role factors. Host employees might have used to very different leadership styles than expatriate has. Big differences in leadership styles can cause significant problems, because of confusion and misunderstandings caused by different leadership styles.

However, Black et al (1991) and Shaffer et al (1999) models present quite a comprehensive picture of expatriate adjustment process and factors that have an effect on it. These studies take into account work, general and interaction issues, which can be seen as the main issues forming the adjustment. However, it can be discussed if the influencing factors are sufficient, because each assignment is unique. Furthermore, the model of Black et al (1991) is relatively old and it has even been developed afterwards, so it is necessary to consider if it is still suitable in this more globalized world than for which it has been created. Yet, their model is widely used and treated as a basic model of expatriate adjustment. Consequently it has been proved to be at least almost as workable nowadays as it was twenty years ago. Emphases on different factors might have changed and there are some more influencing factors, but basically study is still useful. Due to the fact that there are no essential competing theories, expect theories that have developed the original model, Black et al (1991) model is a good starting point for examining expatriate adjustment process.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION PROCESS

Organizational socialization refers to the process by which employees are transformed from the outsiders of organization to participating and effective members (Feldman 1976). In the process an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to acquire an organizational role (Van Maanen and Schein 1979). This definition for organizational socialization process is from organizational literature point of view, but the way socialization is understood depends on the science, which studies it. Socialization has been widely studied within sociology and psychology and Kammeyer, Ritzer and Yetman (1990) define socialization from socio-psychological perspective: “Socialization is a process by which a person learns and generally accepts the established ways of a particular social group or society”. Taormina (1997) criticizes the organizational definition of socialization, because they do not specify the content to clarify the concept (Taormina 1997; Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein and Gardner 1994). He combines the organizational, sociological and psychological perspectives of socialization and defines organizational socialization as “the process, by which a person secures relevant job skills, acquires a functional level of organizational understanding, attains supportive social interactions with co-workers and generally accepts the established ways of particular organization”. In this thesis, organizational socialization is considered this way.

Organizational socialization literature has focused mostly on the process proposing different stage models of organizational socialization process (Taormina 1997, 2008). Wanous (1992), Buchana (1974), Schein (1980), Feldman (1976, 1981) and Van Maanen (1976) are examples of researches, who have made stage models of organizational socialization process. They describe it as sequence of separated events. These models present different stages that newcomers go through when they enter an organization. Wanous’s (1992) model of organizational socialization is a good example of a stage model, because it has four clear stages which newcomers experience when they enter the new organization. This model of organizational socialization includes the following steps:

1. Confront the reality of the new job—newcomers adjust their expectations to the reality of the job.
2. Achieve role clarity—newcomers learn and negotiate the expectations and requirements of their role in the organization.

3. Locate oneself in the organization—newcomers learn how their work contributes to the work of the organization.
4. Assess success—newcomers assess the value of their contributions to the organization.

However, researches have proposed that organizational socialization process needs to be continuous, rather than a process, which goes straight from stage to stage (Feldman 1976, 1981, Van Maanen 1976, Schein 1980, Chao et al. 1994, and Fisher 1986). According to this continuous process idea, Taormina (1997) provides synthesized model of a very diverse socialization literature, which treats organizational socialization process as a continuous process. Taormina's (1997) model includes four domains: (1) training; (2) understanding; (3) coworker support and (4) future prospects. These four domains connect elements from previous models of organizational socialization process and create a coherent model of previous studies. Taormina's continuous process model is used in this thesis, because it provides a comprehensive model to understand organizational socialization process.

3.1 Continuous process of organizational socialization

The four domains, training, understanding, co-worker support and future prospects, form the continuous process of organizational socialization. These domains mean that spheres of influence or activity and domains are particular dimensions of organizational socialization. Each domain contains few content areas, and each domain operates continuously and concurrently with other domains. They are not separated from each other, but they occur continuously during employee's socialization and career. Domains can also be overlapping and have common factors with each other. (Taormina 1997)

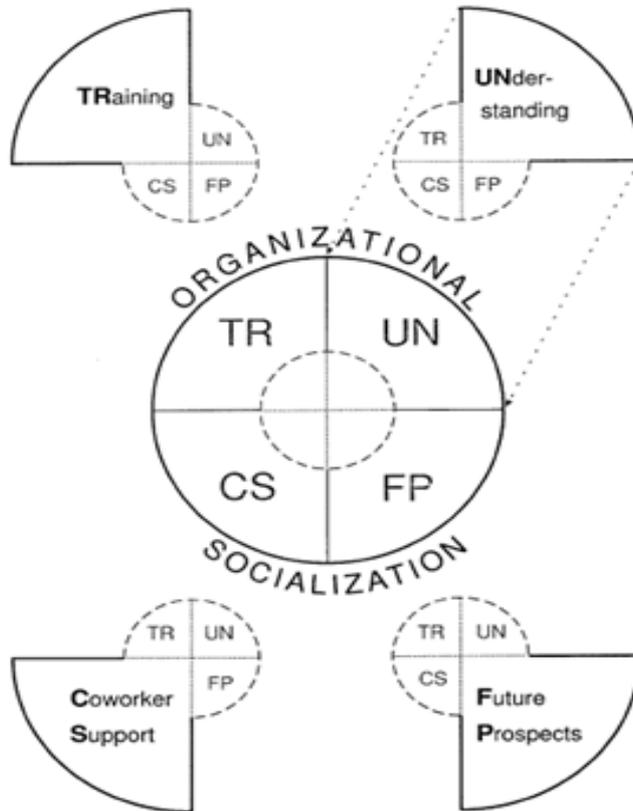


Figure 2. The four domains of organizational socialization (Taormina 1997)

3.1.1 Training

In this context training means the development of job skills and activities, but more widely it can be described as an act, process or method by which one acquires any type of functional skill or ability that is required to perform a specific job (Taormina 1997, Van Maanen 1976 and Wanous 1980). Due to these definitions, skills and abilities to perform a job are main parts of training domain (Taormina 1997). Training can be formal or informal (Taormina 1997) and usually both ways of training occur, when a new employee is trained to socialize in an organization. Formal training usually consists of structured programs of instructions arranged by organization. These programs concentrate on improving new employees' job skills and also managerial and executive job skills (Taormina 1997). Informal training is unstructured training, which aims to enhance employee's job skills. Informal training can be interaction with coworkers or support and training from an arranged mentor. (Taormina 1997)

According to Taormina (1997) training is an activity, which helps organizations to socialize new employees and it is a part of newcomers' socialization process. Researchers have disagreed about the question, whether training is a part of organizational socialization process or not. Schein (1980) proposes that training should be regarded as a separate process but many other researches (Fisher 1986, Van Maanen 1976, Wanous 1980) claim that training is a part of socialization process. Feldman (1981) even suggests that training is not any longer only a part of socialization but would be a synonym with it. In this study training is considered as a part of organizational socialization process, which occurs strongly in the beginning of the socialization but continues also during it.

Researches place training in different stages in their socialization process models, which can be explained by the fact that training does not occur only once during the process but several times at different stages. For example, Buchana (1974) places training at stage one, while Schein (1978) and Feldman (1981) place training at stage two. Furthermore Feldman divides training into the learning of new tasks at work, task mastery and attaining positive performance levels. First part takes place at stage one and latter two at stage two. Taormina (1997) concludes that training appears at different times and different levels for different employees. Chao et al's (1994) study provides support for Taormina's claim that training is an on-going action in socialization process. They found that training can be an on-going process rather than action that occurs only once in organizational socialization process. Changing business environment and developing technology affect that employees need to be trained through their career (Taormina 1997), so it is not limited only to the beginning of employee's career in particular organization.

According to Taormina's (1997) model of training as a continuous process, when newcomers enter into the organization they first get general orientation and training. Soon after they have learned the general issues of organization, the focus will change to the training of job issues. If an organization has a formal training program, new employees will be trained very intensively at the beginning of work relationship, but after that the curve of the model will reduce. On the other hand, if the organization has informal training, training will also be very intensive at the beginning but it will not reduce as fast as if the organization has a formal training program. Significant in the Taormina's (1997) model is that the curve will not reach the zero level of training

before employee does not work in the organization anymore, because until that employees' are trained continuously.

The effects of training are still unclear, because researches have got different results, about what kind of effect training has on employees. For example, Van Maanen did not find any important connecting factors with training and other variables, but Nordhaug (1989) found that training resulted in higher motivation, career development and psychosocial development. In addition Caldwell, Chatman and O'Reilly (1990) discovered that managers' training has a positive effect on managers' commitment.

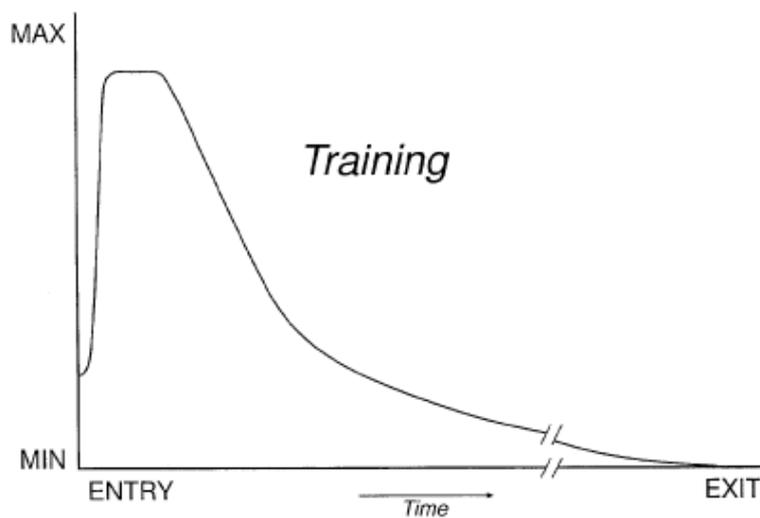


Figure 3. Training in organizational socialization process (Taormina 1997)

3.1.2 Understanding

According to Taormina (1997), in the context of organizational socialization understanding means “the extent to which employee fully comprehends and can apply knowledge about his or her job, the organization, its people and its culture”. More detailed, understanding is having a clear idea of the nature, significance or explanation of something. The content of understanding domain is wide and that is why it overlaps also other domains of socialization process. Understanding is needed in every aspects of

employee's work because understanding underlines all human behavior, such as organizational behavior. (Taormina 1997)

Taormina (1997) uses a term "understanding" as a wide concept, which consists of many factors that other researchers have identified as factors that newcomers should learn in the socialization process. Chao et al (1994) have identified four factors of organizational socialization, which Taormina (1997) includes in the understanding domain: organizational goals and values, politics, language and history. Many other factors of understanding domain are related to role learning, such as: role clarity (Buchanan 1974), role definition (Feldman 1981) and developing one's role and identity (Schein 1978). Reality shock (Buchanan 1974), adjustment to group norms and values (Feldman 1981), technical, social, referent, feedback, and cultural information acquisition (Morrison 1993), task, role group and organization learning (Ostroff and Kozlowski 1992), accepting organizational reality and deciphering the reward system (Schein 1978) are also factors of understanding domain. Furthermore, Louis (1980) emphasizes the importance of role-related learning and culture learning in organizational socialization process. Morrison (1993) adds that understanding one's role and the organization should help employee's socialization.

Reality shock is something that employees might face when they enter to the organization if their expectations of the organization do not match with reality (Buchanan 1974). This is one stage when understanding and adjustment to the situation is really needed (Taormina 1997).

Taormina (1997) bases his suggestion of understanding as an on-going process on the idea that socialization is a life-long process. Due to this Van Maanen (1976) proposes that organizational socialization is a part of life- long process of socialization and moreover, continuous learning is a significant part of organizational socialization. A dynamic environment also affects the need of understanding, because organizations have to adapt themselves according to the changing environment. This leads to changes inside the organization, such as structure, personnel and processes. That is why employees need to understand the on-going changes so they can manage to be as efficient workers as possible. (Taormina 1997)

There is a lack of empirical tests concerning understanding as a continuous process, which decrease the credibility of this theory. However, Taormina's (1997) understanding- domain concludes so many factors that it might be difficult to measure

how continuous understanding really is. On the other hand, because of the fact that it has so many elements it is natural that understanding will continue through organizational socialization process. As mentioned before, many researchers have used the elements of understanding in their studies, which Taormina (1997) has connected under the concept of understanding. Understanding relates also other domains of organizational socialization, because employees use understanding in all their behavior.

When an employee enters to an organization, his or her understanding grows as a bullish curve. In the beginning, there is only a little understanding about the organization, because employee has been an outsider of the organization. When the entry has happened they do not know yet where to look for information to increase their understanding. But when employee finds reliable information sources, understanding begins to grow rapidly. Information seeking is important in understanding domain, because it is the way employees learn to understand more about organization and their work role. It causes that while employees are seeking much information, their understanding is still relatively low, but after finding answers, understanding grows. Studies (Graen, Orris and Johnson 1973; Ostroff and Kozlowski 1992) show that information seeking is very high in the beginning of one's career in the organization and then starts to decrease steadily. In the end of one's career, the curve of understanding increases again, but does not reach 100% understanding due to complicated and dynamic world. (Taormina 1997)

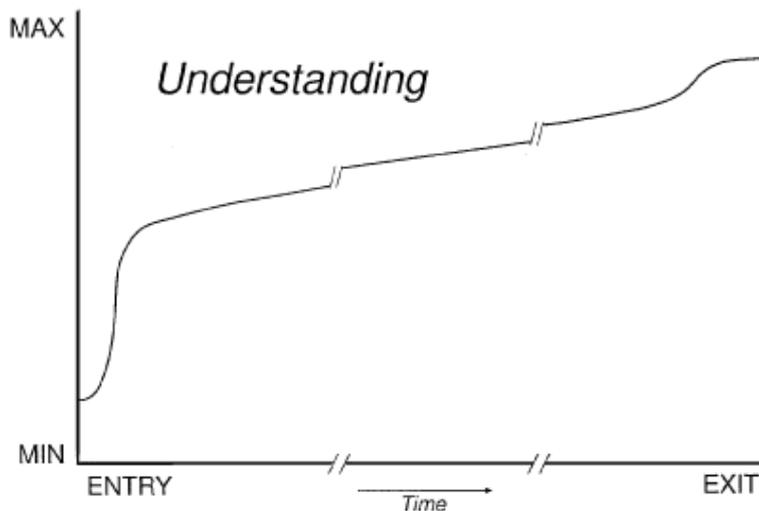


Figure 4. Understanding in organizational socialization (Taormina 1997)

3.1.3 Coworker support

According to Taormina (1997) coworker support is “an emotional, moral or instrumental sustenance, which is provided without financial compensation by other employees in organization in which one works with the objective of alleviating anxiety, fear or doubt”. Emotional- and moral support is a significant factor of coworker support and they refer to verbal encouragement but in some cases also to behavioral solace. In some cultures coworkers can support each other besides verbal support also by more physical way, such hugging. Instrumental support refers to helping with getting material, like lending equipment. This coworker support is usually received from workers of the same level, because most interaction among employees occurs with people within the same level. It is important that coworker support is offered without financial cost, because otherwise it would be considered as a professional social service. (Taormina 1997)

Taormina (1997) represents coworker support differently than many other previous researches. He separates teaching and training clearly from coworker support, because in his model of organizational socialization these parts belong to training and understanding domains. He emphasizes that coworker support is basically an activity, which is related to the emotional needs of employees and gives them social support. Although social and emotional support might sometimes be mixed with teaching and training, it is useful that Taormina (1997) brings them up separately. Coworkers can have many different roles (Taormina 1997), they might be friends and teachers at the same time, so it may be difficult to say when they are providing emotional support or teaching. These issues are all important in newcomers’ socialization process, no matter how they are separated. That is why it is good to analyze them also separately to make socialization process effective and successful. Teaching role is significant, because coworkers can help new employees, for example, to get familiar with organizational culture and values. On the other hand, newcomers need social and emotional support to adjust themselves faster to the new work community and environment.

