Expatriate Adjustment: A study of Taiwanese MNC employees in the UK

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Jean Wang, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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Date: ____13/01/2014_____

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Abstract

Global staffing orientations have been shown to influence expatriate adjustment outcomes. Previous studies have examined various factors influencing expatriate adjustment, but have not yielded consistent results. In order to examine the dynamic relations between the nature of expatriate roles in a host country and adjustment experiences in a host country context, this study examines the influence of MNC staffing orientations on expatriation, including international assignment conditions and work roles. In order to explore the specific adjustment issues experienced by expatriates faced with a great cultural distance between their home and host countries, it takes the case of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK as an example of MNCs from an emerging economy operating in an advanced one. To achieve this goal, this study draws on the literature on MNC international staffing policies, role theory, Nicholson's work role transition theory and Hofstede's culture difference and local ethnocentrism in expatriate adjustment. The empirical evidence is based on a survey and in-depth individual interviews with 42 Taiwanese expatriates working in the UK and 18 of their locally hired colleagues.

The study finds that the staffing orientations of Taiwanese MNCs in the UK are either based upon an ethnocentric approach – mainly found in the transport and service industry – or an inclination toward polycentric one – in the IT and electrical industry. These, in turn, differently influence the MNCs' patterns of international assignment conditions (i.e. types of international assignment duration, expatriation ratios in foreign subsidiaries and statuses of family accompaniment).

Based on these different patterns of international assignment conditions and work roles, the analysis identifies two categories of Taiwanese expatriates, henceforth labelled *visitors* and *explorers*. The data shows that *visitor* expatriates are typically subject to fixed international assignment durations, work in sectors (e.g. banking and transport) with relatively high expatriation ratios in local subsidiaries and are normally unaccompanied by their families. By contrast, *explorer* expatriates usually face open-ended international assignment durations, commonly work in sectors (e.g. IT and electrical) with low expatriation ratios in local subsidiaries and are usually encouraged to relocate their families with them to the UK. Drawing on Nicholson's work role transition theory, which highlights different modes of adjustment in work contexts based on personal and role development, and taking inspiration from the three facets of adjustment in the acculturation and Black's framework, in this

study, the patterns of cross-cultural adjustment of *visitor* and *explorer* expatriates are explored in the three dimensions of adjustment – psychological, interaction and work – the analysis compares the work and adjustment experiences of the two categories. The study finds that *visitors* display an 'inflexible' psychological adaptation, have a 'restricted' interaction with their local colleagues and locals and adopt a 'replication' mode of work adjustment – involving low personal but high role development. Conversely, '*explorers*' exhibit a more 'flexible' psychological adaptation, experience an open interaction with their local colleagues and locals and adopt an 'exploration' mode of work adjustment – featuring high personal and role development.

This study argues that the patterns of expatriate adjustment are strongly influenced by the different expatriate roles in the host country which draw upon their different expatriation, including the specific international assignment conditions and work roles implemented. Moreover, it shows that locally hired employees play a crucial role in influencing the adjustment experiences of expatriates through their work relationships. This is especially evident in those instances which see 'newcomers' operating in a novel cultural environment. This study represents the first attempt to explore the unique adjustment experiences of expatriates from emerging economy MNCs operating in an advanced one. It provides important insights into the experiences of (first-generation) expatriates with open-ended assignment durations, which had not been previously examined in the literature. The study also contributes to the theories which are relevant to expatriate adjustment by demonstrating the relationships between MNC staffing policies and expatriation (i.e. international assignment conditions and work roles) and patterns of expatriate adjustment.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

FDI   Foreign direct investment

HPWS   High performance Work Systems

HR   Human Resource

HRM   Human Resource Management

IHRM   International Haman Resource Management

IA   International Assignment

LHCs   Locally Hired Colleagues

MNCs   Multinational Corporation

CHAPTER

ONE

Introduction

This research seeks to advance our understanding of expatriate adjustment by studying the experiences of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK. This introduction chapter begins with an overview and an outline of the key aspects emerging from the current literature in the field of expatriate adjustment – which define the core elements used as the basis for this research study – with the identification of the apparent existing empirical and theoretical research gaps to clearly define its objectives and state how it intends to address them. This chapter also provides justification for the importance of this research study and its potential contributions. The structure of this thesis is presented at the end of this chapter.

1.1 Why Carry Out This Study

This research study is an exploration and an investigation of expatriate adjustment through the experience of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK. The research will be focusing predominantly on the nature of the expatriate role and on the adjustment experiences in a host country context, drawn on staffing orientation and expatriation situation of multinational corporation (MNC). The core aim is to achieve an understanding and an analysis of the specific adjustment issues experienced by Taiwanese expatriates assigning from Taiwan-based MNCs in the UK, as an example of expatriation from an emerging economy to an advanced one and being characterised by a significant cultural distance between the home and host countries. The reasons for carrying out a study of expatriate adjustment on Taiwanese expatriates in the UK follow the outline of the relevant research background and gaps which, in turn, define this research study's objectives.

Several scholars have pointed out that, with more and more companies aiming to globalise, the number of expatriates working abroad is on the increase, making them a vital and huge investment for MNCs (Suutari and Brewster, 1998). However, companies face difficulties in the selection of the most appropriate employees to assign abroad (Lee & Liu 2006). Ineffective expatriate assignment is a cause of great damage for corporations, which involves financial costs, the business costs of the projects managed and even the loss of business that occasionally may result (Dowling, et al. 1999, cited in Mayerhofer et al. 2004). Black and Gregersen (1999) claimed that the costs – including benefits and the cost of living and adjustment – of international assignments is significant, in the region of $300,000 per person per annum. Moreover, the failure of expatriate assignments not only increases the financial risks for the company but also psychologically harms the expatriates themselves, decreasing their self-esteem and self-confidence (Takeuchi et al. 2002; Yamazaki & Kayes 2007).

As shown by previous studies, the satisfactory adjustment of expatriates to their new work and life in the host countries has a positive impact on their work performance and work-life balance, and reduces the likelihood of assignment failure (Black et al. 1999; Ones, & Viswesvaran, 1997; Shay & Baack 2004; Kim & Slocum Jr. 2008); this highlights the importance of expatriate adjustment for a successful overseas assignment.

A successful international assignment relies upon the satisfactory adjustment of the expatriate. Over the past three decades, there has been an increasing number of studies on expatriate adjustment, which have introduced some determining adjustment factors and examined their relationship with the degree of expatriate adjustment (Black. 1988; Harrison, et al. 2004). These studies have adopted Black's conceptual model (Black et al. 1991) by examining the degree of adjustment in three dimensions, namely: (1) general, (2) interaction and (3) work. These examine one or both of two types of circumstances in the host country: work circumstances and non-work circumstances.

Although the study of expatriate adjustment has progressed over the past three decades, the previous studies have however left some critical gaps that need to be addressed. In this research study, four main gaps left from previous studies are considered to shape the preliminary aspects and the design of this research study and

to indicate its significance and potential contributions.

The key research gaps of expatriate adjustment

The first gap emerges from the fact that previous studies were limited to investigating individual-level factors affecting the degree of expatriate adjustment, rather than contextualising them. For instance, in order to conduct a clear comparison of the effects of the different elements on expatriate adjustment, very few have explored the possible links between organisational-level factors such as MNC staffing orientations and their international assignment conditions. Hence, this study considers the influence of organisational-level determining factors on patterns of expatriate adjustment.

The second gap relates to the fact that it is not only the study of the degree of adjustment that is important, but also *how* that degree is reached (Thomas, 1998). As mentioned above, most previous studies of expatriate adjustment were limited to an examination of its relationship with individual factors and their effects on the degree of adjustment in quantitative research terms. However, culture shock and the theory of Nicholson's work role transition (1984) indicate that both the different coping strategies adopted within the new cultural and work environment and a deeper understanding of the whole situation of expatriate adjustment are important and need to be explored further. This also embraces role theory (Kahn et al, 1964; Katz and Kahn, 1978), in the sense that expatriates face the different nature of their new work roles in situations specifically stemming from their expatriation. Hence, the different patterns of adjustment which expatriates experience in their new roles in the host country with the new cultural and work environment should be studied in detail to explore *the ways* in which they adjust.

Inspired by Black's (1991) three adjustment dimensions – i.e. general, interaction and work as well as the three facets of adjustment in the acculturation framework (Searle and Ward, 1990; Aycan and Berry, 1996; Hawes and Kealey, 1981) – i.e. psychological, socio-cultural and work –the dimensions of expatriate adjustment patterns are refined in this research study under work and non-work circumstances. Since adjustment is a psychological process/change, as defined above, it is necessary to look at the expatriates' changes in attitudes and behavioural inclinations which

directly reflect to the psychological and interaction adjustment dimensions. Also, as expatriates are assigned abroad for work purposes, work adjustment, involving job requirements, is one of the key dimensions pertaining to their adjustment. Therefore, this research study has considered the following three adjustment dimensions: psychological, interaction and work. In brief, through these three dimensions, the patterns of expatriate adjustment can be explored systemically to cohesively understand *the ways* in which expatriates adjust.

The third gap concerns the limited understanding of expatriate adjustment from multiple perspectives. From the point of view of local ethnocentrism – i.e. "the propensity to view one's own cultural traditions and behaviours as right and those of others as wrong" (Black, 1990) – some studies (e.g. Aycan, 1997) indicated that host country national colleagues who hold highly local ethnocentric beliefs are less willing to provide expatriates with support and information; this, in turn, has a negative effect on the latter's work relationships and adjustment. This highlights the importance of also studying expatriate adjustment from the perspective of their host country national colleagues. At the same time, Harrison, Shaffer and Bhaskar-Shrinivas in 2004) pointed out that colleagues and subordinates are the most essential elements for expatriates in the work environment; yet, these have hitherto received little attention. However, there are a few studies that have examined expatriate adjustment not only from the perspective of the expatriates themselves but also from that of their host country national colleagues. Hence, in this study, the perspective of the expatriates' locally hired colleagues, including host country nationals, was also considered.

Finally, the fourth gap stems from the fact that most previous research was conducted in Western contexts, mainly in developed nations, with very little focus on emerging economies in Asian contexts. Similar levels of economic development among countries usually imply comparable levels of internationalisation, with much the same expatriation purposes. In order to expand the empirical base and narrow research context prevailing in existing expatriation studies, greater focus should be placed on emerging economies which are characterised by different behaviours (Chang et al. 2007). The 2005-07 report published by the UN Conference on Training and Development with regard to levels of outward foreign direct investment (FDI) performance indicated that Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore had performed

well and had grown faster than the majority of developed countries. Hence, there is an increasing trend for expatriates from emerging and newly industrialised economies (e.g. Taiwan, Singapore and Korea) to be relocated abroad. According to a 2006 report published by ORC Worldwide, from 2000 to 2006, the countries from the Asia-Pacific region had seen the highest percentages of expatriation, at more than four times those of their Western counterparts. It is therefore useful to take MNCs from Taiwan, an emerging economy, as a case study for the Asia-Pacific expatriate context. As several studies have pointed out, different stages of internationalisation focus upon specific staffing policies for their international assignment purposes, which, in turn, shape the different expatriation situations. For example, short-term expatriation is currently popular for purposes of skill transfer/problem solving and management control (Latta, 1999; Evans, et al. 2002; Scullion and Collings 2006; Tahvanainen *et* al., cited in Dowling et al. 2008; Collings et al. 2007). Clearly, this points at the link between staffing orientations/purposes and international assignment conditions (e.g. international assignment durations). Hence, it can be seen that expatriates from emerging economics are assigned with specific expatriation patterns drawn from their MNCs' different internationalisation stages and staffing orientations. Summarising, this fourth research gap aroused my interest into whether the Taiwanese MNC expatriates' adjustment in the UK works in the same way as had been identified by previous studies. Moreover, *the way* in which these expatriates adjust as Asians in Western contexts is of interest.