Need for social connection and therefore need for coworker support was brought up already in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in 1943. McClelland (1961) also confirmed that social support is needed for affiliation. Many later studies have included coworker support as a part of organizational socialization, such as Van Maanen and Schein (1979), who highlight the support and guidance of colleagues to be important for individuals. The lack of coworker support would make newcomers socialization more

difficult, especially if instead of support there would be separating or ostracizing of newcomer (Taormina 1997).

Graen, McGee, Seers and Serey (1983) found a positive connection between coworker support and reducing work stress. Furthermore Johnson (1991) and Karuppan (1994) propose that the lack of coworker social support is the main reason for work stress and that coworker support can effectively decrease burnout (Leiter and Maslach 1988; Russell; Watts 1990). New work environment can cause stress, which consequently leads to poor adjustment and performance and to negative attitudes and behavior (Taormina 1997). But as Graen et al (1983) found, stronger social support can lead to a higher level of satisfaction, which help socialization process to be more successful. Staw, Sutton and Pellet (1994) confirmed these results in their study, while they proposed that positive emotions are connected with greater achievement at work and supportive social context. However, there are also opposite surveys, which bring different aspects to the subject.

When employees enter to the organization, in most cases they do not usually know anyone beforehand, except if they found the job through friends or acquaintances. In Taormina's model of coworker support, the curve of coworker support is first very low but increases rapidly during the first few weeks, when newcomers bond relationships with new colleagues. Thus, coworker support is usually established during a few weeks. After that, the curve does not necessarily rise anymore, but stays quite stable. Though, as Taormina (1997) mentions, the curve of coworker support is very personal and varies much among individuals. The model is an example of co- worker support but it cannot be expected that it would be seen in the curve how the support develops in the situation of every employee. Every person, organization and background is different, thus the model can give some insight about how co-worker support probably develops.

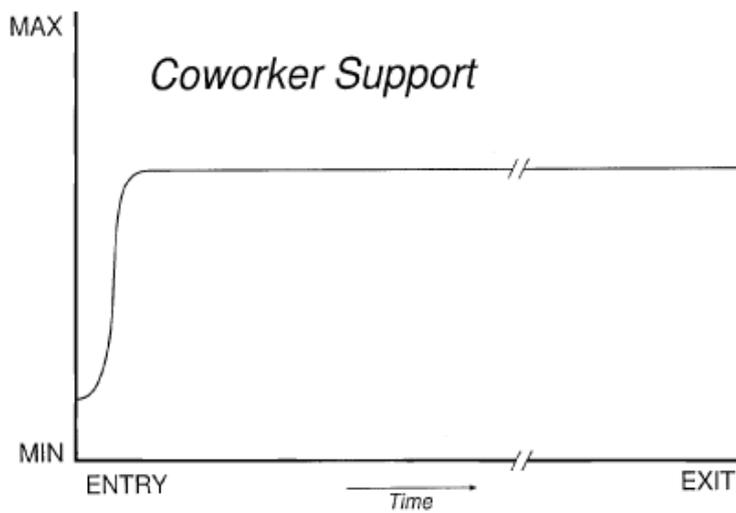


Figure 5. Coworker support in organizational socialization (Taormina 1997)

3.1.4 Future prospects

Future prospects refer to the preconception that employee has about his or her rewarding career in particular organization (Taormina 1997). According to Taormina (1997) there are several factors, which make employee's career rewarding and employee willing to stay in the organization. Main factors are: employee's perceptions about probability of remaining employed, current salary and potential or scheduled salary increments, future job assignments, promotions, bonuses, benefits, stock options, recognition and awards. If the rewards, which make job pleasing, are provided by the organization, employee's own perceptions are critical if he or she decides to remain in organization. (Taormina 1997) This attitude refers to the interaction perspective of organizational socialization (Reichers 1987).

Buchanan (1976) was one of the first researches, who analyzed employee's concerns about their future employment as a part of socialization process. According to him, employee is first more worried about safety issues, such as being accepted and getting established, which refer to remaining employed in Taormina's model. In the beginning employee is also concerned about whether the organization can satisfy their

achievement needs. Later in their career in the same organization, employees usually concentrate on salary and promotion issues.

Reinforcement theory (Skinner 1953), social comparison theory (Festinger 1954), social exchange theory (Homans 1958, 1974) and comparison level theory (Thibaut and Kelley 1959) all have their effect on future prospect. The main point of psychological theories is that people tend to continue satisfying relationships and end unsatisfying relationships. This idea suits also to organizations and employees, because if an employee is not content in his or her job, he or she will probably try to seek another job if possible. (Taormina 1997) Especially comparison level theory is relevant to estimate future prospects, because theory considers how people establish the standard of evaluation when they are considering whether or not to stay in a relationship.

Taormina (1997) proposes that most people are continuously worried about future, because one's employment is related to economic condition and thus also on wellbeing. Feldman (1976, 1981) adds in his study that the concern for future begins even before the employee enters the company and may continue, for example, in the mode of reality shock. Dissatisfaction from unmet expectations can cause reality shock and it can occur besides the beginning of one's career also later in the career (Fisher 1986, Toffler 1981). These later unmet expectations usually concern employees' future hopes about promotions, salary increment and bonuses (Fisher 1986). While reality shock is usually a negative and an isolated event, future prospects are continuous and can be related to either positive or negative issues (Taormina 1997). Buchana (1976) also found that employees' concern about their future continues almost throughout their career. During the first year, employees are most concerned about issues related to safety and security and through the second to the fourth year they concern more about obtaining rewards, like higher status, better salaries and improved working conditions. Rewards are important in future prospects, because offering a reward in the future reinforces the desired behavior. But if the employee feels that he or she does not have much chance on success in the organization it will lead to poor socialization (Schwarzwalt, Koslowsky and Shalit 1992). On the other hand, researchers have found out that strong reward system and fairness in promotions and salary lead to better job satisfaction and commitment (Caldwell et al 1990, Wright 1990, Witt and Nye 1992, Schwarzwalt et al 1992).

Taormina (1997) suggests a model of Future prospects which consists three different curves that each present different employee types. Usually every employee's curve has

at first very high value, because of high expectations about organizations but decreases fast due to reality shock. The first group of employees includes rare, very talented people, who face only a little reality shock and whose career advances rapidly thanks to rewards advancements. However, most employees belong to group two, who fairly fast recover from reality shock but whose curve of Future prospects starts to decrease slowly after adjusting organization norms and role due to the pyramid structure of most organizations. The last group represents employees who do not recover well from reality shock and have only little hopes of Future prospects. They might soon quit or lower their ambitions. (Taormina 1997)

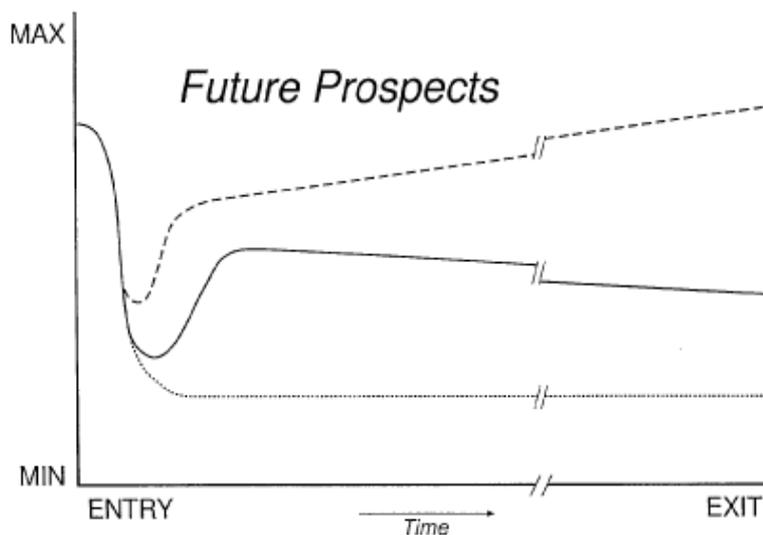


Figure 6. Future prospects in organizational socialization (Taormina 1997)

3.2 A summary of organizational socialization process

Studies of organizational socializations have focused on organizational socialization from two different points of views: top- down or bottom up. Top- down studies are from organizations point of view and they concentrate how organizations can socialize their new employees (Crow 2006). These studies have usually studied socialization tactics, which help organizations in socialization. In contrast, bottom- up view studies are from newcomers point of view. These studies usually suggest how new employees can

facilitate their organizational socialization process (Wanberg and Kammeyer- Mueller 2000). Taormina's (1997) model of organizational socialization is from employees' point of view, so it is a bottom- up study. Its perspective suits well this thesis, because this study concentrates on organizational socialization from employee's point of view, not from organization's perspective.

Taormina's (1997) organizational socialization process model is useful, because it gives factors, which form organizational socialization process and not only different stages. He has connected different socialization theories to make more comprehensive model of the process, so it provides a good tool to study organizational socialization in different situations among different individuals. However, it can be argued if organizational socialization process really is a continuous process. Taormina presents many previous studies, which confirm his theory but his theory has not been empirically tested. Also all parts of his theory do not have empirical support from other studies and theorists' opinions are strongly divided.

The four chosen factors, which form socialization process might be questionable, because they are quite ambiguous. Those domains include very essential factors of organizational socialization process, but the question is, if the main domains are relevant or not. Especially understanding domain can be understood in many different ways, because it is such a wide term. Though, Taormina specifies the factors under the understanding term, which covers a large part of organizational socialization process. He shows that the context of understanding domain is very relevant in the organizational socialization process.

Taormina's model provides a good starting point for examining expatriates, because suggested domains are quite global and not connected only to one particular culture. There are many other models of organizational socialization process, which might be clearer and have better structure, but Taormina's model suits better this thesis being so comprehensive. Expatriates' assignments are very diverse due to time, national and organizational culture and interaction. Thus it may not be as relevant to examine those from stage model or socialization tactics perspective. However, it is probable, that even short expatriate's assignments have factors of continuous organizational socialization process, since socialization dimensions are so wide and overlapping.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION PROCESS AS AN INFLUENCING FACTOR IN CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Besides the cross-cultural adjustment literature, also domestic adjustment literature provides a basic process of adjusting to new settings. Domestic adjustment literature has traditionally consisted of four main research areas: 1. Organizational socialization, 2. Career transitions and sense making, 3. Work role transitions and 4. Relocation or domestic transfers (Ashford and Taylor 1990). Due to this, organizational socialization has been usually considered as a part of domestic individual adjustment. However, in the comprehensive model of cross-cultural adjustment Black et al (1991) connected socialization also to international adjustment. They suggested that organizational socialization theories would be useful also in international adjustment, not only domestic adjustment.

Domestic theoretical and empirical literature of organizational socialization has mainly emphasized the relationship between the mode of adjustment and organizational socialization tactics (Fisher 1986, Jones 1986, Van Maanen and Schein 1979). Also Black et al (1991) connected organizational socialization to the mode of adjustment in their model of international adjustment. They proposed that socialization tactics and socialization content have an effect on the mode of adjustment. On the other hand, Black et al (1991) suggest that organizational culture, work environment novelty, social support of co-workers and supervisors would be important antecedents for the degree of adjustment. In their study, Black et al (1991) focus mainly on organizational socialization tactics rather than organizational socialization process. There is some support to the idea that different socialization tactics lead to different outcomes of mode of adjustment: individual organizational tactics lead to a high role innovation as a mode of adjustment and institutional organizational tactics lead to a low role innovation as a mode of adjustment (Jones's 1986).

Even though organizational socialization process in the host country is largely ignored in the expatriate literature (Lueke et al 2000), there are some studies that confirm the important role of organizational socialization in cross-cultural adjustment. In 2005 Lee studied factors that have an effect on cross-cultural adjustment success. He found evidence for the important role of organization socialization. According to Lee, socialization in the host country is an important predictor of cross-cultural adjustment. He proposes that adjustment was enhanced with greater satisfaction and better

socialization in the host country. Also Liu and Lee (2006) argue that “expatriates that are better socialized in the host country are likely to adjust more effectively.” Thus, they found prove that organizational socialization influence expatriates’ adjustment, but they concentrate mainly on socialization tactics of the organization rather than the socialization process. Therefore, it is important to study organizational socialization also from a different perspective.

When expatriates are selected for the assignment and start to work in the new organization, they need to go through organizational socialization. Organizational socialization is not restricted to domestic organizations but socialization happens equally also in cross-cultural context. In these cases organizational socialization is more complicated and broader. It might also be difficult to define, which issues belong to organizational socialization and which to international adjustment. Socialization and adjustment are related to each other due to definitions of socialization:” Socialization is a process by which a person learns and generally accepts the established ways of a particular social group or society” (Kammeyer, Ritzer and Yetman 1990, p. 220). According to Feldman (1976), in organizational socialization process employees are transformed from organization outsiders to participating and effective members. These definitions describe also what happens for expatriates in a new culture and an organization, because they become insiders of culture and start to adapt unfamiliar habits. Consequently, it can be assumed that organizational socialization process has an effect on expatriate’s work, interaction and general adjustment.

It can be suggested that the four domains of organizational socialization in Taormina’s (1997) continuous process- model would be influencing factors in international adjustment. Socialization already has common factors with areas that Black et al (1991) and Shaffer et al (1999) have proposed, but they have been studied from different perspective. If organizational socialization was considered as an influencing factor, it could give more information and understanding about expatriates’ international adjustment. This new point of view could give tools to help expatriates to have successful foreign assignment.