1.2 The Research Aims and Objectives

The aims of this study are here explained to highlight the focal points used to achieve them, thus addressing the gaps listed above and extending the lines of research. As this research study is an inductive one on expatriates from a newly industrialised and emerging economy as they adjust to an advanced host country, its nature is primarily exploratory. It seeks to shed light upon the following research question:

> "What are the overseas adjustment experiences of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK?"

Based on this key research question, it is useful to clarify the three main aims of this research study:

1. In what way do Taiwanese MNC staffing orientations influence their international assignment conditions in the UK?

2. In what way do Taiwanese MNC international assignment conditions influence expatriate roles in the UK?

3. How do specific expatriate roles differently respond to adjustment experiences in the UK?

4. How do specific expatriate roles adjust to a new work relationship and environment based upon cultural differences?

As mentioned earlier, it can be noted that most existing studies conceptualised expatriate adjustment and elaborated the related theories based upon Western contexts. However, as noted by Kim and Slocum Jr. (2008), the main limitation of expatriate studies is their external validity; this means that research findings relating to nations with radically different social, economic and cultural backgrounds and values (e.g. Western and Asian contexts) do not provide any comparison value. This highlights the need for the development of expatriate adjustment studies in Asian contexts, especially with regard to nations with similar social and economic levels, to bring out systemic results.

Hence, taking the study of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK as an example, the main goal of this research is to investigate and broaden the understanding of the overseas adjustment of expatriates from emerging Asian economies in Western contexts. Taiwan's socio-economic and cultural conditions influence the nature of its expatriates' work roles and adjustment in the UK as, due to the huge cultural distance between Asian and Western contexts, it determines a high degree of role novelty. Therefore, this study was inspired by role theory to understand the nature of expatriate roles from home to host country. Based upon the different strategies to internationalisation adopted by various MNCs, which are determined by their economic and cultural statuses, the case of Taiwanese expatriates provides a pertinent example to understand the specific expatriate roles in a host country based on their expatriation profile, including their international assignment conditions, which are the result of specific staffing orientations. In this way, the determining factors influencing expatriate adjustment are explored systemically; in turn, the

dynamic relationship between the nature of the expatriate role and the adjustment patterns are explored accordingly. This takes on particular relevance because, as noted by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991), the theoretical development of the understanding of *how* these factors influence expatriate adjustment has not been advanced since Black's initial work.

Nicholson's (1984) work role transition theory, which is based on role and personal development, examines the adjustment coping strategies. Inspired by this theory, in this research study, the participants were interviewed to understand their personal development – through their behavioural and attitudinal changes from home to host country – and their role development, in order to examine the pattern of expatriate adjustment in work contexts.

Furthermore referring to the concepts of culture shock, Hofstede's (1984; 2001) (national) culture difference and local ethnocentrism, expatriates were interviewed in this research study to understand their patterns of adjustment which draw upon culture novelty in three dimensions – psychological, interaction and work. The specific assignment profiles of Taiwanese MNCs expatriation to the UK shape the expatriates' role and determine their specific work relationships which, in turn, influence their adjustment experiences. Hence, it is important to understand how Taiwanese expatriates experience adjustment in the UK from the point of view of the cultural differences between Taiwan and the UK through their work role behaviour transition, their attitude in dealing with their new work environment and their work relationships with their locally hired colleagues.

In addressing the aims of this research study, the detailed objectives of the empirical analysis are to:

a) Develop the study of expatriation and expatriate adjustment from MNCs in emerging economies to Western contexts.

b) Identify *how* MNCs' staffing orientations influence the roles of expatriates in the host country and their patterns of adjustment, drawing on the specific Taiwanese MNC expatriation context.

c) Illustrate the specific expatriate adjustment by incorporating the perspectives

of the expatriates and of their locally hired colleagues to achieve a balanced picture.

d) Develop and suggest a conceptual model of expatriate adjustment, as shown in the following diagram which shows the links between the key variables

| MNCs staffing orientations | → | Expatriation | → | Expatriate roles in host country | → | Pattern of expatriate adjustment |
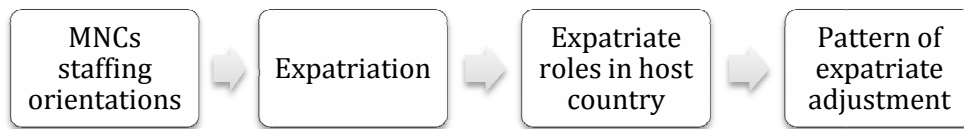
Figure 1.1 Diagram of a conceptual model of expatriate adjustment

1.3 Contribution of this Research

The findings of this research study indicate that the patterns of expatriate adjustment are strongly influenced by the different conceptual categories, which expatriates take on in the host country. These conceptual categories are drawn from the specifics of MNC's Staffing orientations and expatriation conditions, including the international assignment conditions implemented and the nature of their work roles. Moreover, the findings also show that culture novelty plays a crucial role in influencing their work relationship and in turn expatriate adjustment experiences from the perspectives of both the expatriates themselves and of their locally hired colleagues. In brief, this study represents and explores the specific adjustment experiences of expatriates from emerging economy MNCs which find themselves operating in an advanced economy.

This research makes several contributions to the field of international human resource management, both in terms of its empirical analysis of expatriate adjustment experiences and of its theoretical framework. With its empirical analysis of expatriate adjustment, this study contributes to the relevant theories by conducting a study on a specific nation to demonstrate the relationship between MNC staffing policies and expatriation, including international assignment conditions, and the patterns of expatriate adjustment, which define a conceptual framework for expatriate adjustment. Furthermore, how do these determining factors influence expatriate adjustment, is determined, by interviewing the participants in the psychological, interaction and work adjustment dimensions, whereas most previous

studies limit themselves to considering *what* influences expatriate adjustment. The different ways in which expatriates' respond in these three dimensions of adjustment and then follow their patterns of adjustment from the perspective of their locally hired colleagues provides a comprehensive understanding of the expatriate adjustment experience. This is specifically achieved by studying Asian (Taiwanese) expatriates in Western contexts to obtain more significant results on overseas adjustment due to the high level of cultural dissimilarity. Hence, the use of survey and interviews conducted with both the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues as the main research method to seek a systemic understanding of the determining factors which influence expatriate adjustment from an Asian context to a Western one provides a contribution that may inspire further research studies in the field of expatriate adjustment. The above contribution was made mainly from an empirical perspective, which is closely linked to the research aims and objectives.

From a theoretical point of view, the research insights shed new light on the nature of the roles and patterns of adjustment of expatriates from Asian emerging economies who operate in advanced Western host countries. Hence, this research study has made a conceptual contribution to the literature on expatriate adjustment filed by developing a conceptual framework linking staffing orientations and international conditions to patterns of expatriate adjustment. In brief, through a rigorous and cohesive examination, this research study helps to fill a gap in the expatriate adjustment literature and develop the context of the field of expatriate adjustment by suggesting a conceptual framework and provide information to further elaborate the relevant theories.

This study can also help MNCs to address some of the specific issues they face, such as how to improve expatriate adjustment which help them to achieve better work performances and gain a global competitive advantage by reconsidering their international assignment conditions and reducing the failure rate and costs of their international assignments (Scullion & Paauwe, 2004). Importantly, this research study provides a deeper, systemic understanding of expatriate roles in host countries, which constitutes a rooted social capital for organisations (Dickmann & Harris, 2005). By expanding our understanding of expatriation adjustment experiences, this research study specifically helps Asian organisations from emerging economies to

reconsider their overall international assignment staffing orientations and profiles. Furthermore, these organisations can better understand the specific cultures and needs of Asian expatriates, as opposed to simply accepting Western systems as a reference. Overall, the decreasing risk of international assignment failure and the increased productivity will further the development of these MNCs in the field of internationalisation.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters and, following this introduction chapter, is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive review of the existing literature on expatriate adjustment, with definitions and empirical evidence provided for the main variables considered in this study. It then provides a brief review of the relevant theories that have been adopted by researchers in cross-culture expatriate adjustment and that will be referred to in this research study.

Chapter 3, following up on the literature of previous empirical studies, presents and assesses the specific contexts of emerging economies and Taiwanese MNCs. It provides more specific information and discussion about the staffing orientations and expatriation of Taiwanese MNCs to provide a background to the specific expatriate adjustment issues that Taiwanese expatriates face in the UK.

Chapter 4 outlines the discussion of the research methods which were adopted in the context of the research aims and objectives. It then details the use, in this research study, of quantitative and qualitative research through survey and interviews and how these were designed by means of procedures aimed at achieving the research aims and objectives. Thematic analysis was used to examine the in-depth semi-structured interviews, followed by a correlation analysis via SPSS for the examination of the survey questionnaires. Both analyses were conducted on the data collected from both the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues.

Chapter 5 presents the research findings on the expatriates' assignment profiles, mainly gathered from their survey responses. The core of this chapter focuses on the key themes which emerge from the Taiwanese MNCs' staffing orientations, which

define the patterns of international assignment conditions and the expatriate roles in the host country. This chapter concludes with a short summary of the various expatriate roles in the host country identified throughout the chapter.

Chapter 6 presents an analysis of the various expatriate roles in the host country, linked to their patterns of adjustment. These are summarised in a matrix form. The insights from the interviews of the expatriates and of their locally hired colleagues were analysed and presented to explore *how* the different expatriate roles in the host country experienced their work relationships and adjustments. At the end of the chapter, a summary links the discussion of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK back to the key research question and a conceptual framework has been presented.

Chapter 7 is presents a discussion of the research findings to restate the research aims and objectives making reference to previous studies and relevant theories. The key findings presented in this research study are summarised and discussed in the contexts of how and why different expatriate roles in the host country follow specific patterns of adjustment according to their expatriation situations and the new cultural contexts in their UK workplaces. To conclude this thesis, this chapter also illustrates the contributions this research study makes to advance the study of expatriate adjustment. Furthermore, the outlines of its limitations and suggestions for possible further research are proposed at the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER

TWO

Literature Review: Empirical and Theoretical

2.1 Introduction

In order to examine the key research question – "What are the overseas adjustment experiences of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK?" – it needs to be placed within the context of both the existing expatriate adjustment literature and the Taiwanese contextual background. Accordingly, this chapter provides a first step with regard to the grounding and context of expatriate adjustment. The background and contexts will be presented and discussed in the next chapter.

This chapter presents a critical review of the empirical studies and major tenets of the various theories related to expatriate adjustment. As the studies on expatriate adjustment cover the last three decades – resulting in the huge scope of the existing literature – this research study focuses upon some key empirical and theoretical literature which it draws upon; specifically based upon how relevant it is to the particular purposes of this research study.