4.1 Training

Training, or the absence of it, can affect expatriates' adjustment, especially job adjustment but also interaction adjustment. Expatriates are trained in the home country before assignment and hopefully also in the host country in the beginning and during the assignment. Home country training is not discussed here, because this thesis concentrates on in-country adjustment. Training in the host country is essential for expatriates so they can adjust better to their roles. Training helps expatriates to learn, for example, job related skills and tasks faster. Training related to organizational culture is also very important, since it can be expected that organizational cultural novelty is high between host and home country organizations. In the international context, training could also include language skills and national culture training, because better knowledge of the particular culture and language would help expatriates in their adjustment.

It is probable that national culture and organizational culture have an effect on how much expatriates get informal or formal training. Different cultures have different preferences for training forms, thus expatriates are likely to receive the training, which is habitual for the particular culture and organization. It can be expected that both training methods influence positively expatriate's adjustment, but informal training could help the expatriate in interaction adjustment more, because informal training is usually carried out by a coworker or a mentor.

4.2 Understanding

Understanding domain is a very wide subject in Taormina's model of organizational socialization and it contains many different elements. It has also similarities with job factors in Black et al (1991) model, such as role clarity. This domain does not have clear boundaries and as an influencing factor it would have an effect on most issues that expatriates do, because they need intellectual skills in adjustment process. Due to wide concept of understanding domain, in international adjustment context it could involve expatriate's understanding toward his or her assignment as a whole, in which case it would affect all dimensions of adjustment: interaction, work and general adjustment.

Like in organizational socialization, also in cross-cultural adjustment expatriates need to comprehend their job, organization, its people and culture. More detailed, affecting factors related to understanding are, for instance, organizational goals, values, politics, language and history; role learning, role clarity, role definition and role development. In international context this could also include issues related to national culture and consequently also different communication and habits in everyday living.

In socialization, employees might face reality shock, when they enter a new organization. In expatriate adjustment, this reality shock could be compared to a culture shock, which is a broader concept, because it includes the whole culture. While reality shock happens when there is a gap between employees' expectations and reality of the organization, culture shock comes up in the situations of high cultural novelty. Reality shock brings more depth to culture shock phenomenon and gives more importance also to "organizational culture shock" and differences between expectations and experienced reality.

4.3 Co-worker support

Co-worker support is one organizational factor that Black et al (1991) have presented, but socialization gives different perspective to the same subject, so in this thesis it is included also into socializations factors. From organizational socialization perspective, co-worker support concentrates more on emotional and moral support to fill newcomer's emotional needs (Taormina 1997). However, the relation between verbal and physical support is culture bounded, so it is emphasized in expatriate's adjustment. Andreason (2003) and Shaffer et al (1999) propose that coworker support would facilitate international adjustment. It has also positive effect on adjustment from socialization point of view, because coworker support can reduce stress caused by the new environment. It would be useful for expatriates to have coworker support, which is not related only to job and organizational issues, but also other cultural issues.

Support is usually received from coworkers, who work at the same level. Thus, co-worker support for managerial expatriates might be problematic if there are not enough other workers in management positions, from whom expatriates can expect to receive support. Especially in cultures, which have high power distance, there may be very strict rules in relationships between managers and subordinates. In these cases

expatriates cannot wait equal support from their subordinates, due to the hierarchical nature of their relationship. Consequently, the most suitable coworker support is probably received from other managers or mentors. It might also diminish manager expatriates' authority if they show their unawareness or uncertainty to host employees, because in high context countries managers are supposed to be the authority. Besides employees' from the same level, expatriates can receive co-worker support from other expatriates who are in the same situation and therefore understand each other better. In those cases the nature of support is different, because expatriates are not usually as familiar with host country and organization as locals. However, if expatriates have already worked a long time in the particular country, they can have significant knowledge of the culture from foreigner's perspective.

4.4 Future prospects

It can be supposed that expatriates have different future prospects than employees in the domestic context, because expatriate assignments are expected to be shorter than individuals work in home organizations. Naturally, employees in the home country can also have temporary employment or do not have future in the same organization. On the other hand, expatriates might have longer assignments and expectations toward future in the host organization. However, it can be proposed that future prospects have different meaning for expatriates than for domestic employees.

In expatriates' future prospects the essential question is, which is the target country or organization of future expectations. It can have an effect on the adjustment process. Some expatriates might consider the international assignment as a compulsory duty to ascend their career. In these cases future prospects are not probably directed at the host country but at the home country and organization or at some third country. This might have a negative effect on adjustment if expatriates are not as willing to stay and work in the host country but rather wait when they can continue to other assignments. Then expatriates can have negative attitudes toward host country, culture, organization and local people, which would diminish the adjustment process. But even if expatriate's future prospect would be toward home organization, it does not necessarily mean that they would have a negative attitude toward assignment and host culture. On the contrary, they can be very positive about assignment but just do not want their future to

be in the host organization. Then future prospects would not probably have a strong effect.

In contrast, if expatriate's future prospects are toward host country and host organization, it can be supposed that it has a positive effect on adjustment. Expatriates might want to continue in the same host organization after assignment and probably become permanent employees of host organization or maybe apply for another job in the host country. In these cases expatriates are usually more willing to learn more about organization and general culture, which would help them to adjust faster. They might also want to learn local language if they expect that they need it also in the future, which has a great impact on the whole international adjustment process. Positive attitude and eagerness to learn could be important factors in international adjustment process.

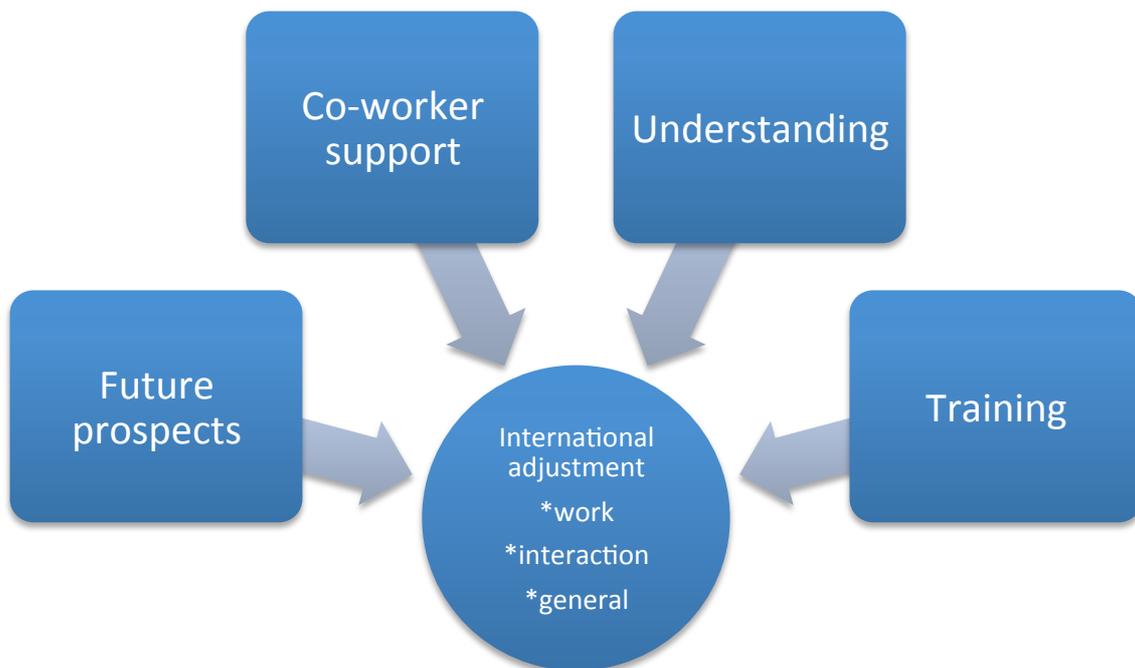


Figure 7. Organizational socialization affecting international adjustment (Based on Black et al (1991) and Taormina (1997))

4.5 A summary of organizational socialization process as an influencing factor in cross-cultural adjustment

The main purpose of this theoretical part was to present a model on how cross-cultural adjustment and organizational socialization are related to each other and how OS-theories can be used in the expatriate adjustment context. A composited model of cross-cultural adjustment and organizational socialization proposed in this theoretical part, aims to provide a new point of view to expatriate adjustment.

Cross-cultural adjustment is a wide and complicated adjustment process, which affects strongly how successful expatriate's assignment will be in a host country. International assignments are challenging both for the individual and the organization and consequently assignments fail too often. Expatriates' performance in work might be ineffective or they need to return home earlier than the assignment was supposed to end. Black et al's (1991) study of international adjustment is one of the basic models in cross-cultural adjustment literature and it is used in this thesis.

Cross-cultural adjustment consists of three dimensions: work, interaction and general adjustment. Work adjustment focuses on job issues in a host organization, interaction adjustment focuses on communication with locals and general adjustment concentrates on adapting to non-work environment. These adjustment dimensions are affected by many different factors, which are important for expatriates to recognize. These factors are positional, job, organizational, individual and non-work factors. In this thesis it is also proposed that organizational socialization factors have an effect on international adjustment.

In organizational socialization literature, researchers have proposed different socialization tactics and process models. Taormina (1997) suggests a model of continuous process of organizational socialization, which connects parts of different theories of organizational socialization process. His model offers a general view of organizational socialization process that is not limited to stages. The model includes four domains: training, understanding, co-worker support and future prospects. These domains form organizational socialization, which newcomers undergo as a continuous process. It can be supposed that expatriate's organizational socialization process contain also these same domains, but they might be different and have dissimilar emphasis.

The domains of organizational socialization could increase understanding of expatriate adjustment and bring deeper perspective to the adjustment process. In this study, organizational socialization domains are proposed to be influencing factors in cross-cultural adjustment. Expatriates undergo organizational socialization process besides the cross-cultural adjustment during their assignment, so the domains of organizational socialization could be seen as effecting factors of adjustment.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this thesis is to research how organizational socialization affects the international adjustment of Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia. However, in order to study this, the whole international adjustment process is covered to form a comprehensive idea about adjustment. Hence, questions, which were asked from the participants covered all adjustment categories and the socialization process, but the main emphasis was in the influence of socialization on international adjustment process.

5.1 Research approach

Researches are typically divided into quantitative and qualitative studies to differentiate both data collection techniques and data analysis procedures. Quantitative is usually used as a synonym for data collection techniques and analysis procedures that generate or use numerical data, such as questionnaires and statistics. On the contrary, qualitative method generates and uses non-numerical data, such as interviews and data categorization. (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2007)

This research is a qualitative research and relies on the philosophy of interpretivism. A qualitative method is adopted because it suits well on studies about human behaviour. Since, the expatriates' behaviour and influencing factors are studied here, qualitative method gives more freedom and diversity in the study. According to Maylor and Blackmon (2005), an organization contains both social systems and the setting for social behavior. They suggest that since people represent the social systems, research on these systems is different from that on physical objects and systems in the natural sciences. This is why qualitative methods are better in management studies, because it takes into account people within the organizations.

Qualitative study is more open-ended than quantitative since in the beginning of the research the researcher does not know exactly what can be found. Much of the learning appears throughout the research process. (Pratt 2009). Qualitative research is also better at learning the meaning rather than measurement "through investigating feelings, attitudes, values, perceptions or motivations, and the state, actions and interactions of people, groups and organizations" (Maylor and Blackmon 2005).

When using deductive approach a researcher develops a theory and hypothesis and designs a research strategy to the hypothesis. On the other hand, in inductive approach data is collected first and theory is developed as a result of data analysis. Consequently the main difference between these two approaches is that deductive approach moves from theory to data and inductive approach from data to theory. (Saunders et al. 2007)

This research has adopted both inductive and deductive approaches but emphasises inductive approach. Deductive approach is seen in the theoretical framework, which is the basis for research and the research questions and objects are developed by using previous theories (Saunders et al. 2007). However, there are no hypotheses that are tested but using both previous theories and data found in this research the theory is created. Inductive approach is more appropriate for this topic because the topic has not been studied widely before and therefore there are no existing studies to use to create hypotheses. According to inductive approach data is collected and theory created from that.

This study is phenomenological, theory -based research, which uses IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis) approach. IPA refers to an approach, which explores in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world. IPA attempts to search personal experience and is concerned with an individual's personal perception or account of an object or event. The aim is to produce an objective statement of the object or event itself. Furthermore, it is emphasized in IPA, that the research is a dynamic process, which involves a researcher as an active player during the process. (Smith and Osborne 2008)

5.2 Research design

5.2.1 Data collection

Data was collected through non- standardized semi-structured interviews. This method was chosen because it is recommended to use in IPA and it has been found to be suitable in qualitative case studies. (Smith et al 2008; Saunders 2007). Smith et al (2008) explain: "This form of interviewing allows the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue whereby initial questions are modified in the light of the participants' responses and the investigator is able to probe interesting and important

areas which arise.“ Saunders et al (2007) propose that the order of questions may be varied depending on the flow of conversation and additional questions may be required to explore research questions and objectives. This is how it was done also in this research. Interview themes were sent beforehand for interviewees so they had time to think about relevant experiences and in order to have more efficient interviews. During the interview the interviewer had a list of questions, which was changed when it was considered necessary. The average duration of an interview was 45 minutes. Two interviews were conducted through Internet telephone (Skype) and seven were telephone interviews. Three of the interviewees were still on the assignment and the rest lived so far from the interviewer that face-to-face interviews were not possible to conduct due to financial and time limitations. The interviews were recorded and transcribed afterwards.

The language chosen for interviews was Finnish, since it was the mother tongue of both the interviewees and the interviewer. The interviewees felt more comfortable and it was natural for them to have the interview in Finnish. Misunderstandings were also minimized between the interviewer and the interviewees by using the mother tongue.

The samples were collected by using purposive and snowball sampling (Saunders 2007). The aim was to gain understanding into a particular population within a specific location. It was possible to find a more closely defined group for whom the research questions will be significant by using purposive sampling (Smith and Osborne 2007). By using combined sampling strategy it was tried to make sure the data gathered will be of direct relevance to the study being carried out (Anderson 2004). Participants were approached by e-mails or calling, depending on the contact information and the country they are living in. All who were asked agreed to participate in the interview. When using IPA analysis in research, the sample size is suggested to be small in order to get in-depth engagement of each participant. IPA analysis has been used in cases from one to fifteen and more, but five or six is suggested to be quite a reasonable sample size (Smith et al 2007). In this thesis there are 9 participants, because a smaller sample would have felt insufficient since the aim is to study Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia, not just in one country. Larger sample gave opportunity to get participants from several Southeast Asian countries and more than one from each country. However, if the sample had been much larger, in-depth engagement with each participants would have suffered.

No	Level	Position	Country	Gender	Duration working in the host country
1	Middle	Expert	Laos	Male	2006-2009, 3 years
2	Middle	Expert	Laos	Female	2006-2009, 3 years
3	Upper	Manager	Laos	Male	2006-, 6 years (still continuing)
4	Upper	Expert	Laos	Female	2006-, 6 years (still continuing)
5	Upper	Manager	Thailand	Male	2010-, 1,5 years (still continuing)
6	Upper	Manager	Thailand	Male	1992-1994, 2 years
7	Upper	Manager	Indonesia	Female	2004-2007, 3 years
8	Middle	Expert	Indonesia	Male	1988-1995, 7 years
9	Middle	Expert	Indonesia	Female	1988-1995, 7 years

Table 1. The profiles of the interviewees

5.2.3 Data analysis

The main idea in making analysis of data was to identify themes, which is a common procedure in qualitative research. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) a thematic analysis is “a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic.” In order to interpret various aspects of the topic, IPA was used to analyze the data in this thesis. If the purpose of the research is trying to find out how individuals perceive the particular situations they are facing and how they view their personal and social world, IPA is a suitable approach (Smith et al 2008). IPA is proposed to be especially useful when the topic is concerned with complexity, process or novelty. (Smith et al 2008). These are the reasons IPA is conducted in this research. Researchers point out that there is no “one” right way to analyze or interpret data in qualitative analysis and therefore there is no single approach in qualitative analysis that is widely accepted (Neuman 2006). Furthermore Smith et al (2008) proposed that qualitative analysis is a ‘personal process’ depending on investigated topic and personal style. Thus, even though the guidelines of IPA (Smith et al 2008) are adopted here, the personal style of the researcher is reflected in analyzing methods.

According to the guidelines of IPA, thematic network was developed and a number of common themes were drawn out from the interview transcripts. First transcripts were

read carefully a number of times and notes were made in interesting points. Underlines, different colors and fonts were used alongside with notes to find themes. The purpose was to look for themes, case by case. This was followed by rereading and transforming initial notes into themes. The next stage was to connect the themes and product a table of the themes. Notes and other marks were used to find some clusters of themes, where topics were seen most strongly. These clusters created main themes, which were named according to the notes and marks. After all the transcripts had been processed separately, the final table of superordinate themes was constructed. It was necessary to decide upon which themes to focus on, which required the analysis to prioritize the data and reduce them (Smith et al 2008). Theoretical framework and research objects were used to reduce insignificant themes. However, there were finally some aspects and themes left, which did not exactly belong to the research objects but which brought richer aspect to research problem. The essential parts of transcripts and notes were divided under the themes to have a clear picture of what interviewees had said and thought about every theme. Results were written up in two sections, as Smith el (2008) as propose; “findings” sections contains the emergent thematic analysis, and the “discussion” links analysis to the extant literature.

5.3 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are essential issues in order to measure the quality and credibility of the thesis. Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection techniques and analysis procedures will produce consistent findings (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2007). Validity means the concern whether the findings really are about what they appear to be (Saunders et al. 2007). It refers to the extent to which conclusions give a precise description or explanation of what happened (Eriksson and Kovalainen 2008).

Easterby-Smith et al (2002) proposes three different questions to measure reliability:

1. Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions?
2. Will similar observations be reached by other observers?
3. Is there transparence in how sense was made from the raw data?

Hence, reliability is about replication and means that it is possible to repeat or reproduce the results of the research (Riley, Wood, Clark Wilkie and Szivas 2000). If another

researcher, who uses the same procedures as the earlier researcher, conducts the study, he should reach the same findings and conclusions in a reliable study (Saunders et al 2007).

Validity can be divided into construct validity, internal validity and external validity. Construct validity refers to the establishment of correct operational measures for the concepts being researched (Yin 2003). In other words, it concerns with the fit between the concepts used in the new research and those already established in some relevant area. Dey (1993) suggests that if the concepts are compatible with the ones already successfully used in previous analyses, it increases the construct validity of research. According to Yin (1994), internal validity means establishing a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from false relationships. There should be a logical connection and harmony between theoretical and conceptual definitions of research (Eskola and Suoranta 1998: 214). Eskola et al (1998) propose that if researcher has carefully familiarized himself with the scientific area, it increases internal validity. External validity concerns about to what extent the research results can be generalized; whether the finding could be adapted to other similar studies (Yin 2003).

In qualitative research, when using semi- structured interviews the threat to reliability might be especially interviewer error or interviewer bias. In this research, this was tried to minimize by careful preparation. The knowledge about research topic was collected beforehand and theoretical framework was established. As Saunders et al (2007) suggest, the interview themes were provided for participants before interview in order to promote both reliability and validity. Questions were created carefully, and presented as neutrally as possible. Before the interviews, a pilot interview was conducted to make sure questions are relevant and ask what they are supposed to ask. The order and mode of questions were changed after the pilot interview, as it was needed. The interviewee bias was tried to minimize by using their native language in interviews and making sure they really understood what was asked.

The participant error and bias can also be a threat to reliability (Robson 2002). In this research, it was tried to avoid by having as neutral timing and situation for interviews as possible. Interviewees were able to decide the time, which was best for them so they had time and interest for interviews. The anonymity of respondents was ensured and they knew that it would not be public what they said in interviews. Most of them were

from different organizations and it was made clear that the organizations would not know anything about what the interviewees said.

The use of IPA-analysis helped to increase both reliability and validity. The analysis is more transparent and can be repeated because there can be seen a logical way in making analysis and conclusions. IPA-analysis made it also easier to include previous theory into the conclusions, because it proposes guidelines to utilize the previous research in one's own study.

Construct and internal validity were increased by comprehensive theoretical framework. Researcher carefully familiarized herself with the research topic and theory, so it was possible to make logical connections between theory and empirical findings. Concerning the problem of external validity, the theoretical framework in this study demonstrates that the research has a broader theoretical significance than the cases that form the basis of this research (Saunders et al 2007). However, the aim of this study is not to try to make general claims about all expatriates' adjustment but more about deeper understanding about particular group- Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia. But as Smith et al (2008) say about IPA researches, it is suggested also in this study: "It is also possible to think in terms of theoretical rather than empirical generalizability."

6. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The main findings of empirical research are presented in this section. Each adjustment dimension -work, interaction and general adjustment- is discussed separately. The factors that have an effect on expatriates' adjustment are presented under the heading of each adjustment dimension. These factors are: job factors, organizational factors, individual factors, non-work factors, positional factors and organizational socialization. Some influencing factors, which were mentioned in the interviews, have an effect on more than one adjustment category but they are discussed only in the category where they are the most relevant. Thus, all influencing factors are not mentioned in all adjustment dimensions.

International adjustment and organizational socialization were very essential parts of expatriates' assignments. The successfulness of interviewees' adjustment to the host country and organization affected strongly how much they enjoyed working and living in the host country. It had also an influence on the length of the assignment, because many of the expatriates were able to choose how long they were going to be on the assignment and if they wanted to extend their assignment. Those who adjusted well and had a successful organizational socialization wanted often to lengthen their assignment if it was possible. Some of expatriates wanted to extend their assignment, since they had adjusted so well, but they did not have a chance to do that.

A successful international adjustment had a slightly different meaning for each interviewee depending on personality, but it was based on the same factors: happiness at work and at social/family life and generally liking the host country. It also advanced the adjustment if expatriate's family enjoyed living in the host country and expatriate got along with locals and other expatriates. These factors reflect to successful work, interaction and general adjustment, which form the basis for comprehensively successful international adjustment. Furthermore, there are more specific factors, which either advance or reduce the feeling of success in expatriates' adjustment process. These factors are discussed in this chapter.

In previous research, organizational socialization model is studied within organizational and work context. In this study, the effect on organizational socialization on work adjustment is discussed but it is also analysed how organizational socialization affects interaction and general adjustment. Interviewees did not separate their adjustment in the

host country to different categories but they considered adjustment more as an overall integration process. Consequently, organizational socialization factors -training, understanding, co-worker support and future prospect- affected expatriates' adjustment process as a whole. In addition, these factors are very wide and they can be used in more than one sense. For example, training consisted culture and language training that naturally affected all adjustment categories. In this study, they are seen as factors in "socialization to the host country". Co-worker support is discussed only in organizational socialization part, even if it belongs also to the adjustment model, because otherwise there would be unnecessary repetition. Cultural novelty is discussed separately under "culture heading" instead of having it as a non-work factor. Most of cultural issues are presented in "Work adjustment" and "Interaction adjustment" sections. Even though the discussed cultural factors are important also for general adjustment, there would be too much repetition if those factors would be mentioned in all sections. Those influencing factors that did not come up in interviews are left out.

Functional area and Assignment vector are not essential in this thesis, and consequently they are not discussed in this section. All of the expatriates were managerial/ expert expatriates and no one was technical expatriate, which would have affected different adjustment process. Interviewees were either third country nationals or parent country nationals, as were all the other expatriates in the company, so assignment vector is not discussed as a factor in empirical findings.

6.1 Work adjustment

The work adjustment was seen as satisfaction and happiness at work and host organization. Duties, co-workers and organizational culture were all part of work adjustment. The general culture of the host country was also a factor in work adjustment, because it was an essential reason, why adjusting to the work was different compared to the home country. Expatriate's needed to learn how to be a worker in their host country and how the national laws and rules affected their work. Interviewees' work adjustment can be understood as a general adaptation to the work environment and to everything, which create it. The following factors influenced on the background of how expatriates adjusted at work.

6.1.1 Job factors

Role novelty did not seem to be essential factor in job adjustment for interviewees. Those who had been sent from Finnish organization had quite a same job in the host country than in the home country. The only main difference was that the job description was broader and they had more responsibilities.

Role conflict and clarity. Most of interviewees felt that they had clearly defined roles at work and there were no conflicts between host and home organization or between parties. Though, one interviewee told how in the beginning of her assignment her home organization expected that she would have taken a different role in the host organization than she thought was necessary. However, she had a broad decision power in her job so she was able to adjust the work role according to what she believed was needed in the host organization.

However some of the interviewees did not have clarity at job at all and it had a strong negative effect on work adjustment. The job description was not clear, which caused confusions what was demanded in job and what were the main responsibilities.

“From the side of home organization the job description was not clear at all. Sometimes it feels like survivors are just thrown here and watched how they survive.--- It has complicated working and adjusting. Because, if it was clear what are my duties, I would not have to be frustrated about what I have to do or just pretend to do something.”

Also the difficult political situation and national laws in host countries caused some conflicts and problems, because the job could not been executed in the host country the way it was planned.

Role discretion. Most of expatriates had a very high autonomy in their jobs in the host organizations. Their jobs were interactive and most of them worked with colleagues but individually they had much decision-making power and responsibility. Interviewees felt that autonomy at work was a positive factor, because they were able to do the job the way they thought was the best to reach the targets.

6.1.2 Organizational factors

Organizational culture novelty brought its own challenges, because most of the interviewees described organizational cultures of the host countries to be hierarchical and corrupted. Organizations were also bureaucratic in Southeast Asia and it was difficult sometimes to find “*a golden middle road*” between Finnish and Southeast Asian organizational cultures.

“In Finland, office culture was quite co-ordinate and there you could go to talk to the boss immediately if you wanted... But here, they are led by managers and the opinions of managers are not to be questioned, employees cannot say against managers or say no to them, manager’s word is the law and they are feared and then on the other hand when you have used to different and you want that people can say their opinions and you won’t be fired for that and you can go to talk to boss. It has caused challenges when you have tried to spread that method.”

The hierarchical order of the employees was also very important and one interviewee told that in meetings no one said anything before the oldest employee had expressed his opinion and all the others had to agree with him. Thus, it was very important to know everyone’s status, whether it was lower or higher, so the employees knew who had more authority and how everyone needed to be treated. People also tried to express their own status, whether it was lower or higher than others.

It was mentioned that the motivation and joy to work was higher in Southeast Asian organizations than in Finnish organizations. Work moral was also stated to be better and communality stronger. The way of thinking among Southeast Asian employees differed from Finnish employees in local/global mind-set. One interviewee pointed out that Southeast Asians tended to think more locally and focus on how things affected their local subsidiary rather than the whole organization.

Because most of the interviewees’ organizations were global organizations, there were also similarities in organizational cultures. Meeting practices were quite similar, working hours regular and people were motivated and did the job well. The values of the organizations were similar than in Finland. Consequently, values, visions and strategies were quite similar internationally but the national culture and local people brought own features to everyday working life.

Organizational culture was very different depending on whether there were mostly local employees or expatriates. Organizational culture was very similar to the general culture of the host country in organizations where most employees were locals. On the contrary, in the organizations where there were many expatriates, organizational culture was more Western- like.

6.1.3 Positional factors

Hierarchical level. All of the interviewees were in high positions in the host organizations. This had an effect on work adjustment because, as it was earlier mentioned, organizations in Southeast Asia are very hierarchical. Consequently, interviewees' work adjustment was different when they were in managerial position than if they were in lower positions or technical expatriates. It was not clear if the effect was negative or positive, but high hierarchical level might have made it more difficult to create close relationships with local subordinates.

6.1.4 Individual factors

Previous assignments experience. About half of the interviewees had previous international assignment experience but not from the same country as their host country was. It had a positive effect on work adjustment, because those who had experience had more varied job background in the international context and they were able to use the already learnt skills in work. However, those who did not have previous experience did not think it affected their work adjustment.

Language fluency. There is a clear difference between interviewees in how they felt towards the importance of language fluency in work adjustment. Interviewees who felt that language fluency had an effect on their work adjustment were in expert or managerial expert positions and those who did not find an effect were in managerial positions. Half of the interviewees used English at work and it was the official language of the host organization. In these cases, the lack of language fluency was not important in their jobs. Even though they did not speak the local language, it did not affect their work adjustment. Local employees spoke quite good English so there were only little misunderstandings or confusions because of the different linguistic background. However, some of these interviewees adduced the problem, when there were

negotiations and meetings with local customers. Local employees and customers spoke local language, so interviewees could not understand the course of events.

The other half of interviewees felt that language fluency or the lack of language fluency affected work adjustment, because not all local employees understood English. They had to use an interpreter at work, which caused that not all things were translated and the hue was missed. If the interviewee could speak a little bit local language and used it at work, there was a danger of misunderstandings and sometimes locals and expatriates might talk about different things.

6.1.5 Organizational socialization

In the context of work adjustment, organizational socialization appeared as understanding and accepting the way of working in the host organization's and as attaching social relationships at work. Organizational socialization was seen as a feeling about being a part of the organization and the work group. Understanding the work role and duties was also an essential part of organizational socialization. Organizational socialization process contains different factors and they are discussed next.