This chapter is divided into two main parts: empirical and theoretical. With regard to the empirical part, it reviews the existing empirical studies and reports and discusses how this study seeks to develop and contribute to this research field. Firstly, it explains the reasons why it is necessary to conduct an analysis of expatriate adjustment to exactly define the phenomenon. This is followed by providing the definition and the dimensions of expatriate adjustment, which will be focussed upon in the research analysis. Secondly, it presents a critical review of the existing literature on the antecedents and consequences of expatriate adjustment, in order to outline the systemic determining factors which influence expatriate adjustment which

will be focused upon by this research study. The theoretical part presents an explanation of key insights and a discussion of the relevant theories, such as social learning theory, role theory and Nicholson's work role transition theory, which provide the theoretical grounding and a brief outline of this expatriate adjustment study.

2.2 Empirical Insights into Expatriate Adjustment

2.2.1 Expatriation and cross-cultural adjustment

Some scholars state that expatriation is vital for the internationalisation and success of any organisation. It is obvious that multinational organisations which have several subsidiaries in various countries need substantial support from their business expatriates to enable headquarters to deal effectively with overseas assignments, especially in cases in which there is a shortage of qualified local country nationals. (Edström & Galbraith 1977; Bauer & Taylor 2001; Sparrow et al. 2004; Selmer 2006). Some studies have shown that expatriate failure – i.e. early returns from an international assignment or unexpected resignations during or shortly afterwards the same – is seen as a serious problem by multinational corporations (MNCs) (Dowling et al. 2008).

Some scholars have pointed out that the successful expatriate adjustment to work and life in a host country has a positive impact on work performance (Caligiuri, 1997; Kraimer et al. 2001; Kim & Slocum Jr. 2008) and work-life balance (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001; Meyskens et al. 2009), and a negative one on assignment failure (Black & Gregersen 1999; (Ones & Viswesvaran, 1997; Shay & Baack 2004; Takeuchi et al. 2002; Scullion & Paauwe 2004;). For instance, Takeuchi et al. (2002), in their survey of 170 Japanese expatriates who had relocated with their spouses to work in the US, indicated that the desire to return early from an international assignment is stronger when there is an inadequate adjustment to the work and host environment. Therefore, it would appear that the success or failure of expatriate international assignments is mainly the result of the degree of local adjustment and that this influences organisations and individuals.

From an organisational perspective, Varner and Palmer (2002) claimed that expatriate

failure costs international corporations in the range of US$250,000-1,000,000 per assignment. Therefore, expatriate success can become a decisive factor in the global market. Expatriates play a leading role in the success of international corporations; not only because they can help the parent company understand global operations, but also because they can help develop the organisational culture and network. The importance of international assignments can be deduced from the tremendous investment made by MNCs in fields such as housing allowances, living costs and subsidised personnel costs (Hartmann 2004). A study by Tung (1981) also found that the main reason behind expatriate failure is inadequate adjustment to the different social and cultural environment. In addition, the failure of expatriate assignments not only increases financial risks but also harms expatriates psychologically, decreasing their self-esteem and self-confidence (Takeuchi et al. 2002; Yamazaki & Kayes 2007). This is due to expatriates having to face dramatic changes, including those relating to performing different types of international work and dealing with new colleagues and life in a new environment. In the literature, there is a general agreement on the fact that the effective adjustment of expatriates does not only influence work performance (Caligiuri, 1997; Kraimer et al. 2001; Kim & Slocum Jr. 2008) and reduce the rate of failure and costs – even bringing huge benefits to international corporations – but that it also addresses the psychological problems that expatriates encounter within their lives and work during and after the international assignment.

Generally, expatriates are defined as employees who are assigned in various roles to accomplish work-related goals within an international organisation's overseas operations, across cultures and nations (Sinangil & Ones 2001; Dowling et al. 2008). Some scholars have categorised expatriates into two groups: organisational expatriates, who are dispatched by their home companies to international posts (Edström and Galbraith 1977), or self-initiated expatriates, who independently make the decision to move and work abroad (Suutari and Brewster 2000; Inkson and Myers 2003; Myers and Pringle 2005; Altman and Baruch 2012). Some scholars stated that expatriate motivation has an impact on the degree of overseas adjustment. Accordingly, Selmer (2010) stated that it is more likely for willing expatriates to be accepted in foreign countries. Conversely, expatriates who do not have a strong willingness to be assigned abroad are less likely to adjust. Only willing expatriates possess the enthusiasm necessary to live abroad and be comfortable and satisfied

within a diverse cultural life. Some consider that expatriates who are obliged to go overseas by their work assignments have more negative experiences than willing ones. Shaffer and Harrison (1998) stated that the concept of psychological withdrawal can be linked to the willingness to adjust. In other words, unwilling expatriates may display psychological withdrawal behaviours because of a lack of adjustment. It is also likely that unwilling expatriates are less motivated to address and rectify this problem. Mental or psychological withdrawal is their adverse reaction to handling emotional problems such as stress and anxiety. In general, expatriates who have a strong desire to work overseas are more willing to adjust and can cope adequately with their cross-cultural life.

The notion that the willingness to move abroad greatly influences expatriate adjustment is also supported by recent studies (Biemann and Andresen, 2010; Froese and Peltokorpi, 2013, 2011; Peltokorpi and Jintae Froese, 2009) on the difference between organisational and self-initiated expatriates in terms of expatriate adjustment (e.g. interaction adjustment) and international assignment outcomes (e.g. organisational commitment and job satisfaction). Specifically, the 2013 study by Froese and Peltokorpi, based upon a survey of 57 organisational and 124 self-initiated expatriates in Tokyo, claims that self-initiated expatriates show better interaction adjustment than organisational ones due to the longer international assignment durations and language fluency. Connelly, Hitt, DeNisi and Ireland (2007), however, observe that the various studies on expatriation present inconsistent results. Hence, due to the various levels of willingness and conditions of expatriation, the study of expatriate adjustment should be examined by groups. In the expatriation literature, the term "traditional expatriates" refers to those employees who are assigned from heavily expatriated MNCs (for-profit organisations), whereas different organisational backgrounds would define them variously as other expatriate types. Therefore, in order to understand how MNC global staffing strategies and international assignment purposes shape different expatriate roles, generating the expatriation conditions which influence adjustment experiences, this study focuses upon organisational expatriates.

2.2.2 Expatriate adjustment: definitions and dimensions

Overseas assignments cause expatriates to face dramatic changes, such as new types of international work, associates and a different life in a new environment. When

people find themselves in a new culture and environment, they may experience difficulties which drive them towards change. Acculturation, adaptation and adjustment are all terms used in the literature to describe the process of individual change driven by being immersed in a new culture and environment. Specifically, the term "acculturation" refers to a continuous long-term process of change based on the level of social and cultural contexts. It is a two-way process that not only influences the relocated individual, but also those from the new culture and environment. It is a more complex phenomenon than are adaptation and adjustment, which are one-way processes in which individuals alter their attitudes and behaviours to achieve a degree of integration into the new or different environment. Also, whereas acculturation and adaptation can be equally applied regardless of whether relocation is permanent or temporary, adjustment is a more specific and narrow concept that refers to an anticipated, proactive and temporary relocation to an unfamiliar environment.

In terms of "adjustment", it is widely accepted that people who find themselves in a new environment will experience a degree of psychological change (Black 1988; Nicholson 1984; Harrison et al. 2004). This also involves the measurement of various cognitive, affective and behavioural situations (Harrison et al. 2004). This relates to the fact that, during the adjustment process, there is a tendency for individuals to change their personal attitudes and behavioural inclinations (Aycan 1997). In the early stages of the adjustment process, this takes the form of a global state of dissatisfaction or feelings of unhappiness in the expatriate work environment (Munton & West 1995) and it is linked to the conceptualisations of job satisfaction (Wanous & Lawler 1972) and organisational commitment (Reichers 1985). Some scholars noted that, in order to fit into a new environment and become comfortable with it, expatriates undergo a process called "expatriate adjustment" (Huang et al. 2005).

Scholars have categorised adjustment into different dimensions. Firstly, there is the adjustment to the psychological conditions and work contexts. This was studied by some researchers in the 1980s (e.g. Black 1988; Black & Stephens 1989; Black et al. 1991), who all concluded that the adjustment to non-work related circumstances should be also looked at. Most previous studies (e.g. Shaffer et al. 1999; Kraimer, 2001; Peltokorpi, 2013) discussed expatriate adjustment through the construct of multidimensionality, based on Black and Stephens' (1989) three cross-cultural

adjustment dimensions: general, interaction and work. General adjustment refers to the manner in which expatriates cope with living in a foreign country and adjust to a foreign culture. Interaction adjustment addresses the expatriates' efforts to establish relationships with locals, such as interacting and socialising with host country nationals. Work adjustment involves the way expatriates fit into the workplace and adjust to their work requirements.

Aycan (1997) stated that Black's three multidimensional adjustment dimensions are conceptually similar to the three facets of adjustment in the acculturation framework, respectively: psychological, socio-cultural (Searle and Ward, 1990), and work adjustment (Aycan and Berry, 1996; Hawes and Kealey, 1981). The concept of psychological adjustment is based on a problem-oriented view which evaluates subjective mood status and psychological well-being and addresses such adjustment factors as depression, anxiety and stress. On the other hand, general adjustment refers to the degree of psychological comfort associated with non-work related factors found in the foreign environment; how expatriates adjust to foreign culture. In other words, the level of life satisfaction and the inevitable comparisons between the home and host societies can be used to observe whether an individual's mental health has changed. Hence, compared with general adjustment, psychological adjustment is a wider measurement dimension as it covers both non-work and work circumstances (Aycan 1997; Selmer 1998, Selmer 2001; Selmer et al. 2000). Thus, compared with the general adjustment one, the psychological adjustment dimension should be considered as a more reliable measurement of subjective perspectives.

Further, socio-cultural adjustment, which is based on social learning theory, refers to the ability to fit in with the interactive aspects of a foreign culture, to address problems related to non-work circumstances and to effectively interact with people in the host society. Similarly, interaction adjustment flows from the level of comfort with interpersonal exchanges, such as socialisation and communication, not only outside the host workplace but also within it (Black 1988; Takeuchi, Yun & Russell 2002). In accordance with Bell and Harrison (1996), who stated that the pattern of the expatriates' interpersonal interactions in a new environment is the foundation of both their work and general adjustment, the examination of expatriate adjustment from a behavioural perspective should pay attention to the interaction adjustment context, as

this provides a more detailed picture. This is because the interaction adjustment context is comparatively wider than that of socio-cultural adjustment, which only deals with non-work related circumstances in the host society.

The degree of expatriate work adjustment is measured by the comfort associated with the assignment or tasks, such as the individuals' level of performance and positive attitude in their new work circumstances, as well as by how well they adjust to their job responsibilities, supervision and performance expectations (Takeuchi, Yun & Russell 2002). The main concept of this work adjustment is linked to the degree of commitment to the host companies, which has an impact on the motivation to stay. Mowday et al. (1982) demonstrated that organisational commitment includes organisational goals, values and the desire to stay.