Training. Work related training was not common among expatriates, because only two of them had received training, which was related to duties. They had, for example, an introduction to job, IT- and management- training and some medical and security training, which were necessary at work. However, these were not found particularly useful and they did not clearly affect work adjustment. Consequently, there was only very little formal job training in host organizations, but expatriates did not feel that it would have been important in work adjustment.

There was more informal than formal training and it was considered more important. Previous expatriates in host organization gave advice and helped interviewees in adjusting to a new job. Two interviewees had six months' adjusting period during which previous expatriates supported them and helped them to get into the job and culture.

Understanding. Interviewees felt that understanding the job and organization was a long learning process and it was a little bit difficult for them to answer how it affected on adjustment. However, most interviewees thought that increased understanding had a positive effect on work adjustment. Although, since it took quite a long time before they

had enough understanding, it was a process, which went hand in hand with adjustment. Understanding the work increased step by step when expatriates started the job in the host organizations. Many of them said that it took about a year before they thought they understood enough about their new job. One said that:

“When I went there, I definitely did not have enough understanding but after being there in those work situations I learnt about culture and sensitivity...During the second year at work I started to feel like now I managed and understand and these things are going to work out. It (understanding) took a really long time maybe because it was so complex and there were hidden messages because people did not speak straight.”

However, when interviewees gained enough understanding about the job, it made work adjustment easier and created confidence at work. Someone felt that the more they understood the more enjoyable work became.

“Well, maybe it (understanding) has helped in adjustment the way that you have been able to do some things...I’ve been able to do quite a lot of that kind of system development, so I’ve been able to utilize those skills I’ve learnt and maybe in that sense it has been agreeable or even more pleasant when I’ve been able to use what I’ve learnt. Maybe that’s the point.”

It helped if local employees understood English so expatriates were able to communicate straight without an interpreter about job related issues. In some organizations top managers were Finnish or from other Western countries and expatriates in these organizations told that it was easier for them to work with other expatriates because they understood better their way of working.

There were some interviewees who thought that understanding, or the lack of it did not affect work adjustment. One interviewee also made an interesting point:

“Increased understanding had partly a positive effect but then of course when you began to understand those things and also those injustices, it brought some negative feelings when I understood those things, which I could not accept. But surely, it affected adjustment also positively. In a way it did not affect adjustment but on the other hand when you started to understand things from many sides it started to feel that they awoke anger when there was inequity and unfairness. “

She referred mostly to political and human rights issues that were a great factor in her work. When understanding about these issues increased, it was difficult to accept them.

Interviewees told that they gained understanding about job and organization mostly from other expatriates and local employees. Talking with people who had lived a long time in the host country and worked in the particular organization was considered very helpful. Also previous jobs were considered to be useful if they were similar or within the same geographical area.

Co-worker support. According to interviewees, co-worker support had a positive effect on work adjustment. Most of them received support from co-workers, both from locals and from other expatriates. Whether they got more support from locals or expatriates depended on organization and their position in it. Some organizations had many expatriates in the host country and in these cases, expatriates created groups and supported each other at work. On the other hand, in those organisations where there were only a few expatriates, interviewees received more support from locals. Some expatriates in high positions explained that relationships with local employees were more like a manager-subordinate-relationships. Naturally they received then that kind of support they requested, such as help in coordinating things at work. Local employees supported expatriates also by helping them to get familiar with organizational culture. However, many interviewees told that local workers answered questions when they were asked but otherwise they did not advice expatriates in work related issues. Locals were very helpful in practical issues, such as in housing and how to live in the local city.

When interviewees started working in the host organizations, there were still previous expatriates who they were supposed to replace. These previous expatriates helped interviewees to get familiar with the new job and organization. They had meetings together and previous expatriates helped in paperwork and interpretation. This support was considered to be very important in work adjustment. Some also mentioned how it was very good to have advice from the point of view of the same nationality. Some interviewees continued that it was nice not to need to learn everything by trial.

Future prospects. Future prospects seemed to be a little bit confusing question for interviewees. When asking about it, most of the interviewees said that they never thought about it. There were also some contradictions between answers because some interviewees said that future prospects did not affect their adjustment, but in other answers it came up that future prospects affected their adjustment process. For example,

one interviewee said that future prospects did not affect his job adjustment. However, he mentioned many times how it increased work motivation that the assignment was only for a short period. He explained:

“I could quickly imagine that when you go to that kind of short time assignment and you know you don’t have future there, you wouldn’t make so much effort for the job, but people were very motivated there. Well... Especially in that limited time they wanted to achieve a lot and that way usually... There were a lot of projects that we led and the continuity and development of your own project seemed to be an important thing and we wanted that they will continue also afterwards.”

Thus, it had a positive effect on work adjustment that future prospects were not in the host organization and the interviewee knew the shortness of the assignment beforehand.

6.1.6. The effects of culture from the perspective of work adjustment

The culture of the host country influenced very much the work adjustment of the interviewees, because the national culture had an effect on organizational culture, even in multinational companies. Local workers worked and behaved according to their cultural habits and values, which brought both positive and negative effects on work adjustment.

All interviewees described Southeast Asian people to be very friendly, helpful, positive and relaxed. Many of them emphasized that locals were wonderful people and they were the best thing in their assignment. One interviewee described:

“I’ve always said that people are the best thing in Indonesia, people are just lovely there.” One continues that *“even though people are poor, they are still very hospitable”*.

The whole atmosphere in Southeast Asia was explained to be relaxed, genuine and traditional, which was caused mostly by people. There was also a “never mind”-attitude. Interviewees explained that Southeast Asians believed that things go as they are supposed to and there is nothing to do about that. Strong religions (Buddhism, Islam, Animism) and the natural catastrophic nature of countries were said to be factors influencing this attitude. One interviewee described how this affected people’s values.

” What ever happens, people just go forward. There (in Indonesia) people did not keep on grieving and worrying as people keep on chewing the cud in Finland”.

The belief in supernatural and superstition were seen also in many other ways in everyday life. Rules and beliefs of religions affected people’s behaviour, habits, holidays and everything they did.

People were very polite and discreet, but they also expected that from others. Interviewees told that it was important to smile and they were not allowed to get mad. Loss of face was a really feared thing and it was a very serious issue in Southeast Asia. It affected much the way people behaved and communicated with others. Thus it had an effect on adjustment.

The political environment in Laos is challenging and it caused some difficulties for interviewees who worked in Laos and moderated their adjustment. There was only one legitimate political party, communistic party, which was why there was no democracy in Laos. Government was very hierarchical and interviewees told that working and trying to proceed in projects was very difficult and slow, because of government policies. One interviewee proposed that the government controls and suspects especially foreign workers and they were trying to keep locals uneducated. Another said:

“There (in Laos) was that party and the guys of government, who ruled everything and the voice of small people, different people and especially weaker people was not heard and their interest was not always pursued”.

One factor, which caused conflicts and difficulties for almost all interviewees, was that things did not happen when they were promised and everything was done very slowly. The way for Finnish and Southeast Asians to consider time is very different. Interviewees told that the general mentality in cultures was that there was no need to hurry. They told that it might take months even before small steps were taken in projects, work or juridical issues. Interviewees also added that usually things won’t happen when they are promised to be done but they have to be asked many times before something happens. One interviewee describes how time was called “rubber time” because as rubber, time was also flexible, not strict. She continued:

“It was acceptable that everyone is always late because there is a rubber- time and local laugh that there are so many rubber trees.”

6.2 Interaction adjustment

Interaction adjustment refers to the interaction with host nationals and also with other expatriates. With interviewees, it appeared as satisfactory social relationships and as a feeling that they can communicate with locals. Interaction adjustment was quite challenging, because cultural distance between Finland and Southeast Asia is very wide and thus people’s values and habits differ a lot. Interviewees needed to learn to understand the way locals think and behave in order to adjust in interaction. Naturally, interacting with other expatriates was also an essential part of interaction adjustment since many interviewees spent most of their time with expatriates instead spending their time with locals. Most of the expatriates were from Western countries, therefore communicating with them was easier than with locals, since the interaction culture was quite similar among expatriates. Consequently, interviewees’ interaction adjustment happened and appeared in different ways depending on whether they spent their time with locals or with other expatriates. There are many factors that influence expatriates’ interaction adjustment and they are discussed below.

6.2.1 Positional factors

Hierarchical level. Interviewees who were working as experts or as managerial experts needed to interact with people from different hierarchical levels than managerial expatriates. They were working more with customer interface and local workers who were also in lower positions. Thus, hierarchical level had an effect on with whom the expatriates worked with and consequently it affected their interaction adjustment.

6.2.2 Individual factors

Achievement self-efficacy and Social efficacy. It was clear how much expatriates’ attitude affected their interaction adjustment. Social skills were important in creating new relationships and communication with both locals and other expatriates. One interviewee described how she felt about interacting with locals.

Well, I'm normally that kind of person that I don't want to say I'm right and, how terrible, how you do everything this way but when I come to the new culture I try to proceed with silk gloves because I'm on their land. I think that I'm the one who has come as an outsider and I have to be the one who can listen, follow and ask, how these people behave, so I come as a listener and learner, I don't come from up to bottom. I won't come to say how things should be done, but I think that they have the potentiality and I try to help them to find it. Maybe I'm listener and follower when considering the culture and there is no wrong or right culture. We can learn from all cultures, because there are both good and bad sides in every culture.

Previous international assignment experience. Previous international assignment experience affected positively interaction adjustment because according to interviewees it seemed to have an effect on their attitudes towards local people's customs and the way of thinking. One interviewee pointed out that previous international experience had taught her that there are so many different ways to think and act and there is no reason why Finnish (or other Western people) would know how to do things better. She emphasized:

"People are experts of their own things and we just go there to bring some different viewpoint, but we don't know their issues better than they themselves do."

Another interviewee explained that previous experience helped to see the culture and people as an insider, not as an outsider. She continued that it helped to understand better why local people behave the way they do. In a confusing situation she could see that people were acting according to their culture. She mentioned a good example, which demonstrates this idea:

"Once when I had come back from Finland there was a girl who said that you are so fat and ugly. Or then salesman, when you go to a shop, laughs and spread hands and says, oh, you look so old! --- But these people didn't offend me... I see that this culture produces that sort of behaviour."

About half of the interviewees had previous international assignment experience and they thought it helped the adjustment process. Even if they did not have experience from the particular area, it was useful that they had lived in some foreign country before. Mostly it affected on attitudes and gave knowledge about how to live in a foreign culture. They explained that experience helped them to see that there were many

very different ways to think and there was no right or wrong way of thinking. Thus, previous international assignment experience developed skills to adjust, which was more important than experience to adjust just in a particular culture.

Language fluency. According to the interviewees, language fluency had an effect on interaction adjustment. Most of the interviewees who did not speak local language well or not at all, felt that it affected negatively their interaction adjustment. Interviewees described that if they had spoken the local language, people would have accepted them differently. Those interviewees who could speak local language felt that it made them to feel safer, because they could not be so easily cheated. Everyday life was also much easier when they were able to interact with locals. People were also very delighted when expatriates spoke local language and locals treated them with even friendlier manners and more warmly than before they spoke the local language.

However, all expatriates who did not speak local language well did not think it affected much their interaction adjustment. Some casual things might have been more difficult, but most people with whom they spent time or worked spoke English, so they did not feel necessary to learn local language.

6.2.3 Organizational socialization

From the point of view of interaction adjustment, organizational socialization was seen as socializing into a work group and into the whole society. Expatriates became a part of the group, bounded social connections at work and outside the work. They became to understand the rules and habits of their groups and they accepted, at least to some degree, the group's values and way of thinking. Even if they did not accept everything, they learned to live with them and respect these different habits and values. The different parts of organizational socialization process that have an effect on interaction adjustment are presented below.

Training. More than half of the interviewees went to language school or they had an own teacher, and most of them arranged it by themselves. It was considered to be very important training mode for expatriates, especially in interaction adjustment. Besides language studies, interviewees also got cultural training in language schools. Many of them emphasized how language and culture are strongly connected to each other, so when they studied the language, they also studied cultural issues. Those interviewees

who attended a language school felt that it was not so serious that the organization did not arrange cultural training. However, those who did not have language studies felt the lack of cultural training more negatively. Many interviewees mentioned that they wished they had had more language training because it affected on interacting with locals and understanding the culture. One said:

“I’m sure it affected (adjustment) that I didn’t really get into the language. There were some colleagues in the capital who had real language courses where they had own programs. When you look it that way, it would have been nice to know language as well as they. It really bugs me as it would have been good to have more training on it.”

Understanding. Understanding related to interaction seemed to be the most challenging thing to gain. In interaction adjustment understanding varied a lot depending on whether interviewees were more with locals or with other expatriates. Those who worked and spent spare time more with other western expatriates mainly felt that they had enough understanding because habits and language were common. On the other hand, those who were more with locals had more difficult interaction adjustment, because understanding language, habits and customs was more challenging. Many interviewees thought that it is never possible to understand enough about people and culture. One interviewee described:

“What my Norwegian colleague said was, in my opinion, an excellent observation there, and in a way it was also in the firm that when you think you understand something about these people and their way of thinking, then you realize again how wrong you were and again you understand nothing. But on the other hand, that also kept things interesting that there were constantly these kind of situations at work and outside of work that you note again that I did not understand at all what this was about. But then again it keeps you lively all the time and you won’t get the feeling that this was seen and experienced already, because there always came then some surprising turns.”

The fact that it was not possible to understand enough was seen as a positive thing and as a salt in assignment. Therefore, not having enough understanding had also a positive effect on adjustment.

Expatriates learnt about interaction mostly by talking with locals or expatriates who had been longer time in the country. Interviewees also observed others’ behaviour and that way understood more about how they are supposed to behave and communicate.

Interviewees felt that it was very important to talk and learn from foreigners who already knew the host culture, because then they heard the aspect from two different cultures. Expatriates who had lived longer in the host country understood local culture from the point of view of similar culture to the interviewees.

Co-worker support. Co-worker support had a positive effect on how interviewees adjusted in interaction. Colleagues, both locals and expatriates introduced interviewees to the communication and interaction culture of the host country. They explained the habits and details of appropriate behaviour. Religions are very strong and traditional habits highly respected in Southeast Asia, so interviewees felt it was very important to get instructions on how to behave in the host country. This kind of co-worker support was considered to be essential in interaction adjustment.

Co-workers became friends, so they were a very fundamental part of interviewees' social life. Co-worker support contributed expatriates' social life and these relationships with expatriates and locals were very important. They spent time together and had different activities, such as went out for a dinner or arranged house-warming parties. One interviewee went to the host country alone and it was very unusual for those people that a woman goes and moves somewhere alone, but they treated her as their "own".