Summarising, since adjustment is a psychological process/change, as defined above, it is necessary to look at the expatriates' changes in attitudes and behavioural inclinations which directly reflect to the psychological and interaction adjustment dimensions. Also, as expatriates are assigned abroad for work purposes, work adjustment, involving job requirements, is one of the key dimensions pertaining to their adjustment. Therefore, this research study has considered the following three adjustment dimensions: psychological, interaction and work. These deal in a more rigorous and cohesive manner with the different depths and fronts of adjustment in terms of non-work and work related settings and circumstances, which stem from changes in affective and behavioural situations.

2.2.3 Studies of the antecedents and consequences of expatriate adjustment

With regard to the antecedents and consequences of expatriate adjustment, research has paid continued attention to the stressor-stress-strain framework (Lance & Richardson 1988; Takeuchi, Seokhwa Yun & Russell 2002; Parker & McEvoy 1993). The 1980s witnessed a wealth of research into the characteristics (stressors) of expatriates, including their demographic characteristics, personal traits and workplace, environment and family/friends related factors, and how these are linked to their degrees of adjustment, performance and satisfaction (Takeuchi, Yun & Tesluk 2002; Kim & Slocum Jr. 2008). Hence, these antecedents have been regarded

as being stressors that lead to adjustment problems which, in turn, influence the outcome of organisational and individual levels (strain). The process of adjustment is presented through this model.

Regardless of the process linking the antecedents (the stressors) to adjustment problems (stress) in the workplace, scholars have constantly noted that the potential consequences of occupational stress influence the attitude, adjustment and effectiveness of the employees as well as the efforts of managers in HR practices (Teo & Waters 2002). Hence, over the past three decades, many scholars have studied the various antecedents which can influence expatriate adjustment. Although many antecedents have been studied, the various studies have yielded insufficiently organised and systemic results. In other words, all types of factors have been individually examined in various existing studies with respect to degrees of specific adjustment dimensions (e.g. work) to identify the relationship between them. For example, most studies adopted the comprehensive model of (Black et al., 1991a), which combines five sets of factors related to expatriate adjustment: 1) anticipatory factors, such as previous experiences and language abilities; 2) individual factors, such as self-efficacy and relational skills; 3) job factors, such as role clarity, role discretion, role novelty and role conflict; 4) organisational factors, such as co-worker support and logistical support; 5) non-work factors, such as spouse adjustment and culture novelty. Later, (Andreason, 2003) identified five different significant sets of factors influencing expatriate adjustment. He kept the same job factors but adapted organisational factor contexts to organisational culture and company size, individual factors to locus of control and non-work factors to previous international assignment experiences. Basically, many studies limited themselves to partly changing factors adopted in previous ones, possibly adding a new factor or changing the contexts of an existing one to re-examine its relationship to the degree of adjustment. However, systemic factorial studies of expatriate adjustment, exploring *why* and *how* individual factors influence expatriate adjustment, are limited in this research field. Thus, over the past three decades, most studies have followed similar patterns in their examination of the degrees of expatriate adjustment or have focused upon specific parts of the same model. Hence, the existing studies on the link between antecedents (stressors) and expatriate adjustment (stress) are not comprehensive and do not present many opportunities for expansion. In order to achieve any advancement, the

related and systemic factors should be considered altogether, as opposed to individually, to examine *which* and *in what way* factors influence expatriate adjustment, instead of a mere relationship with the degree of specific adjustment dimensions.

In order to overcome the limitations of previous studies in the understanding of expatriate adjustment experiences in terms of *why* and *how* related and systemic factors influence expatriate adjustment and *how* expatriates respond to them, this research study systematically examines expatriates adjustment experiences from two perspectives: 1) organisational and 2) individual. First, in order to understand the work roles and situations created in overseas workplaces by specific international assignment conditions, the strategies adopted by MNCs to define their international assignment purposes are examined. Then, based upon this, expatriates are categorise in terms of the specific expatriation conditions they face, which result in their different overseas adjustment experiences; this is first effected from organisational and work related perspectives, and then from individual and non-work related ones.

At the same time, since the study of expatriate adjustment involves work requirements and the interaction with colleagues in the local subsidiaries, an examination of these aspects from the perspective of their non-expatriate colleagues is integrated, which had not been considered in previous studies (Harrison, Shaffer and Bhaskar-Shrinivas in 2004). Some studies (e.g. Aycan, 1997) had indicated that host country national colleagues holding highly local ethnocentric beliefs are less willing to provide expatriates with support and information; this negatively affects the latter's work relationships and adjustment, which highlights the importance of including this perspective in the study.

2.2.4 The impact of organisational and work related conditions on expatriate adjustment

2.2.4.1 MNCs and their international assignment strategies

From the 1980s to the present day, MNCs have been a trend in the global business environment. Frenkel (2006) demonstrated that 30 of the 100 largest economies in the world feature MNCs. In a global business setting, multinational organisations

need to run complete and effective operations in order to match their international competition. In recent years, considerable concern has arisen over the globalisation of business management. Not only has it trans-nationally influenced business systems but, importantly, it has affected the practice of HR transformation and integration between headquarters and subsidiaries. As different national environments and cultures develop specific human resource management systems to meet local needs, MNCs have to address the challenges presented by different environments, cultures and needs by adopting global management strategies to achieve their internationalisation goals and thus establish themselves globally in positions of strength. Furthermore, (Dowling & Welch, 2008; Scullion and Collings, 2006) noted that MNC success depends on good global staffing, although this is the most expensive staffing strategy (Caligiuri et al. 2001; Lee & Liu 2006). According to Scullion and Collings (2006) this relates to "the critical issues faced by MNCs with regard to the employment of home, host and third country nationals to fill key positions in their headquarters and subsidiary operations".

A review of the literature shows that previous studies of MNC strategic approaches to internationalisation were conducted from various perspectives, including country-centred, simple-global, complex-global (Porter, 1986), domestic, international, multinational and global ones (Harzing and Ruysseveldt 2004; (Adler & Ghadar, 1990). In addition, Bartlett and Ghoshal in 1989 presented extensive discussions on the definitions of the terms of the internationalisation process, which focussed upon "domestic", "international", "global" and "transnational" perspectives. Although there may be slight differences in their specific emphases, the competitive advantages and strategic objectives of each category are clear; this study employs them to understand MNC strategies and goals.

In the first stage of their internationalisation, MNCs focus on domestic production and export. Then, in order to gain an advantage over their competitors, they set up cheaper foreign manufacturing subsidiaries. In their business systems, MNCs tend to dominate their foreign subsidiaries and to impose their headquarters' management systems. The second internationalisation stage refers to the international product life cycle. Basically, it addresses local responsiveness and the transfer of knowledge/technology to foreign units. From this perspective, MNCs need to assign

managers overseas not only for management development and financial control purposes but also for reasons of cross-cultural adaptability, often in the areas of sales, marketing and personnel. The third stage sees the global stage tending to implement global low cost and price competition strategies. Thus, local management advantages, including costs, are integrated with the parent country's management system. Finally, the transnational stage focuses on local responsiveness and cultural diversity and the home country's management strategy has to be adjusted in order to satisfy local needs, cultures and environments. Therefore, in order to implement their strategies, parent companies assign employees abroad to develop and gain international experience and skills.

Having briefly outlined the different terms and stages of MNC internationalisation, the relationship between MNC strategies and the resulting practices of international human resource management (HRM) is presented in the following section. Several studies (Perlmutter, 1969; Heenan & Perlmutter, 1979; Taylor et al. 1996) have defined four global business system approaches linked to global staffing strategies: ethnocentric, polycentric, regiocentric and geocentric.

The ethnocentric approach favours centralisation, with the parent company seeking to maximise its power and control over aspects, such as decision-making, in integrating with its foreign subsidiaries. In general, this strategy is commonly used in the first stage of MNC internationalisation or when there is a need to transfer technical skills to subsidiaries (Tung & Punnett, 1993). With reference to international HR management, in order to imprint the headquarters management system, culture and philosophy, MNCs tend to assign short-term expatriate managers abroad for product and technical purposes. In brief, the ethnocentric approach sees parent company nationals holding all crucial positions in the subsidiaries.

The polycentric strategy stresses local receptiveness. Hence, MNCs tend to focus on employing local resources, including labour, to fit into the local cultures and specific circumstances of foreign subsidiaries. In these instances, host nation employees will generally be placed at the management level of foreign subsidiaries to reduce linguistic and cultural differences. Under this strategy, expatriates will play less important roles, with MNCs possibly assigning just a few expatriates abroad. The disadvantage of this strategy is the low level of cultural interchange between the

parent company and its foreign subsidiaries, as well as the limited career development of employees in the absence of global perspectives.

Similarly, in the regiocentric approach (proposed by Heenan and Perlmutter in 1979), human resources are developed and operated on a geographical regional basis. Therefore, employees are selected and transferred within regions. In this way, not only can headquarters maintain control over the regions but host nationals are also able to manage their own subsidiaries. A geocentric management strategy is applied by globally oriented MNCs that require the integration of foreign subsidiaries and headquarters within a worldwide corporate culture. In order to achieve organisational integration, MNCs place their most suitable employees in expatriate positions in different countries to develop their international skills within the organisations.

MNCs in different stages of internationalisation apply different global staffing orientations (i.e. ethnocentric, polycentric, regiocentric or geocentric) to integrate with their foreign subsidiaries. These staffing orientations generate different international assignment purposes which lead to different expatriate roles and expatriation conditions.

2.2.4.2 The impact of international assignment purposes on expatriate roles

Based upon the abovementioned global staffing orientations, there are, in general, three main reasons for MNCs to assign expatriates in foreign subsidiaries. Firstly, expatriates are able to transfer knowledge to the subsidiaries (Edström & Galbraith 1977; Evans et al. 2002; Dickmann & Harris 2005; Zhang & Dodgson 2007; Harris 2002). Secondly, not only can they improve the inter-cultural competence of MNCs but also build important personal networks (Edström & Galbraith 1977; Bauer & Taylor 2001; Mayrhofer 2001, cited in Hartmann 2004; Sparrow et al. 2004), with international assignments also being seen as the best training for aspiring senior managers (Bauer & Taylor 2001; Selmer & Leung 2003a; Sparrow et al. 2004). Thirdly, expatriation helps organisational development by providing opportunities for innovation, organisational learning and corporate integration in the global environment.

In addition, Harzing in 1999(a) presents different expatriate authority strategies between headquarters and their subsidiaries: these feature a classification of the control mechanisms in two dimensions – direct vs. indirect and personal vs. impersonal – to define four categories of control functions. For example, if control is personal and direct, it is exercised by the headquarters through expatriates, employed as a direct personnel control channel, or home nationals under direct supervision. If the control is impersonal and direct, it falls within the realm of bureaucratic formalised control, which makes use of formal procedures with little need for expatriates to control overseas subsidiary employee behaviour. If the control is personal and indirect, it is implemented through socialisation and networks which aim to spread headquarters norms and values through the use of a huge number of expatriates. Lastly, if the control is impersonal and indirect, it is categorised as output control, which emphasises the evaluation and measuring of outputs with little use of expatriates.

Further to this, Harzing in 2002 surveyed expatriate managers from 104 different MNCs in 22 different countries. She drew an analogy of the different expatriate controlling roles with bears, bumble-bees and spiders. Bears represent the implementation of expatriate control at a dominant level. Conversely, when expatriates are used to control subordinates indirectly through socialisation and informal communication networks, they are characterised as bumble-bees; flying "from plant to plant" for socialisation. Finally, expatriates can also act as spiders; weaving informal communication networks to maintain control.

Observed through the lens of Harzing's three types of expatriate roles, international assignments can be seen to have different purposes, entailing different expatriate control roles which, in turn, influence their adjustment processes. For example, 'bear' expatriates exercise direct control and are empowered by headquarters to mainly dependent subsidiaries. This can be linked back to ethnocentric MNC global staffing orientations. Therefore, 'bears' have their 'heart at home', maintaining an ethnocentric approach to their international assignment purpose; this may cause greater strain in their adjustment in terms of their relationship with the locals, which also limits their level of involvement and interaction with them.

'Bumble-bees' embody the socialisation purposes of their international assignment to

integrate foreign subsidiaries and headquarters within a set of shared values. Hence, these purposes place expatriates in intermediate positions between subsidiaries and headquarters, generating in them ambiguous feelings during their adjustment process. Finally, like the 'bumble-bees', the 'spiders' take on an intensive presence role in the subsidiaries, which are also independent from headquarters. Harzing points at "marginal effectiveness", which means that information communication is most effective when expatriate presence is low. In other words, spiders perform well when there are few of them in the subsidiaries. This relates to the polycentric global staffing orientation, which emphasizes local receptiveness and results in MNCs assigning few expatriates abroad. In order to fulfil international assignment purposes of efficient information communication, it can be therefore assumed that expatriates taking on spider roles have to deal with substantially lonesome situations (being a minority in their groups) and tend to develop a strong desire to get involved with the locals. Different MNC staffing orientations towards internationalisation and international assignment purposes – which result in different expatriate roles – generate different expatriation conditions, such as the durations and ratios of expatriation in foreign workplaces, which influence the expatriate adjustment process.

2.2.4.3 The impact of international assignment purposes on expatriation

Expatriation is considered to be a function of the international assignment purposes. For example, (Evans, Pucik and Barsoux (2002) state that international assignment purposes and MNC strategies determine international assignment durations. In traditional expatriate assignments, which involve a demand-driven purpose, expatriates have to remain abroad long-term, generally from three to five years (Kim & Slocum Jr. 2008; Kollinger 2005; Dowling and Welch, 2004). In this transitional assignment, expatriates may face adjustment difficulties and, without family relocation, develop an increased desire for turnover. At the same time, it can be hard for them to resume and update their original home country work patterns, having been away for a long period of time.

Besides traditional expatriate assignments, frequent flyer, commuter and short-term assignments (Dowling & Welch 2004; Collings et al. 2007; Dowling et al., 2008), are linked to a global trend for skills transfer/problem solving and management control purposes (Latta 1999). The term "frequent flyer" identifies an employee that travels

and communicates frequently with headquarters, but whose family resides in the home country. This employee profile is operated in order to coordinate quality and timeliness across borders between subsidiaries and headquarters (Mayerhofer et al. 2004). The main problems linked to this type of assignment are last-minute trips, family issues (Welch et al. 2007) and an increased workload, which results in jetlag/burnout. The term "commuter assignment'' concerns those employees who travel overseas on a weekly or bi-weekly basis (Collings et al., 2007). The definition of commuter assignment implies that assignees commute on their own, without relocating their families (Collings et al., 2007). Therefore, like frequent flyers, commuters face the stress of intensive travel commitments and impacts on personal relationships (Dowling and Welch, 2004), such as family issues. Finally, "short-term assignment" identifies those employees who are assigned internally to overseas subsidiaries for a limited period of time, generally between a month and a year (Tahvanainen et al. 2005; Collings et al., 2007), while their families remain in the home country. These assignments, which are usually linked to highly technical tasks such as problem-solving and troubleshooting, are typical of the 'bear' expatriate role and of an ethnocentric global staffing orientation and entail the risk of failing to build good relationships with local colleagues and customers (Tahvanainen et al., 2005). Clearly, assignments of different durations present different issues and difficulties to expatriates, such as family relocation. Therefore, in expatriation studies, it is necessary to consider international assignment durations, which are linked, among others, to issues specific to some types of expatriates, such as family relocation, and to the strategies involved in their international assignment.

Besides the international assignment durations, the expatriation ratios in foreign subsidiaries also present a variety of implications. Connelly (2009) proposes a typology of expatriatism which can be presented by means of a two-by-two matrix shaped by two key organisational factors: the level of expatriation in local subsidiaries and profit orientation of organisation. He notes that expatriate workforce sizes will influence selection, training, experiences and the degree of understanding of adjustment issues. For example, organisations with large expatriate workforce sizes feature more standardised procedures and support for international assignments.

The issues that expatriates encounter abroad are shaped by their specific international

assignment conditions (antecedents) – i.e.: the purpose and duration of their assignments and the ratios of expatriation in the local subsidiaries – which, however, are clearly not the only factors influencing adjustment. From previous studies, for example, it can be seen that the length of the international assignment durations can variously influence expatriates' by creating family issues. Hence, specific individual and non-work related conditions (e.g. marital status) should be cohesively considered together with expatriation conditions.

2.2.5 The impact of individual and non-work related conditions on expatriate adjustment

Several researchers (Molinsky 2007; Shaffer et al. 2006; Kim & Slocum Jr. 2008) have stated that individual differences play more valid predictor roles of expatriate assignment effectiveness than others, such as organisational factors. Over the past 30 years, the research on expatriate adjustment has examined the controversy surrounding whether individual differences/different stressors – e.g. personal, workplace and family/friends factors – play a part in influencing the degree of expatriate adjustment (Harrison et al. 2004) and predict its success (Caligiuri 2000; Shaffer et al. 2006; Molinsky 2007). However, although considerable attention has been placed on this aspect of expatriate adjustment research, the resulting literature is not very cohesive.

For example, looking at demographics, it is clear that family factors are related and overlap with marital status. Hence, the expatriates' marital status is considered to represent a crucial individual and non-work related expatriation condition which variously influences adjustment in relation to other organisational and work related ones.

Marital status

In terms of marital status, some arguments support the positive relationship between marital status and overseas adjustment. Black (1988) and Black and Stephens (1989) stated that the most important non-work variable affecting the international assignment adjustment of US expatriates is family adjustment. However, the Catalyst study by Moore (2002) indicated that there is no remarkable difference of adjustment

difficulties to overseas life between the American married and single expatriates.

Kim and Slocum Jr. (2008) stated that the international assignment location might explain these conflicting results. The result of a field survey drawing on 94 US-based South Korean expatriates indicated the US as the preferred international assignment location for South Koreans. This appears to be due to the good quality of US education, which enables their children to learn English and experience new learning opportunities. Hence, attractive features pertaining to the children of expatriates can reduce the desire for an early return, regardless of any adjustment issues. Conversely, Brett and Stroh (1995) asserted that employees with children have a lower assignment motivation. Taking into account the similar Asian cultures and economic statuses of South Koreans and Taiwanese and based on the study by (Kim and Slocum Jr., 2008), it is important to study and categorise Taiwanese expatriates based upon their marital status to examine its impact on their overseas adjustment. Although most researchers believe that single employees have a higher assignment motivation than married ones, the attitude of spouses will impact on the expatriate intent and the assignment location/environment may differently influence the adjustment of single or married expatriates. Hence, to categorise different expatriation situations with regard to overseas adjustment, the expatriates' marital status must be considered in this research study.

2.2.6 Outcomes of expatriate adjustment

Empirical studies have focused upon the expatriates' attitudes and behaviours as significant consequences of their adjustment. These predicted outcomes include psychological well-being (Wang & Kanungo 2004), work-life balance and job satisfaction (Shaffer & Harrison 1998). The ways in which work-life balance and job satisfaction are linked to expatriate adjustment are now discussed.

Work-life (family) balance

Work-life balance has been defined by Hill, Hawkins, Ferris and Weitzman (2001) as "the degree to which an individual is able to simultaneously balance the temporal, emotional and behavioural demands of both paid work and family responsibilities". Some studies (e.g. Milkie & Peltola 1999) have pointed at the link between work-

family balance (or conflict) and overall well-being, as well as work stress and psychological adjustments such as depression and anxiety (Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2001). Furthermore, several researchers have found that work-family conflict has adverse effects on work, such as dissatisfaction and burnout. It is therefore likely that dual-income families experience negative work-related outcomes and emotions such as work overload, depressed social networks, unbalanced roles between work and family and individual identity conflicts (Viers and Prouty, 2002). Greenglass and Burke (1988), Bacharach et al. (1991) and Noor (2004) all discuss the relationship between burnout and work-life conflict. Furthermore, Parasuraman and Simmers (2001) note that lack of personal control results in strain. Additionally, work-family balance issues are also associated with gender. Parasuraman and Simmers (2001) observe that there is a significant difference between men and women in their work and family role characteristics, experiences and psychological outcomes. However, this relationship is not supported by the results of Lyness and Kropf in 2005, but the small sample size adopted (n=14) could help explain the fewer significant relationships found in their study model. Hence, an argument still exists regarding the link between gender differences and work-life balance. In general, it can be assumed that, in order to explore expatriate adjustment relative to work-life balance (or conflict), the important stressor role of family demands/issues has to be considered. It can also be assumed that expatriate family conditions in international assignments influence their overseas adjustment based upon the outcome of the work-family balance.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the attitudinal variable which reflects people's feelings about their work and aspects of their job, including global and facet approaches. The global approach considers the overall feelings that people have about their jobs. Conversely, the facet approach involves people evaluating their satisfaction level with their jobs with regard to specific facets, such as rewards, colleagues, the nature of the work and job conditions. According to Black and Gregersen (1999), 10-20% of all US managers assigned abroad return early because of job dissatisfaction or difficulties in adjusting to a foreign country. Therefore, as it is highly correlated with expatriate turnover, job satisfaction is considered to be one of the most important

variables in the study of expatriation, as supported by several scholars (Allen et al. 2005; van Breukelen et al. 2004; Shaffer & Harrison 1998; Takeuchi, Yun & Tesluck, 2002). Moreover, the meta-analysis study of Griffeth et al. (2000) found a significant correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention (i.e. harbouring thoughts of leaving an organisation), followed by a less significant correlation with future turnover prediction. In other words, job satisfaction has a strong impact on expatriate failure; hence, studying how to increase expatriate job satisfaction is a dominant concern which reflects the global competition between MNCs.

Furthermore, the positive relationship between expatriate adjustment and job satisfaction has been demonstrated. For instance, investigating expatriates in Hong Kong, Aryee and Stone (1996) found that work adjustment had a positive influence on their job satisfaction, consistently supporting the results of Shaffer and Harrison's 1998 study. In addition, Takeuchi, Yun & Tesluk (2002) stated that poor interaction with local people in the host country or workplace influences expatriate job satisfaction, as supported by the results of Kim and Slocum's 2008 study of US-based South Korean expatriates.