"Yes, I definitely got support from others, and they also in some way got a special experience, when I went there alone. I didn't have my own family with me but that group at work became a family for me and we created strong friendships that still last."

After getting familiarized with the host culture interviewees were able to support other expatriates, who came after them to host country. This was considered also important and encouraging to be able to help the others.

Future prospects. Future prospects affected interaction adjustment, since the motivation to learn language and culture was dependent on the length of assignment. Those interviewees who had a long assignment or did not know how many years they will be in the host country, had an attitude that they came to host country to live, even "*for good*". Most of them told that living for a long time in a country and working in an organization increased their motivation to study local language and motivation to learn to communicate with locals. One interviewee described that:

“The fact that we had moved for a long time affected our motivation to learn. Yes, we had a very high motivation to learn the language and culture because we thought we are probably going to be there for the rest of our lives.”

However, some also said that because they were going to be for a long time in a country, it decreased the motivation to learn the language fast. The reason for this was that they thought they would have time for studies later during their assignment and they did not have to hurry.

6.2.4 Culture from the perspective of interaction adjustment

Culture had a strong effect on interviewees' interaction adjustment, because people's behaviour and communication habits were bounded to their culture. Consequently, interviewees felt that the host country culture affected their interaction both at work and at spare time. There were several aspects of the culture from the interaction point of view that had either positive or negative effect on expatriates' interaction adjustment.

Interviewees described that in Southeast Asia people had to be very careful not to hurt others feelings or embarrass others. The loss of face was a very serious issue, and it was challenging for some expatriates to learn how to live according to the rules in order avoid the loss of face. One interviewee told what happened when local employees were hurt:

“It was also challenging not to hurt anyone so you had to think continuously what to say and so on. Some expatriates have got a lifetime long hatred against them from locals and they (locals) don't want to talk or cooperate anymore at all with those expatriates. The loss of face is such a big thing. Nothing like that ever happened to me-- - but these things are huge and you have to be very sensitive.”

Another interviewee confirmed this and told that locals will not forgive and if someone has hurt another, it will be that way forever. He also told how an expatriate had criticized the work of a local employee and this employee felt that he had lost his face and he quitted his job because of it. One interviewee added that if there is a conflict, the one who is guilty is always a third person, so those who are having a conflict will not lose their face. Accordingly, the loss of face was a very serious and challenging issue which most of the interviewees considered to affect their adjustment.

It was also difficult to know if people meant “no” or “yes”, because “yes” might mean either “no” or “yes”. Locals will not disagree especially not with foreigners, so it was hard to know if they agreed or not. An interviewee told how locals taught her:

“That person is stupid who says things directly, because you are supposed to mince words in order not to hurt anybody’s feelings.”

Main reason for this was the fear of losing own or someone else’s face. This was also related to the hierarchical system, which was the reason why people in lower level or younger people could not disagree with people of higher hierarchical level or with older people. One interviewee described that within the company the managers were not to be questioned and their word was the law. This brought difficulties for interviewees and they felt that it had a great effect on their international adjustment. They had to learn to read whether “yes” meant “no” or “yes”. In some cases they believed that everything was well and everyone agreed with what to do but after a few weeks or months, they wondered why nothing had happened about what they had agreed earlier. The reason was that local employees had not agreed but they could not say no.

Most of the interviewees found that cultures were very hierarchical and there appeared corruption continuously. It was important to show your hierarchical position, whether it was lower or higher. The whole society was built according to hierarchy and it seemed to create clarity in social interaction. Some manager expatriates tried to create organizational culture in their work place, which respected both Southeast Asian and Western cultures. It was challenging because of the hierarchical system of the local culture, but expatriates did not want to have such strict hierarchies among employees and managers.

The hierarchical system slowed different processes in expatriates’ work and personal life. It was confusing, who had the decision making power in different offices and government, because the person in higher position did not necessarily have more decision making power. Corruption was a part of the daily life of the interviewees and they were also suggested to pay “under table -money” to get services faster. Consequently, it was a moderating factor in work, interaction and general adjustment.

A big difference was also that interviewees’ host countries were much more collectivistic than Finland. Community was important and families were large. One

interviewee described how people are the most important thing and how other things can wait.

Several interviewees mentioned that it was very important how things look from outside but not as important how they looked from inside. They meant that it was very important to be good-looking, have a nice house and have a life that looks good for other people. People's homes had to look beautiful outside but inside they might have been very moderate. One interviewee also told how domestic violence was common, and it happened in families, which looked perfectly good and happy to outsiders. One interviewee explained the importance of appearance by an example:

“There was a young woman employee in our office. She moved to Finland and married a 60 years old man and she said that she would never have got married in Laos because she was ugly. For her it was ok to marry a man who was 30 years older than her.”

6.3 General adjustment

General adjustment includes, for example, the adjustment to the general culture, habits, food and weather of the host country. For interviewees it appeared as happiness and contentment to live in the particular country. There were many challenges in general adjustment, because geographical situation and culture of Southeast Asia are very different compared to Finland. Expatriates needed to be able to live in a very hot and humid temperature and to learn how to live in a culture, which is almost the opposite of the home culture. Everything starting from clothing, was different and it was an important part of general adjustment to learn those little, special details of the culture. Naturally cuisine, eating habits and even hygiene were also very different in host countries, and getting used to those was a part of general adjustment. There are several factors influencing general adjustment from organizational, individual, non- work and organizational socialization perspective and they are presented next.

6.3.1 Organizational factors

Logistical support was found to be important but still quite limited among interviewees. Most of the participants received help in housing and it was considered to be helpful in adjustment process. Healthcare and children's schools were arranged by organizations

in most of the cases. About half of the organizations had officially arranged logistical support and it was part of the new expatriates' familiarization. However, the other half of the organizations did not have official logistical support but previous expatriates and colleagues helped to find apartments. They gave advice also in other practical issues. Both official and unofficial logistical support were considered being very helpful and important. One interviewee described how his new colleagues were extremely helpful in everything she needed but the home company who sent her

“---did not know how to do anything. They didn't train me or tell or do anything else than pay flight tickets. These colleagues in Indonesia, these Norwegians gave the information I needed.

There were two interviewees who did not receive any kind of logistical support neither from home or host organization. They arranged everything by themselves: work permit, apartment, language school and healthcare. They both thought that it was extremely challenging and exhausting. However, they also believed that they got faster into the local society, because they had to do everything alone in a new country and try to find out how they were supposed to live there. Thus, the lack of support was both negative and positive factor in general adjustment.

6.3.2 Individual factors

Achievement Self-efficacy and Social efficacy. It came up in the interviews that expatriate's attitude is very essential in adjustment. The way they considered themselves and the others affected strongly how they adjusted in a new environment. Most of the interviewees seemed to have quite a high self-efficacy but even so they were able to adjust to the demands of the host culture. It was important that they could be themselves but still live in another culture. One interviewee explained the importance of being able to adjust and change also your own behaviour:

“My wife said that it is better that you change yourself than try to change the nation of 84 million people. When I learnt that, everything was easier.”

It was mentioned in the interviews that an open attitude towards local people, culture and habits made adjustment easier and interviewees got deeper into the local culture. Some of them emphasized that there was no wrong or right culture or habits, but they

were just different. This kind of attitude made them to be more receptive and less critical, which broadened adjustment. Naturally interviewees faced many unpleasant and unacceptable things in the host country but they did not neglect the whole culture and people because of it. They were able to see also the positive side of the country.

Previous assignments experience. Previous international assignment experience had a positive effect on general adjustment. Those who had previous experience about working abroad found it very useful in adjustment process. Someone felt that it helped also when they faced culture shock. They had experienced that process already several times so they knew what to expect and it was easier to go through. Experience in the same geographical/cultural area was also considered to be helpful because the area/culture were already familiar. However, those who did not have previous international assignment experience did not think it affected their general adjustment. Their open and positive attitude replaced the lack of experience and made adjustment easier. Consequently, those who had experience thought it made adjustment easier but those who did not have experience did not find it relevant.

Language fluency. In the interviews, language fluency emerged to be the key point to understand the culture. Some of the interviewees emphasized that understanding the language is one way to understanding the culture. One of them describes the importance of language in a nutshell:

“If you don’t know the language, you don’t know the culture”.

Most of the interviewees felt that if they had known the language better, they would have got into the culture, habits and society faster and easier. Some interviewees pointed out that it was tiring not to be able to speak the local language and to learn it slowly.

6.3.3 Non-work factors

Culture shock. Interviewees were all familiar with culture shock as a phenomenon but they did not all experience it by themselves. A couple of interviewees told how they had heard from other expatriates and from training that culture shock hits usually after three months. However, they did not experience this but the adjustment went smoothly. Most of the interviewees did not feel that they went through culture shock. One reason for

this was that they were well prepared for that and were surprised that it was not as hard as they had expected. They felt that people were so welcoming and open that it was easy to adjust. Someone explained that she did not have any expectations and only a little information about the host country, so she was ready for anything.

Some interviewees felt that they went through a culture shock. Influencing factors were, for example, weather, statutes, surprising habits and living conditions. One interviewee, who had very much previous international experience, explained how he faced culture shock and how previous experience helped in that.

“I’m sure I experienced culture shock at some point, I can’t say exactly at which point, but I’m sure that I’ve gone through all the stages and I’m not at the end point yet, not sure if I’m totally adjusted yet. We don’t miss back to Finland--- there are many steps in culture shock and one is that you hide under the flag of Finland and it is everything. We don’t have that, we haven’t missed Finland that way.--- Previous international experience has been absolutely useful, for example these first stages of culture shock, you could already prepare and maybe some of them are gone by faster when you have experienced them already elsewhere. And also that we have been here in Asia in other places and they are pretty same kind of cultures and same characters than in Laos.”

Spouse adjustment. Most interviewees had spouses with them on assignment and most of their spouses were also working. They enjoyed living in the host countries as well as their spouses. Those spouses who did not work had also very good privileges, such as servants, nice houses and pools. They also had active social life especially with other expatriates’ spouses who did not work. It was extremely important for interviewees that their spouses and children liked to live in the host country and everything was well with them. Some of the interviewees told how they wanted to stay on the assignment as long as children were happy with that and their whole family was well.

6.3.4. Organizational socialization

In the context of general adjustment, organizational socialization appeared as from being an outsider to be an insider of the culture. It was seen as increased understanding about the culture, habits and traditions and being able to live within that particular culture. Cultural training was/would have been very important for expatriates in order to gain understanding about the particular culture. Co-worker support was also an essential

part of organizational socialization since co-workers helped expatriates to settle down and to learn how to live in the host country. Future prospects affected also organizational socialization and furthermore general adjustment. The longer the interviewees stayed in the host country the more they wanted to learn about the national culture. These parts of organizational socialization that affected general adjustment are discussed below more specifically.

Training. Only a few interviewees received cultural training in the host country and most of them felt that it would have been necessary. A couple of interviewees had cultural training in the form of lectures, guidebooks, info baggage and DVDs. These were useful in general adjustment and introduced well to cultural issues.

Interviewees felt the lack of cultural training differently, but it was common that it could have been useful to at least some degree. One interviewee who felt that he would have needed training about the culture and habits explained the policy of the organization:

“The method was more like that expatriates are just thrown into the lake and watched whether they swim or drown.”

The most needed training was about practical issues and habits, because they were very important in coping with situations everyday life. Some interviewees felt that the lack of cultural training made adjustment harder but it also made them to try harder and that way made adjustment deeper and faster. One emphasized:

“I just had to cope, I had to survive. It was maybe also the reason that we really got into the society.”

Some of them also wanted to learn cultural issues and habits by themselves. Consequently, they did not even want to have cultural training.

“We didn’t have training and it was ok for me, I didn’t even want any other training. Our schedule was so tight that they even couldn’t arrange training but neither did I want any, so it was ok for me to go there as a novice. I like more to find out by myself and find the channels so maybe it’s my habit. I trust it more than if someone would just tell....”

They also added that learning by mistakes made adjustment faster.

Understanding. Understanding the culture was an important factor, which affected the whole adjustment process. One interviewee said that:

” I think the more you understand, hear and see, the better you adjust. And then you can find your place better in this foreign culture. If my expectations are according to the Finnish culture, if I expect that people say what they mean, come in time, prepare things beforehand, I just live in disappointments. If I had expected people to behave as the Finnish do I would have had a burn out immediately. But if you learn not to expect it and realize that you don't live in Finland, you begin to realize the rules of this culture and respect them”

Interviewees thought it was time- consuming and challenging to learn about the culture. Most of them thought that it was impossible to understand everything, but gradually you could understand enough. Someone felt that he did not have enough understanding and it affected negatively on adjustment process.

Interviewees told that increased understanding about culture brought the feeling of security and consequently advanced general adjustment. One also explained that understanding decreased stress and brought certainty in behaviour.

The most important resource to gain understanding about national culture was people, both locals and other expatriates. All interviewees agreed that they learned by talking with foreigners who had lived a longer time in the host country and with locals. Some interviewees read some books and articles about the country. Especially useful written resource was guidebooks written by foreigners who had lived a long time in the host country.

Co-worker support. Co-worker support affected positively on general adjustment because it helped expatriates to settle down in the host country. Many interviewees told that co-workers helped them to find housing and showed what to find and where in town. Previous expatriates also introduced interviewees to their contacts, such as language teachers. This was considered to be very important.

There were two interviewees who felt they received only very little co-worker support. They were the first foreigners working in the host organization and everything was quite

unstructured. Locals were helpful and welcoming but did not have experience about how to arrange things with foreign workers. Other interviewee said:

“I have to say that we had to clear the road and move every stone away. Learning the hard way. It was quite a hard road to go.”

Even though these interviewees had difficulties because of the lack of the co-worker support they saw it as a positive thing because it made them to try harder to adjust.

Future prospects. Future prospects affected general adjustment because those interviewees who stayed for a longer time in the host country wanted to learn more about culture. Those who stayed or were intended to stay for a long time in the host country described that it made adjustment easier, because they were more willing to learn about culture and habits. It affected especially daily life because they wanted to learn how to live in the particular country.

6.3.5 Culture from the perspective of general adjustment

The culture of the host country naturally affected expatriates' general adjustment. There were both positive and negative sides of the culture and of the countries, which were influencing factors in general adjustment process. Interviewees thought that positive factors were cuisine, beautiful nature and weather. On the other hand, traffic jams and dirtiness were considered to be negative factors in general adjustment.

When asking about similarities between Finland and Southeast Asia, most of interviewees did not find any similarities. One emphasized:

“That culture there is so different that from our perspective everything is done in the opposite way. Everything is done exactly the way we wouldn't be doing in Finland so it is very difficult to find similarities.”