Regardless of the relationship between personal factors and job satisfaction, several pieces of research have suggested that job satisfaction is associated with nationality, as different nationalities have different values and levels of job satisfaction, as shown by Spector et al.'s 2007 study of managers in 24 countries. This is confirmed by Pearson and Chong (1997) who, in their study of 286 nurses in Malaysia, noted that the specific values of Chinese Malaysians have an impact on their job satisfaction. For example, the more pronounced collectivist aspects of Chinese culture, compared with those of others, would have a stronger influence on employee job satisfaction through the evaluation of their interpersonal situations. In brief, the results of studies on a particular culture do not necessarily apply to others. In any case, job satisfaction appears to be associated with specific personal factors and expatriate adjustment in different perspectives. Varying degrees of work satisfaction are linked to the expatriates' commitment to organisational goals and international assignments, which influences their intention to stay in or leave their jobs. All the above turns the attention of this research study towards Taiwanese expatriates in the UK.

The main observations derived from the literature are:

- The emotional and behavioural demands of paid work and family responsibilities are linked to how work and family conditions are balanced when people are adjusting to a new situation.

- Expatriate family conditions in international assignments influence their overseas adjustment to the outcome of work-family balance.

- Job satisfaction levels are linked to job facets such as the nature of work, job conditions and colleagues.

- Specifically for people from collectivist cultures, job satisfaction can be judged based upon their interpersonal situations.

2.3 A Review of the Theoretical Literature

In the previous section, the exact phenomenon subject of this research study, with the definition and dimensions of expatriate adjustment, has been identified, and the critical reviews from the existing literature on the antecedents and consequences of expatriate adjustment have been highlighted. In this theoretical literature section, the aim is to extract the main concepts and related theories which are drawn upon in this research study. The following review and discussion of related theories will lead to the development of a conceptual framework. Hence, Nicholson's work role transition theory and role theory will be grounded in order to develop the concepts of *which* determining factors influence expatriate adjustment and *in which way* they do. Following the review and discussion of Hofstede's national culture difference which draws on culture shock and local ethnocentrism, the concepts of how Taiwanese expatriates' experience work relationships and adjustment in the UK are developed.

2.3.1 Nicholson's work role transition theory

Nicholson (1984) defined work role transition as "any change in employment status and any major change in job content". This, applied to the work context of international assignments, sees individuals facing work role transition and having to adjust to role changes as they abandon their home country work roles to take on new positions abroad. Numerous scholars (including Dawis and Lofquist 1984; Nicholson

1984; Van Maanen and Schein 1977, cited in Shay and Baack 2004) have essentially argued that individuals can adjust by either altering their new roles to better match their characteristics or by altering their own attitudes and behaviours to better fit their roles. Obviously, any changes influence the future individual development of the expatriates as well as that of their organisations.

A codification of the relevant theoretical ideas was provided in Nicholson's article "A Theory of Work Role Transitions" and Dawis and Lofquist's "A Psychological Theory of Work Adjustment" in 1984. These studies provided deeper arguments regarding the underlying variables of work adjustment. Based upon adjustment research, the study by Dawis and Lofquist (1984) examined the influence of individual personal development, i.e. attitudes and behaviours, on the demands of a new role in a new work environment. They argued that adjustment can be viewed in active and reactive terms. In active adjustment, individuals can adjust by changing their environment to a new situation – as in role development – which better fits their needs and abilities. In reactive adjustment, on the other hand, individuals can change themselves – as in personal development – to adjust to the new situation.

Nicholson (1984) postulated that role shifts affect the individuals' modes of adjustment, resulting in them making changes in themselves (i.e. personal changes) and in aspects of their work roles (i.e. role innovation). *Personal changes* refer to "reactive changes which are absorbed through the individuals altering their frames of reference, values, or other identity-related attributes". *Role innovation* refers to "role requirements implemented to better match individual needs, abilities, and identities" and includes changing "task objectives, methods, materials, scheduling and the interpersonal relationships integral to role performance". Nicholson also stated that there are four modes of adjustment which shape the individuals' adaptation to their new roles: role requirements (i.e. role novelty and role discretion), personal motivational orientations, prior occupational socialisation and the introduction-socialisation process. The resulting matrix is laid out over the two dimensions of role and personal development, identifying four adjustment modes based upon the extent to which either development is enacted (see Figure 2.1). These enactments take into account, in terms of personal development, the aptitude to absorb new demands – e.g. attitudes or behaviours – and, in terms of role development, the tendency to redesign

situational demands. These four outcomes, which can be positioned in the four quadrants of the matrix, are: replication (limited changes in both work roles and attitudes or behaviours), determination (substantial changes in work roles but limited changes in attitudes or behaviours), absorption (limited changes in work roles but substantial changes in attitudes or behaviours) and exploration (substantial changes in both work roles and attitudes or behaviours).
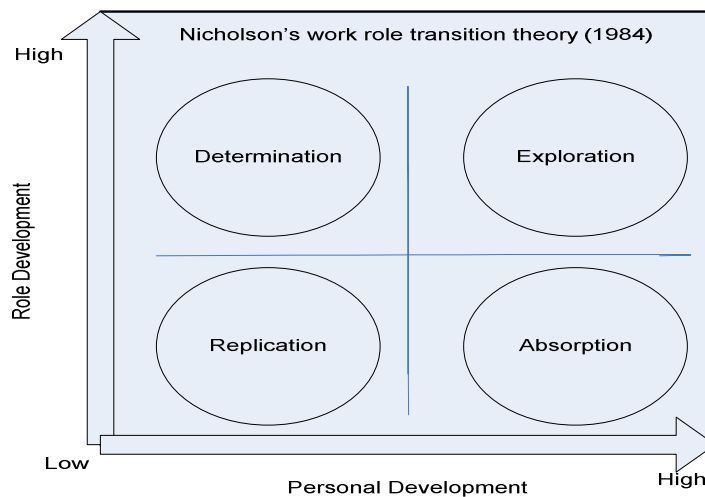
Figure2.1: Nicholson's work role transition theory (1984)

In general, it can be seen how Nicholson's adjustment modes provide a general idea of how the expatriates' personal and role developments influence the way in which they adjust. Clearly, it is a more accurate tool than the contexts of Black's work adjustment dimension for the more rigorous examination of expatriate adjustment in the work contexts. The work purposes for which expatriates are assigned to foreign subsidiaries determine their work roles in their new work environment which, in turn, change their attitudes and behaviours. Hence, in this research study, the work role transition adjustment dimension is considered instead of Black's work adjustment in a general work context. Summarising, taking into account what was mentioned earlier in the adjustment dimension section, expatriate adjustment in this research will be examined under three dimensions: psychological, interaction and work.

In order to improve the application of Nicholson's work role transition theory to international work role transitions, (Shay and Baack, 2004) conducted a quantitative study involving 194 expatriate hotel general managers and 505 of their subordinates. The expatriate managers in that study came from 32 home countries and were

assigned to 194 hotels in 83 host countries. Shay and Baack (2004) identified some of the mechanisms through which international assignments influence the expatriate modes of adjustment. Since one of the purposes of international assignments is managerial development (e.g. gaining international experience), expatriate managers are likely (and indeed expected) to modify their personal values, attitudes, and beliefs as well as the way they do their jobs in their new work roles. Moreover, the study claimed that it may be challenging for expatriate managers to promote role innovation in their locally hired subordinates when the latter are not newcomers, but are experienced and socialised in the companies' behavioural norms; this would influence the managers' adjustment modes (including their personal changes and role innovation). Hence, (Shay and Baack, 2004) showed that the purpose of the managers' international assignments and the level of socialisation of behaviour of their local subordinates have an influence upon the former's adjustment (modes), which need to be considered and developed from Nicholson's work transition theory. Shay and Baack (2004) suggested that the correlation between superiors and subordinates needs to be given adequate consideration in the study of expatriate adjustment. Hence, in its examination of expatriate adjustment in the work role transition adjustment dimension, this research study takes into consideration the purposes of expatriate international assignments. At the same time, expatriate work relationships will be explored in terms of the level of local support they receive from their locally national colleagues in order to draw out expatriate adjustment experiences in work-related contexts.

This echoes (Ashforth and Saks, 1995) suggestion on future work transition related to research and to Nicholson's work transition theory. They stated that all resources, including peers and supervisors, should be considered in an integrated way to enrich the adjustment measurement. Their suggestions shaped the research method of this study: to not only conduct interviews with the expatriates but also with their locally hired co-workers to enrich the data and results on expatriate adjustment. At the same time, Ashforth and Saks (1995) suggested that situational specific and life-stage factors, such as expected role durations and the co-occurrence of other significant transitions (i.e. geographical relocations, the onset of mid-life crises) should be considered to enrich studies related to work-role transitions theory. This suggestion highlights the relevance of carrying out a study on the expatriate adjustment of Asian

expatriates in a Western workplace (i.e. a context relocation). The expected durations of new expatriate work roles is also focused upon in this study.

Furthermore, returning to the suggestions made by (Shay and Baack, 2004) and in order to understand different expatriate adjustment experiences, there is a need to consider the purposes of their international assignments, which reflect on their work role changes, and their socialisation levels, which refer to the values and behaviours of the expatriates and of their locally hired colleagues. In other words, in order to understand how international assignment purposes influence expatriate adjustment, their work role changes need to be examined. This will be done by means of role theory.

2.3.2 Role theory

Nicholson's work role transition theories suggest that the adjustment to a new role or situation is fundamental to the subsequent outcomes in the role itself (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984; Nicholson, 1984b). In addition, several studies (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Black et al., 1991b; Shaffer et al., 1999) have identified four job stressors, related to the characteristics of the work role, that are strong predictors for expatriate adjustment, i.e.: role ambiguity (uncertainty regarding the positions' requirements), role discretion (decision-making autonomy), role conflicts (contrasting cues regarding job expectations) and role novelty (differences between host and home country work roles). Although some studies (Munton and West 1995; Black 1988) found that there is no significant relation between role novelty and adjustment, they were contradicted by (Nicholson and Imaizumi, 1993), in their study of Japanese expatriates in the UK, and by Shaffer, Harrison and Gilley's (1999) study of 452 expatriates from different home countries in 45 host countries, which found evidence of such a relationship. Therefore, it is argued that role novelty is a predictor of overseas adjustment for expatriates who experience a wide cultural gap with regards to their host environment.

In general, expatriate roles are defined and changed by the home and host environmental situations in order to fit the needs of international assignments. Thus, in terms of work contexts, expatriates face different work roles when they adjust to new places, affecting their attitudes, behaviours and cultural demands. Consistently,

based upon Nicholson's work role transition theory, the levels of role development shape different adjustment modes. At the same time, several researches have pointed out that role development/changes, which bring out changes in attitudes and behaviour, affect employee outcomes. One of these is the study made by (Örtqvist and Wincent, 2006) on the relationship between the various facets of role stress (i.e. role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload), which was carried out by means of a meta-analysis of 295 related studies. Consistently with current occupational stress research, it concluded that a relationship exists between role ambiguity and increasing tension, which may indicate burnout (e.g. emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation), and decreased job satisfaction and organisational commitment, which has similar outcomes to those of role conflict and role overload. Hence, understanding expatriate role development/change provides an indication of expatriate adjustment experiences, i.e. how expatriates feel and react to role development/change. This, based upon Nicholson's work transition theory and role theory, emphasises the importance of understanding expatriate role development/change, as an indicator of the situation of expatriate adjustment.

In this research study, Taiwanese expatriates working in UK subsidiaries provide a pertinent context in which to explore the dynamic relationship between the nature of work roles and adjustment. The adjustment situations of Taiwanese expatriates can be explored by understanding the role development/change they face relocating from their Taiwan headquarters to UK subsidiaries. Furthermore, the huge culture gap which exists between Taiwanese expatriates and the UK environment of their new workplaces engenders in the former a high level of role novelty and consequent adjustment requirements. Thus, this study can enrich the knowledge about the relationship between role novelty and overseas adjustment to the benefit of future studies, as is shown in the next section through Hofstede's national culture difference claims.

2.3.3 Culture difference

From a cultural perspective, national and regional culture differences symbolise a diverse convergence of norms, values and belief systems (House et al., 2004). Although there are numerous definitions of culture, based on the social science literature, it can be defined through a three-layer construct: the outer layer embodies a

society's explicit artefacts and products, the middle one symbolises the norms and values that guide that society, and the inner one represents all the implicit assumptions that guide people's behaviour (Hofstede, 1980 & Trompenaars, 1993 cited in Vaiman and Brewster, 2015). In other words, culture is a shared convergence knowledge that consists of the values, spawns the attitudes and affects the behaviours through which the members of a specific society interpret their experiences and structure their social behaviour (luthans and doh, 2009). Hence, when finding themselves in unfamiliar environments, individuals will often experience feelings of anxiety and discomfort due to concerns about the appropriateness of their behaviours. This kind of circumstance is often labelled "culture-shock". Feelings of confusion and frustration regarding unfamiliar circumstances can lead to a lack of adjustment and potentially and ultimately to expatriates failing to live in an unfamiliar place (Hutchings 2005). Therefore, cross-cultural adjustment is the first challenge with which expatriates are faced. The reason for this is that, in their host countries, they initially adopt the same behaviours they would in their home countries. However, after experiencing this, they adapt to the cultures of the host countries (Huang et al. 2005; Selmer 2006). This is a consequence of a stimulus and reinforced response mechanism (Miner 1992). In general, expatriates will experience adjustment at work, which may have adverse consequences, such as feelings of impotence, confusion, anxiety and a sense of being lost in a different cultural environment (d'Ardenne & Mahtain 1999, cited in Selmer 2001). Of course, people adjust to and perform better in host countries with cultures similar to their own. This is supported by the study of Paik and Sohn (2004) that found that expatriates from Japanese-based MNCs performed more effectively in regions with cultures and knowledge more similar to those of Japan – e.g. Taiwan and Singapore – than they did in the US. More simply, it can be assumed that cultural value dissimilarities influence expatriate adjustment at the psychological and social levels. Although Selmer's studies on Western expatriates in China (2006) and the comparison of American expatriates in Canada and Germany argue that there is no significant association between cultural novelty and level of expatriate adjustment – which implies that the degree of cultural similarity/dissimilarity does not reveal any difference in the extent of expatriate adjustment – this can be questioned with regards to limitations in the nature of the expatriates' culture and methodology. These results, which were obtained from Western expatriates, may not be applicable to Asian ones. Also, the data were

collected through both mail and online survey; they show the relationship with the degree of expatriate adjustment but limited the exact knowledge of how much culture novelty, or the degree of cultural similarity/dissimilarity influences expatriate adjustment. Hence, this research study is interested in exploring how Asian expatriates adjust to the substantial degrees of cultural value dissimilarity/novelty they find in their host country. At the same time, from the culture novelty perspective, this research study explores the ways in which the expatriates' local co-workers' values and behaviours, which are shaped through the socialisation process, influence expatriate adjustment experiences. In order to understand the culture novelty faced by Taiwanese expatriates in the UK, the definition of culture and of Hofstede's national culture difference is given; then, the perspective of local ethnocentrism is discussed to examine how the culture novelty of the expatriates' locally hired colleagues influences expatriate adjustment.

The most comprehensive and generally accepted definition of culture (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952) is "culture is a product; it is historical; it includes ideas patterns and values; it is selective; it is learned; it is based upon symbols; and it is an abstraction from behaviours and the products of behaviour". Culture is, therefore, shaped by a particular social group and includes the interaction of values, attitudes and behaviours between its members. According to Sorge (1995), a nation's culture develops over time and is influenced by national history, demographic and economic development, geography and the ecological environment. Therefore, people from different nations have different cultures. In this study, in order to understand the degree to which the cultural novelty faced by Taiwanese expatriates in Britain affects their adjustment experiences, Hofstede's (national) culture difference needs to be presented.

Hofstede's (national) culture difference

Geert Hofstede (1984; 2001) identified the following five metrics to the test the cultural gap existing between nations:

1). The *power distance* index: a society's level of power inequality is accepted by all its members; this includes the relationship with authority. When applied to society, it refers to the interaction of politeness between individuals holding

different status levels. Moreover, when applied to an organisational context, the distance equals the inequality gap between superiors and subordinates. For example, the UK and USA are characterised by a small power distance, which means that organisations are fairly decentralised, with low hierarchical pyramids and limited numbers of supervisory personnel. Conversely, Asian countries, such as Taiwan, are characterised by a huge power distance.

2). *Individualism versus collectivism*: the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. In an individualist-dominated society, individuals place priority on themselves or their families (spouses and children). A collectivist culture places the group's interests first, as it asserts that an individual belongs to one or more groups since birth. In an organisational context, collectivism/communitarianism results in long decision-making times because collective goals have to be agreed upon through consultation and consensus. Conversely, individualism involves very short decision-making times.

3). *Masculinity versus femininity*: the allocation of roles between the genders is fundamental in a society. In other words, it is a measure of the degree to which men's and women's roles are allowed to overlap in a society.

4). *Uncertainty avoidance*: the degree to which a society tolerates uncertainty and ambiguity. In an uncertainty-avoiding society, people maintain "strict codes of behaviour and a belief in absolute truths" and feel nervous when faced with unpredictable and unclear circumstances.

5). *Long-term orientation versus short-term orientation*: "Long term orientations are thrift and perseverance. Short-term orientations are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations and saving one's face".

According to Hofstede (1984 & 2001), Taiwan scores high in long-term orientation (over 80%) and uncertainty avoidance (over 60%), but low in individualism (around 10%). In contrast, the UK scores 20% in long-term orientation, 30% in uncertainty avoidance and 80% in individualism. This makes it clear that these (national) culture differences generate some culture-shock effects on not only in Taiwanese MNCs operating aboard but also in their expatriate employees. In terms of the institutional perspective, Taiwanese MNCs face culture differences in the

imposition of their HRM practices on their UK subsidiaries followed by international staffing strategies which, in turn, influence expatriate adjustment experiences. For instance, according to Chang, Wilkinson and Mellahi's 2007 HRM study of Taiwanese MNCs' UK subsidiaries, the individual performance appraisal schemes used in Taiwan are not welcome due to their collectivist culture; thus, the formal and systematic performance appraisal belonging to the UK's HRM tradition has to be adopted on an annual basis in the UK subsidiaries of Taiwanese MNCs. In addition, the HRM practices of Taiwanese firms involve long term employment to strengthen job security and, consequently, ensure employee loyalty (Chang et al., 2009) and build trust-based relationships, which are related to the long-term Taiwanese cultural orientation. Hence, based on this culture, Taiwanese MNCs tend to assign parent-country nationals, as expatriates, to the top management positions in their foreign subsidiaries (Chen et al., 2005).

From the expatriate perspective, Taiwanese expatriates working in the UK that are placed under the headquarters' cultural control also face a huge cultural gap and are put in a position to improve their attitudes and behaviours in the new workplace. For example, following up on what was mentioned above – the influence of the collectivist culture on various performance appraisal scheme practices – the case study results of (Chang et al., 2009) regarding the control mechanisms of Taiwanese MNCs in the UK show that expatriates feel uncomfortable during appraisal meetings in the UK subsidiaries due to the collectivist/team harmony orientation of Taiwanese culture (which emphasises the avoidance of conflict in interpersonal relationships); hence, they prefer to deal with this type of issue indirectly, through emails, rather than during face-to-face meetings (Wu, 2004). In addition, Taiwanese culture values tend to avoid high degrees of uncertainty, which implies that Taiwanese expatriates feel nervous when placed in an unpredictable, unclear and culturally novel workplace. However, they tend to develop a tolerance for uncertain and ambiguous situations while working in a place characterised by a low uncertainty avoidance culture. Also, Taiwanese expatriates are used to work in integrated groups and to agree upon group decisions; however, they are faced with new workplaces with people who adopt individual priorities and tend to favour short decision-making times. These contrasts influence their adjustment experiences working in the UK subsidiaries.

Some scholars (McSweeney, 2002) criticised Hofstede on account of: the choice of sampled countries, which could theoretically affect the metrics emerging from his study; the lack of evidence from Communist nations and the sampled values, deemed to be insufficiently comprehensive to exhaustively influence metrics; and the single method of data collection, deemed to be inadequate to produce valid results. At the same time, his claims of national culture difference might be undermined by limiting his study to world-wide IBM cross-subsidiaries considered as a monopolistic organisational culture; the differences may need to be explained by other reasons, such as the characteristics of the sample, and the organisational size (Durvasula et al., 2006; Gerhart and Fang, 2005). However, comparing Hosftede's national culture difference study to other popular ones such as Schwartz's (1994) (Schwartz, 1994)and the seven-dimensional model of national culture differences proposed by Fons Trompenaars (1993) in the book *Raiding the Waves of Culture* (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998), the metrics in Hofstede's national culture difference model appear to be independently determined through rigorous empirical studies focusing on cross-culturally managed workplaces (Hofstede, 1996).

I recognised that some influential cross-culture differences studies claim that national culture perhaps should not be the only focused factor. However, after considering the purpose of this study, I felt that national culture should be thought of the focused factor for this expatriate adjustment study and Hofstede's culture difference is a suitable concept for two main reasons. Frist, past research has consistently cited Hofsted's culture difference study as the most prominent guides for cross-culture management due to its convenience, popularity and even used the metrics as the foundation model with limited alternatives (Taras et al., 2009). Second, Hofstede states national culture is the shared 'values'. The organisational culture - 'shared perceptions of daily practices' does not reflect values although the organisational culture of IBM in his study is considerable difference (Hofstede, 1991). It consist with the quantifying culture study result of (Taras et al., 2009) that values is the central for cross-culture management regarding human behaviour regulation. The focus of Hofstede's statements on (national) culture difference applying in this study is to provide the central tendencies of Taiwan and British nations in order to indicate the different values between two nations towards culture

novelty Taiwanese expatriates face while working in the UK subsidiaries which influence to their adjustment experiences. Meanwhile, several scholars (Chandrakumara and Sparrow, 2004; Chang et al., 2007; Noorderhaven and Harzing, 2003) have stated the cultural implications of country-of-origin for human resource management (HRM) policies/ practices of MNCs in emerging economies which will be discussed in the following chapter (see chapter 3). Hence, Hofstede framework appropriate the purpose of this study, and the five metrics listed above provides a clear concept of a cultural gap which proves to be highly significant, for instance, between Taiwan and the UK. The metrics help us to understand how some of the Taiwanese shared values influence Taiwanese MNCs' HRM policies/practices and how they are related to the international assignment strategies and to expatriation in the UK. Furthermore, how their attitudes and behaviours are related to the Taiwanese expatriates' work relationship in UK subsidiaries and their adjustment, as examined in this study. At the same time and in order to gain a deeper understanding of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences in the UK, the relevance of exploring, in this study, the host nation colleagues' perspective on expatriate adjustment, linked to local ethnocentrism and culture gap influences, is highlighted.