However, one interviewee found some similarities between Finland and Indonesia after thinking carefully.

“The history of the countries is little bit the same in some way, because both of us have been under the power of other states and it has created certain kind of mentality on

people and it kind of connects... And that no one has felt Finns as any kind of threat, when on the other hand they treat the Dutch differently.”

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to study international adjustment process and how organizational socialization affects the adjustment. The context of the study was Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia, so the results are bounded to the special characters of these cultures. The research question concentrates on how organizational socialization influence Finnish expatriates adjustment in Southeast Asia. It was found that organizational socialization influences Finnish expatriates' adjustment in Southeast Asia. If the factors of organizational socialization - training, co-worker support, understanding and future prospects- were fulfilled, the influence was positive. However, if they were lacking, organizational socialization could have had a negative effect on adjustment. Especially the lack of co-worker support, cultural understanding or language training made adjustment harder. Furthermore, organizational socialization was different in the international context than in domestic settings due to cultural differences and to the special characters of expatriates' assignments. Understanding of the national culture and the importance of culture and language training were emphasized in cross-cultural settings.

It was also studied which factors have an effect on Finnish expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in Southeast Asia. It was found out that adjustment consisted the factors Black et al (1991) and Shaffer et al (1999) included in their model of international adjustment; job factors, individual factors, organizational factors, non-work factors and positional factors. However, special characters of Southeast Asian culture affected the emphasis of these influencing factors. Besides of national culture, especially individual factors and organizational factors were important predictors in having a successful adjustment.

In this section, the findings are mostly compared to Black's et al (1991) research about international adjustment and to Taormina's (1997) study about organizational socialization. Besides these, some new, relevant research is also used as a comparison to findings.

7.1 Job factors

Job factors affected interviewee's job performance in either positive or negative way. According to the interviews it seemed that if interviewees did not have problems or

conflicts in the issues asked, they did not think that they had an effect on adjustment. In these situations factors did not have any effect or they had a positive effect, which came up in other answers than when asking directly about particular issues.

Role novelty was not found to be a diminishing factor in international adjustment as it was found in Black et al's (1991) study. However, interviewees did not have high role novelty, so findings could have been different if the role novelty was higher. However, participants did not think that role novelty, or in this case role similarity, had a positive or negative effect. Most of the interviewees did not have *role conflict* at work, so it did not affect the work adjustment. One interviewee who felt conflict between the requested role and the role, which was actually needed at work, did not have problem with that contradiction. She believed that it was better to carry out the work role that she thought was the best in the host organization. Accordingly, findings about role novelty and conflict did not entirely support Black et al's (1991) findings. It came up that in many cases the home organizations did not always know, which were the best ways to act in the host organizations. In these situations interviewees needed to believe in their own and locals' judgement. According to Black et al (1991) *role clarity* has a positive effect on adjustment and consequently the lack of it has a negative effect, as it was also found in this study. The lack of role clarity increased uncertainty and created confusion at job, which made the adjustment more difficult. Shaffer's et al (1999) suggestion that multinational firms should invest in more clearly defined jobs and greater decision-making authority for expatriates was confirmed in this study. Decision making power and autonomy were considered to be very positive factors in adjustment, because interviewees had more knowledge on how they are supposed to do the work in the host country than the home organization had.

7.2 Organizational factors

As Andreason (2003) proposes, *organizational cultural novelty* was found to have an influence mainly on work adjustment and logistical support on general adjustment. Organizational culture novelty was quite high in interviewees' host organizations compared to home organizations. Organizational cultures were very hierarchical and bureaucratic, which caused that work adjustment was challenging. National cultures in Southeast Asia are hierarchical and bureaucratic, so it is natural that organizational cultures are defined by the nature of national cultures. Findings support Black's et al

(1991) claim that organizational culture novelty causes more challenging work adjustment. They also support Shaffer's et al (1999) statement that it has been difficult for expatriates to define whether challenges are caused by organizational culture or by national culture. Furthermore, since organizations, even global organizations, are impacted by local culture and by the values of local employees, it is very difficult to separate the influence of national and organizational culture within organization.

Organizational logistical support reduces uncertainty in a new environment and thus facilitates interaction and general adjustment (Black et al 1991). Expatriates who received help in housing, finding schools and healthcare felt that it made their adjustment easier. However, only a few interviewees received organized logistical help but most of them received unofficial help from their co-workers. Colleagues helped them to find houses and showed how to survive in a new city. This support, whether it was organized or not, was very important for expatriates. Those expatriates who did not get any logistical help were very stressed and tired about all the work they had to do to find a place to live and about other practical issues.

7.3 Positional factors

Shaffer et al (1999) proposed that positional factors- hierarchical level, functional area and assignment vector- would have an effect on expatriates' adjustment. Since Southeast Asian cultures and organizational cultures are affected by strong hierarchical system, hierarchical level influenced interviewees work adjustment the most out of these positional factors. Because expatriates were in management positions, they had higher hierarchical level than many local employees. Consequently, hierarchical level seemed to affect mostly communication and social relationships with local employees. Shaffer et al (1999) suggest that hierarchical level would be a moderating factor in cross-cultural adjustment. In this research, hierarchical level affected work and interaction adjustment, but it was not clear whether the influence was negative or positive. It depended on how expatriates felt about the hierarchy at work, whether it was negative, positive or neutral for them.

Shaffer's et al (1999) claim that hierarchical level is related to previous assignment experience in its influence to work adjustment. They suggest that previous assignment experience enhances middle-level managers' work adjustment but moderate upper-level managers' work adjustment. However, findings in this study did not support this

statement, because all interviewees who had previous assignment experience felt it as a positive factor, even upper-level managers.

7.4 Individual factors

There are some contradictory findings compared to Black's et al (1991) study about how *self-efficacy* influences on the adjustment. Even though some interviewees clearly had a high self-efficacy, they were still willing to change their own behaviour first rather than the environment. They were eager to learn, get feedback and change or maintain their behaviour in order to adjust better in the new environment. Black et al (1991) propose that people with strong self-efficacy are these kinds of persons who have an edge to learn and maintain new behavioural patterns, which facilitate adjustment. However, they continue that expatriates with a strong self-efficacy would rather change environment than themselves, but interviewees in this study behaved quite the contrary.

Relational and perceptual skills are crucially important facilitator factors in work, interaction and general adjustment. Expatriates with good relational skills interact better with locals, they receive more information about what is expected from them and understand better what is appropriate behaviour in particular culture and organization (Black et al. 1991; Mendenhall and Oddou 1985, Andreason 2004). These skills were highlighted indirectly in all interviews. An open and positive attitude and good relational skills seemed to be one of the main character factors to have a successful assignment. Other researchers have found similar findings. Strubler et al (2011) propose that emotional maturity may be the major factor in defining whether expatriates will complete long-term assignments, especially when cultural differences are great. Emotional maturity can be defined as "an array of capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to cope with environmental demands" (Tan, Hartel, Panipucci and Strybosch 2005).

Previous international assignment experience had a positive effect on work adjustment but those who did not have experience did not find it to be a moderating factor. Still, it had only a slight effect on work adjustment. Those who had experience were able to use the already learnt skills at work, which made adjustment easier. However, previous international assignment experience had a stronger effect on interaction and general

adjustment than on work adjustment. Bell and Harrison (1996) argue that the learning process of a different culture is more important than knowledge about particular culture. Selmer (2002) also suggest that if expatriates have already been able to train their relocation skills it decreases uncertainty and facilitates adjustment. In this study, these arguments came up to be the most important effects of previous assignment experience. Experience had changed expatriates' attitudes toward foreign cultures and made them more open-minded. It also helped in preventing culture shock because expatriates were already familiar with the steps of the culture shock and they were prepared for them. Church (1982) and Shaffer et al (1999) explain that experienced expatriates rely more on local workers and inexperienced needs more home office support. Though, in this study, expatriates' personality was more important than previous assignment experience in whether they relied more on locals or home organization. It was not as important whether they had experience or not, than their behaviour with locals and how comfortable they felt in the host culture.

Language fluency had a different meaning for interviewees depending on how much they worked and communicated with locals. In work adjustment, the lack of language fluency was a moderating factor for interviewees who worked mostly with local employees. Consequently, good skills in the local language were a key element in successful work adjustment for those whose work language was the local language. This depended on the functional area of expatriates, as Shaffer et al (1999) also propose. Yet there was no support for Shaffer's et al (1999) argument that language fluency might increase role conflicts. On the contrary, language fluency decreased role conflicts because interviewees were able to communicate better with locals and understand the demands. The lack of language fluency caused the need to use interpreters, which caused tones and the exact message of discussion to disappear. Consequently, the more expatriates work with local employees, the more they should get language training (Andreason 2003). Nicholson and Imaizumi (1993) and Victor (1997) suggest that language fluency increases expatriates communication and perceptual skills. Therefore the lack of language fluency may be the major barrier in interaction adjustment as well as in work adjustment, which came up also in the interviews.

Language fluency was considered to be a very crucial point in understanding the culture and people. Studying the language was one of the best ways to learn to live in the host country. Also Peltokorpi (2008) suggest that positive general adjustment is directly related to expatriate language ability. Even if interviewees did not necessarily need to use local language at work, they needed it in normal, everyday life. However, this

depended also on how much time the interviewees spent with locals or with other expatriates. Those who spent most of their time with other foreigners did not think the language fluency was such an essential factor in adjustment process. They admitted that it would have helped them, but they survived well by just knowing few sentences in local language. Those expatriates, who had many local friends and wanted to live in quite a local way, thought the language fluency was extremely important in adjusting to the host country. It helped to understand the culture and to create deeper relationships with locals. It also created trust and respect among local people.

7.5 Non-work factors

Culture novelty is covered under the “Culture”- heading but the effects of a *culture shock* are represented here. Culture shock as a phenomenon refers to expatriates’ reactions to a new, unpredictable and uncertain environment (Black et al 1991). High culture novelty affects experiencing this phenomenon (Shaffer et al 1999), so it could be predicted that Finnish expatriates would face a strong culture shock in Southeast Asia due to high culture novelty. However, this was not the case with interviewees. Some of them faced culture shock to some degree, but not all of them. For some of them the high culture novelty might have even been a facilitating factor for a culture shock because they were very well prepared for a shock since they were expecting it to come. Thus, a high culture novelty might have an opposite influence than what is proposed in many studies. Many of the expatriates told that even they did not go through a culture shock or it was only a mild when they started to live in the host country, they faced it when they moved back to Finland. Consequently, the reverse culture shock was much worse for them than a culture shock in the host country. This might have been the case because they did not expect to face such a shock when moving back to home country so they were not so well prepared. Expatriates thought that there were also many cultural issues, such as people were much friendlier and the weather nicer in their host countries, so the change felt harder, when they came back to Finland.

Spouse adjustment. Spouse and family adjustment was an important factor in expatriates’ general adjustment, as Shaffer et al (1999) also suggest. Expatriates naturally wanted that their whole family enjoyed living in the host country, which affected their personal life and consequently the general adjustment. If spouses had an active social life and things to do, it did not matter so much whether they were also

working or not. It is probable that working spouses adjusted easier, but the most important thing was that they had an active life. If spouses and family had not adjusted well, it would have been clearly a problem and a cause to the moderating effect for expatriates' adjustment. It could have been even the reason to premature return to home.

7.6 Organizational socialization

According to Kammeyer, Ritzer and Yetman (1990) socialization is “a process by which a person learns and generally accepts the established ways of a particular social group or society”. In this thesis the particular group or society is both the host organization and the society of the host country. Since socialization is recognized also in interaction and general adjustment in this thesis, it is meant to identify that organizational socialization element can appear also in the context of the wider society, not just within the organization. Taormina (1997) describes organizational socialization as “the process, by which a person secures relevant job skills, acquires a functional level of organizational understanding, attains supportive social interactions with co-workers and generally accepts the established ways of particular organization”. Even though, this study basically concentrates on organizational socialization in organization, the importance of socialization for the whole society is so essential in the adjustment process, that it cannot be overruled. Thus the elements of organizational socialization are discussed also in general and interaction adjustment parts, since it arose in interviews.

7.6.1 Training

In the context of organizational socialization, training means an act, process or method by which one acquires any type of functional skill or ability that is required to perform a specific job (Taormina 1997, Van Maanen 1976, Wanous 1980). In this thesis training is considered to include also training for living in the host country and for interacting with locals. According to interviewees, in the beginning of the assignment training was more intensive but it continued through the whole assignment to some degree. Since only a few interviewees had a formal training, most of the training came from co-workers as an informal training.

Taormina (1997) suggests that training continues as long as an employee works in the particular organization. On the contrary, many researchers (Buchana 1974, Schein 1978, and Feldman 1981) have found that training would occur only on one or several stages during socialization process but not as a continuing process. However, findings of this thesis support more Taormina's (1997) claim about continuous training, because interviewees were learning continuously new skills. Those who had formal training, had it mostly in the beginning of the assignment but some of them also also a once a year training period/days. On the other hand, informal training and for example language training seemed to continue throughout the assignment. Besides skills straight related to job, expatriates were trained in language, general culture and interaction. Training on these issues was a very essential factor in general and interaction adjustment.

Even though the interviewees had continuous training during their assignment, it was probably different from that in the domestic context. Some expatriates had shorter assignments, so it cannot be known how their training would have continued in a longer assignment. Because of the new culture and environment, training needs to cover more subjects than in domestic environment. Consequently, it takes a longer time and expatriates learn continuously more about culture, language, habits, behaviour and many other things both within the organization and outside of it. Even though the most of the training was not formal, informal training from co-workers was considered to be very important in learning and getting to know new skills and knowledge. However, it is quite difficult to separate, which is informal training from co-workers and which is co-worker-support.

Official job related training was surprisingly rare with interviewees and it was not considered to be affecting work adjustment. Even those who had job training, did not think it was very useful. More important factors for adjustment were language, culture and interaction training, whether formal or informal. Besides, not all of the interviewees wanted to have formal culture training but it was more comfortable and useful to learn by themselves and by natural connections with locals and other expatriates. Some of them got the information they needed from guidebooks and DVDs, so it was not necessary to have lessons about the same issues. Still, there were some expatriates who would have wanted culture training because the lack of knowledge about culture, habits and behaviour affected negatively interaction and general adjustment.

Researchers have found different results about how training affects socialization. Nordhaugh (1989) suggested that training resulted in higher motivation and

psychosocial development, which can also be seen in this study's findings. This is because the skills acquired through training diminished stress and uncertainty, which consequently increased motivation and developed psychosocial skills. Otherwise, the effects of job training are not clear but training outside of job related issues is considered to be positively affecting socialization and adjustment.

The most important training occurred to be language training, which affected all adjustment categories. Especially in interaction and also in general adjustment language studies were considered to be very important. For those who used local language at work it affected very much also in work adjustment. Better skills in local language helped expatriates to learn about culture, interact better with locals, understand habits and behaviour and survive better in everyday life. Language skills and quality of language school/teacher were emphasized to be an important factor in the adjustment process.

7.6.2 Co-worker support

Co-worker support turned out to be the most influential factor of the organizational socialization elements that affected international adjustment process. In Black's et al (1991) cross-cultural adjustment model, co-worker support is one of the organizational factors and thus expected to affect the most in work adjustment. On the other hand, Pires and Stanton (2000, 2005) suggest that co-worker support would help also in general adjustment, especially if workers have similar backgrounds. Shaffer et al (1999) have also found a positive link between co-worker support and cross-cultural adjustment. Consequently, co-worker support is proposed to facilitate adjustment, especially the work adjustment process. While Black et al (1991) assume that co-worker support is received mostly from host country nationals, Strubler et al (2011) propose that support may also come from workers who have more similar background with the expatriates. Co-worker support is also a part of different organizational socialization models (Taormina 1997 Van Maanen and Schein 1979) and it is suggested to have a positive effect on organizational socialization and furthermore to decrease work stress (Seers et al 1983, Johnson 1991 and Karuppan 1994).

In this thesis, co-worker support was found to affect positively cross-cultural adjustment as well as organizational socialization. As previous researches propose, co-worker support was found to reduce work stress. Most of the interviewees received co-worker

support and it made work adjustment easier, because colleagues introduced expatriates to job, organization and organizational culture.

In Taormina's (1997) model of organizational socialization co-worker support is low in the beginning of starting to work in a new organization but it increases rapidly and stays quite stable until the employee leaves organization. It seems to be this way also with the interviewees, but it may be suggested that with expatriates co-worker support increases faster than in domestic context. Co-worker support increases when a newcomer bonds relationship with colleagues (Taormina 1997) and expatriates' situation is different than if they started to work in an organization in their home country. Since there are usually other expatriates in host organizations, newcomers get to know them very fast because being a foreigner in the host country creates the feeling of belonging together. Other expatriates are/have been in the same situation and they know how important the support and relationships with other co-workers are. Interviewees in organizations with many expatriates described how they created groups and supported each other both emotionally and practically. Co-worker support from locals was different at work, because of the hierarchical nature of organizational and national culture. Interviewees were in manager/expert positions and thus it took more time to create close relationships with locals who were in lower positions because of the hierarchy.

Some interviewees worked in the organization where most of the workers were locals and relationships became as strong as a family. Whether expatriates were more with locals or other foreigners, co-worker support and relationships with colleagues were very important for adjustment. Consequently, as Strubler et al (2011) suggest co-worker support from other expatriates was very important, not just the support from locals. Social support and friendships created with colleagues were one of the most important things in adjustment process. Expatriates got the feeling that they belonged somewhere and as it was brought up already in Maslow's hierarchy of needs in 1943, social connections are one of the basic human needs.

In interaction adjustment, expatriates got vital information and examples from co-workers in how to interact with local people. It was considered essential to get both local and foreign point of view for concerning issues. Locals were able to tell how things were done in their home country but did not know what those different habits looked like from expatriates' point of view. Expatriates who had lived a longer time in the host country could give advice from the perspective of the same nationality, which was very important. Considering the general adjustment, co-worker support helped

expatriates to settle down in the host country, because of the practical help they gave for living everyday life in a new country. This made interviewees' life easier and saved time, since practical issues, such as shopping and transportation, were very differently handled in the host country.

7.6.3 Understanding

Understanding expatriate's work and organization was a continuous learning process, which developed step by step. Also Van Maanen (1976) and Taormina (1997) see that continuous learning is a significant part of the organizational socialization. Organizational goals and values, politics, language and history are the four factors of organizational socialization (Chao et al 1994), which Taormina (1997) includes in the understanding domain. Increased understanding about these factors, except for organizational history, seemed to facilitate expatriates' socialization and work adjustment. Furthermore, information seeking is an important part of understanding domain (Taormina 1997). By seeking information, the needed understanding increased gradually, and some expatriates estimated that it took about a year before they felt they understood enough about job, organization and work community. However, even though the increased understanding strengthened confidence at work and made work adjustment easier, it had also a negative effect. The more the expatriates understood, the better they could also see all the injustices in the host country and organization, which were hard to accept. Seeing terrible discrimination and injustice might have caused resistance and even rebel.

Increased understanding about interaction facilitated interaction adjustment but it was different whether expatriates spent more time with locals or with other expatriates. It took more time to gain understanding about communicating with locals and learn their habits than it was with Western expatriates. Expatriates adjusted also better generally when they understood more about the culture. The lack of knowledge about culture and habits had a negative effect on adjustment. Gaining understanding about the culture was a slow learning process but understanding reduced stress and created the feeling of safety.

The main way to seek information was to learn from other people by talking to them and observing their behaviour. Seeking information and gaining understanding with the interviewees went according to Taormina's (1997) suggested curve about

understanding. First they had barely any understanding but when the expatriates found the ways to seek information, understanding started to grow fast and continued to grow slowly but never reached the 100%.

7.6.4 Future prospects

Future prospects, the preconception that an employee has about his or her rewarding career in particular organization (Taormina 1997), were a difficult concept for interviewees to answer straight because most of them had not thought about it. Even if they had not knowingly thought about how their future prospects affect socialization and adjustment, future prospect had an effect on cross-cultural adjustment process.

It is not clear, how it affected work adjustment whether assignments were short or long and thus whether expatriates wanted to develop career in the host organization or not. Some of those who had a short assignment (2-3 years) thought that because time was limited, it increased motivation at work and they wanted to make as much as they could in the short time. Even if they did not continue in the same organization in the home country after the assignment, not having future prospects in the host organization facilitated organizational socialization and consequently work adjustment. However, those expatriates who had long assignments and who were prepared to work in the host country even for a lifetime, thought it influenced them positively that their future prospects were in the host organization. It also increased work motivation and they wanted to achieve goals and finish their projects as well as they could. There were also some expatriates who did not think that their idea about future prospects affected their work adjustment.

Future prospects had a clearer effect on interaction adjustment than they had on work adjustment. It was quite common that expatriates who were planning to stay a long time in the host country, had a higher motivation to learn more about language, culture and habits of the host country, than those whose assignment was shorter. The drive for wanting to learn to live in the host country was a very important positive factor in adjustment. It made life easier, when expatriates understood language and habits better and they wanted to become part of that particular society.

Taormina (1997) proposes many factors that would make employee's career rewarding and them willing to stay in the particular organization. One of them is future job

assignment. Interviewees' assignments might have been exactly these "future job assignments", which have been promised for them to make them stay in the particular organization and feel that their career is rewarding. Interviewees who were sent to an assignment by home organization felt that assignment was a great and rewarding experience, so it can be expected that "future job assignments" can make one's career to feel rewarding.

An essential suggestion of future prospects is that people are continuously worried about future. When beginning to work in a new organization, employees are at first worried about safety and security issues and later on more about obtaining rewards. A new employee has usually expectations before entering the organization and he/ she might face reality shock if these expectations are not fulfilled. Furthermore this might affect employee's hopes for future career. (Taormina 1997, Feldman 1976, 1981) With interviewees, it was not clear how this reality shock-phenomenon affected their future prospects but it can be expected to be different with expatriates because of their exceptional circumstances. However, reality shock- situation could be seen as a part of culture shock in which expectations are not fulfilled and which causes worries about hopes for the future.

In Taormina's (1997) model of future prospects (Figure 6.) he proposes three different curves depending on how employees react in the beginning of employment in a particular organization. Interviewees seemed to belong to group two, who fairly fast recover from reality shock but whose curve of Future prospects starts to decrease slowly after adjusting to the organization norms and role due to the pyramid structure of most organizations (Taormina 1997). However, it needs to be mentioned again that with expatriates, the situation is different if they have only a limited assignment and they will return back to their home organization. Those expatriates, who do not have a sending organization but who leave alone and start working in a foreign country, have more similar organizational socialization to those working in home country. They do not necessarily have an exact, limited time assignment but just "normal" work contract in a foreign country.

7.7 Culture

Finland and Southeast Asian countries get almost opposite scores in the dimensions of national culture (Hofstede 2012). Thus, they are very different cultures, which affected strongly international adjustment, both positively and negatively. Interviewees talked a lot about the culture of the host country, its people and how different the host countries were compared to Finland. These characters came up in most of the asked questions, not just when the participants were directly asked about culture. Special characters of culture, people, traditions and political situation had both a positive and negative effect on work, interaction and general adjustment for expatriates. Even though the participants were in different jobs and in different Southeast Asian countries, they talked mostly about the same positive and negative factors in the culture, which affected their adjustment. Positive factors were quite the same with participants, but the factors that were not positive, were seen as negative, complicating or just different factors, depending on respondent.

There were some positive factors that almost all of the interviewees mentioned that affected their adjustment. These were: friendly people, relaxed and welcoming attitude and generally happy characteristics of people. Southeast Asian countries are very collectivistic cultures (Hofstede 2012), and thus they care about people and personal relationships are highly valued. Also long-term orientation makes personal relationships and networks very important. People are loyal to the group they belong to and they take care of each other. Uncertainty avoidance is one reason for why people always smile even when they would be angry and they stay polite despite the circumstances (Hofstede 1984). Religions have a great effect on people's behaviour and religions can be seen much clearer in Southeast Asia in everyday life compared to Western countries. Religion is one cause to people's friendly behaviour and how they treat others.

There were also some common negative or complicating factors that influenced interviewees' adjustment. These are as follows: different concept of time compared to Finnish culture, which caused that people were late and work was not done when it was supposed to; things were not spoken straight and "yes" might mean "yes" or "no"; if something was promised to be done it did not mean that it actually will be done; corruption; bureaucratic and hierarchical nature of the culture and the loss of face.

It can be seen that these characters are the result of different values in cultures. In Southeast Asia the power distance is high (Hofstede 2012), which is partly the reason for hierarchical and bureaucratic culture that the participants considered challenging. In Finland, people are used to require justification for inequalities of power but in Southeast Asia people accept the hierarchical order, in which everybody has a place and they do not require further justification (Hofstede 1984, 2012). The long-term orientation versus short-term orientation is one reason for the different time concept between Finnish and Southeast Asians, which affected negatively expatriates' adjustment. Deadlines and timescales are fluid in countries with long-term orientation (Hofstede 1984). This mind-set affects also the respect for tradition and inequality between people, which were difficult to accept for the interviewees. The fear of losing face was a very essential factor in everyday life and expatriates needed to be careful not to put locals in the situation where someone could possibly lose their face. Long-term orientation, high power-distance, collectivism and uncertainty-avoidance all have effect on the loss of face (Hofstede 1984) and on how it has to be avoided.

7.8 Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to study how organizational socialization influence Finnish expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in Southeast Asia. The factors that affect adjustment process, including organizational socialization factors, were studied. Cultural point of view was also taken into account and the cultural dimensions of Finland and Southeast Asia were presented.

The findings in this study support Black's et al (1991) and Shaffer' et al (1999) researches about cross-cultural adjustment process. Organizational factors, job factors, individual factors, non-work factors and positional factors were found to affect Finnish expatriates' adjustment in Southeast Asia. There were some differences compared to other researchers' findings, for example about the effects of self-efficacy or hierarchical level, but in broader meanings findings were consistent with previous researches. However, there were some factors, which were highlighted in the findings of this thesis to be very important in adjustment. These were, for example, expatriates' individual factors, which affected strongly their attitude towards the host culture and local employees. Language fluency was also found to be more relevant than in previous studies, because interviewees emphasized how much it helped in general and interaction

adjustment. Logistical support was an important positive factor for expatriates, especially the help in housing and other practical issues was considered to be necessary.

Organizational socialization domains- co-worker support, training, understanding and future prospects- were found to be influencing factors in cross-cultural adjustment. Especially co-worker support, which is also a part of organizational factors in adjustment model, was very important in order to have a successful adjustment. Co-workers helped in practical, daily needs, so interviewees could survive in everyday life. They also helped in communication and cultural issues and expatriates created desired social connections with them. In many cases, co-worker support replaced the lack of organizational support. Training was also important, especially cultural or language training, but since there was so little arranged training, co-worker support acted as an informal training mode. Understanding the culture and about one's work was significant in adjustment process. Understanding increased especially through training and co-worker support.

Culture was found to be a very significant factor in cross-cultural adjustment and in organizational socialization. Since Finnish culture and Southeast Asian culture differ very much from each other, it brought special features for the adjustment. There were many positive things, such as friendly people and welcoming attitude, but there were also negative issues, such as the bureaucratic nature of the countries and the different concept of time. These features affected also organizational culture and furthermore work adjustment.

The scientific contribution of this study is related to knowledge about organizational socialization in an expatriate context. The point of view in the subject has been different than in those few other studies about organizational socialization as an influencing factor in cross-cultural adjustment. This study also offers more information on Finnish expatriates' adjustment in Southeast Asia.

There are some limitations in this study. This thesis concentrates on Finnish expatriates' adjustment in Southeast Asia and thus findings cannot be generalized to cover international adjustment in general. The sample of this study is narrow (=9); therefore it is questionable how findings can be generalized to concern all Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia. There were only three Southeast Asian countries included in the research, so findings could be different if there were more or different countries included from Southeast Asia. The same limitations consider organizational

socialization process and findings cannot be generalized to cover organizational socialization in other contexts.

This study demonstrates the important factors that could make Finnish expatriates' adjustment easier in Southeast Asia. This study suggests that co-worker support, training and logistical support are very important for expatriates in the host country. Consequently, the implications for managers from this study are that language and cultural training should be taken more carefully into account. It is also important that expatriates receive support in practical daily issues and in settling down to the new city and country.

The current study shows the importance of organizational socialization in international adjustment. Further research could concentrate on how organizational socialization influences international adjustment in different context than Finnish expatriates in Southeast Asia. There are an increasing number of expatriates in Southeast Asia and other Asian countries, therefore it would be good to get more knowledge about adjustment in those countries for different nationalities. It could also give more perspective if future research would use different organizational socialization theories and possibly another international adjustment theory than used in this study. Future research could focus broader on international adjustment process in Southeast Asia and also study deeper how culture influences the process, since this study covered these subjects quite briefly.

It occurred in this study that working and adjusting in non-profit organizations were quite different than in profit making organizations. There was a high turnover of expatriates and organizations were very rigid and bureaucratic, which made operations slow and cost- inefficient. Thus, future research should study especially expatriates' working and adjustment in non-profit organizations.

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