2.3.4 Local ethnocentrism

Local ethnocentrism is "the propensity to view one's own cultural traditions and behaviours as right and those of others as wrong". Applying this to the study of expatriate adjustment, stated that, when host nation colleagues believe their group to be better than that of expatriates, they reject the latter's culture and refrain from getting to know them, even ostracising them. In other words, host nation colleagues who hold highly ethnocentric beliefs are less willing to provide support and information to expatriates. Therefore, the local ethnocentric attitude of host nation colleagues generates feelings of mistrust, prejudice and insecurity, which bring out ambiguities and uncertainties and decrease the expatriates' motivation and their ability to develop relationships with colleagues in a foreign environment. Furthermore, it causes difficulties in expatriate adjustment and can even cause expatriates to consider resigning from their international assignment.

Newton and Jimmieson (2009), in their study of three organisations with 256

employees, show that job stressors (i.e. role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload) are not the only ones significantly related to less favourable employee adjustment, but that social stressors should also be considered. Social stressors include interpersonal conflicts (i.e. conflicts occurring between co-workers in the workplace), lack of supervisor support (the feeling that supervisors do not support the employees' goals and wellbeing) and the lack of feedback (i.e. not being provided with information about one's performance in a role). Therefore, role information and social support in the workplace have a significant impact on employee adjustment. This was followed by Varma, Pichler and Budhwar (2011) with their study of 493 host country nationals in the UK, host nation colleagues provide role-related information and support to those expatriates who they categorise as being part of their group. In the UK, this categorisation tends to be made based on perceived values of similarity, ethnocentrism and collectivism, meaning that host nation colleagues relate to those expatriates who have similar values which fit in with the local customs and culture. Hence, based on Varma, Pichler and Budhwar (2011) study of expatriates in the UK, it is important to understand how ethnocentrism drives the interactions between host nation colleagues and expatriates with respect to social stressors.

Furthermore, in Florkowski and Fogel's (1999) study, survey data collected from 250 expatriates mainly based in the US and Europe shows that local ethnocentrism has a negative effect on work adjustment. Consistently, the results of Templer (2010) on 129 host-country national subordinates of expatriate managers in Singapore show that there is a negative relationship between subordinate ethnocentrism and work adjustment. Also, Shaffer, Harrion, Gregersen, Black and Ferzandi (2006) study of South Korean and Japanese expatriates states that local ethnocentrism not only affects expatriate interaction adjustment but also their withdrawal cognitions and contextual performance. Basically, most studies use surveys to measure the level of ethnocentrism for expatriates in foreign work environments to understand their attitudes toward foreign culture traditions and behaviours. Obviously, ethnocentric attitudes of locally hired colleagues also influence expatriate work and interaction adjustment and they therefore need to be addressed. The relevance of this study of the adjustment of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK is supported by the need to understand the attitudes prevalent between expatriates and their local

colleagues and how these influence expatriate work and interaction adjustment, especially in the presence of a substantial cultural gap.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, an empirical review was made of the literature on expatriate adjustment and its significant antecedents and consequences. The existing empirical literature review highlighted four main research gaps which helped to shape the research design of this study. For example, the bulk of the existing literature on expatriate adjustment considers the determining factors influencing the degree of expatriate adjustment; however, these factors are considered individually but not systemically to understand why and how they influence expatriate adjustment. The existing empirical studies review, for instance, shows the connection between the MNCs' staffing orientations and their expatriation situations (e.g. an ethnocentric approach involves the assigning of specified numbers of expatriates to local subsidiaries from generation to generation for control purposes). At the same time, due to varying international assignment purposes, expatriates are assigned with different lengths of international assignment durations, which highlights a connection with various family relocation issues. Hence, the MNCs' staffing orientations, expatriation and specific related issues (e.g. length of assignment durations and status of family relocation) are considered systemically in this research study. At the same time, following up on the limitations of previous studies on expatriate adjustment, *the way* in which expatriates respond to the determining factors are considered in this study; thus, the research method makes use of in-depth interviews. Lastly, the limited information available from multiple perspectives on the expatriate adjustment of Asian expatriates in Western contexts is enriched. Hence, in this study, Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK is explored from the perspectives of both the expatriates and of their host nation colleagues.

The theoretical literature was also reviewed to identify the main concepts of adjustment and culture gap which are focused upon in this research study. For example, based upon Nicholson's work role transition theory, the dimension of work adjustment were refined as work role transition adjustment in order to understand expatriate adjustment through their work role and personal development in a new workplace. Following up on role theory, the determining factors of work role on

expatriate adjustment are focused upon in this study. Furthermore, from the culture novelty perspective, culture shock – which was explained by Hofstede's culture difference – points at the importance of exploring Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK and the related adjustment issues they may face, such as the different level of power distance, and their influence on work interaction and adjustment. At the same time, local ethnocentrism clearly indicates the importance of understanding how the culture novelty perceived by the expatriates' host nation colleagues influences work relationships and expatriate adjustment. Importantly, local ethnocentrism and culture gaps predict the highly constrained nature of the relationship between expatriates and their host nation colleagues, which causes work and interaction adjustment issues. Hence, the empirical and theoretical literature reviews identified the significant issues to be explored in this study and its design outline, such as the inclusion of the expatriates' host nation colleagues' perspectives in the examination of work relationships and expatriate adjustment, which is effected through both survey and in-depth interviews.

As mentioned earlier, the determining factors need to be explored systemically to understand *why* and *how* expatriation situations linked to MNC staffing orientations influence expatriate adjustment and how Taiwanese expatriates face culture novelty and respond to their expatriation situations to adjust in the UK. Hence, in the next chapter, the contexts of Taiwanese MNCs are discussed to understand their expatriation situations, i.e. international assignment conditions and work roles, aimed at the specific international assignment purposes linked to their staffing orientations, then relating them to the specific situations of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK.

CHAPTER

THREE

The International Assignments of Taiwanese MNCs and their Expatriates

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to form an assumptive context for the kind of adjustment situations and experiences that Taiwanese expatriates may face while working in the UK by exploring the Taiwanese economic development and the effects of the home and host countries' economic and cultural perspectives on emerging economies in shaping the growth of Taiwanese multinational corporations.

3.2 MNC Strategic Approaches Based on the Home and Host Countries' Contexts

Based on what was mentioned in the section on MNC strategies drawn from the existing literature (see chapter 2), in order to address the challenges presented by the different environments, cultures and needs of subsidiaries in host countries, the MNCs adopt global staffing strategies; these, in turn, are influenced by the different internationalisation stages and purposes of MNCs. Thus, the MNCs' global staffing strategies for their subsidiaries in host countries are related to the development of specific HRM systems, which are shaped by effects linked to the MNCs' country of origin.

Through their study of 26 HRM design choices of domestic and foreign-invested firms in Sri Lanka, (Chandrakumara and Sparrow, 2004) outlined the influence of national cultures on HRM policies/practices by understanding the element of national culture in predicting HRM policies/practice design choices. For instance,

(Vaiman and Brewster, 2015) claimed that the cultural environment (e.g. the level of respect for hierarchy and prominence of networking) is way beyond the control of an organisational environment in terms of its implications for international organisations' HRM. This is consistent with the statement of (Noorderhaven and Harzing, 2003) regarding the strength of country-of-origin effects on MNCs; they stated that the characteristics of the home culture, the economic terms of the headquarters and subsidiaries, the cultural and institutional diversity of the MNCs' foreign subsidiaries environments and the growth path of the MNCs should also be considered. Obviously the differences in national cultures and economic statuses, and the characteristic of the industries and the local environments determine the degree of country-of-origin effects on the development of HRM policies/practices related to MNC staffing strategies in host countries.

Therefore, in order to obtain more reliable and objective results, any future research on the global staffing orientations of MNCs from different countries should consider the way the home and host countries' economies and cultures affect specific MNC staffing strategies, which, in turn, influence their expatriation (e.g. international assignment conditions) as a nexus contracts.

3.2.1 The effect of the economy on staffing strategies

In terms of the influence of economic terms on global staffing orientations, the results of several existing studies indicated the influence of home and host countries' economies and culture on specific MNC staffing strategies. Supported by the study of Vo's (2009) which carried out over a six-year period (2001-2007), the result offers empirical evidence for this. Through the qualitative study of a Japanese and a US automotive MNC operating in Vietnam, the result showed that the US MNC tend to apply polycentric global staffing approach/orientation for localisation purpose in developing host countries (i.e. Vietnam). Conversely, the Japanese MNC took ethnocentric staffing orientation approach in Vietnam. Hence, in order to understand how Taiwanese expatriates adjust in UK subsidiaries, the context of the Taiwanese economy needs to be examined and then linked to its MNCs' global staffing orientations.

3.2.2 Emerging economies

The term "emerging (market) economy" is used to describe those countries that are in a state of limited or partial industrialisation and are experiencing rapid-growth economic development and liberalisation by adopting free-market-oriented governmental policies; in other words, countries that demonstrate characteristic trends toward marketization and privatisation. Based on the definition of their economic structure and status of development, emerging economies are divided into two groups: developing economies in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Middle-East, and transitional economies in China and former Soviet Union countries (Hoskisson et al., 2000). UNCTAD (2006) categorises emerging economies into two groups: newly industrialised economies (such as Taiwan and South-Korea) and rapidly developing ones (such as China and India).

Aryee, Chay and Chew (1996) stated that the global economic focus has shifted away from the Atlantic region to the Asia-Pacific one. More and more MNCs from emerging economies are entering into Western countries and this has had a significant impact on the world economy. For example, in UNCTAD 2006 report, Taiwan was categorised as a newly industrialised economy (NIE), and, in its 2014 report, it is still listed as a developing and transitional economy and maintains its consolidated position as one of the leading sources of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the world (see later section 3.2.3 for Taiwanese economic development and internationalisation), but not yet as a developed economy. This is consistent with the statement made by Chang, Mellahi and Wilkinson (2009) in their study of the control exercised by Taiwanese MNCs over their UK subsidiaries; Taiwan is recognised as an emerging economy under conditions of political dependence of business activities and institutional constrains along with a consolidated economic development (Chang and Smale, 2013; Chang, Gong and Peng, 2011, Chang, Wilkinson and Mellahi, 2007; Frynas et al., 2006) and plays an important role among today's global economies.

However, little research has been conducted on MNCs from emerging economies operating in developed ones. Glover and Wilkinson (2007) indicated that relatively less research has been done on newer industrialised economies (e.g. Taiwan and South Korea) than more industrialised ones. Furthermore, some studies (Chang et al.

2007 & 2009; Cheng & Lin 2009) stated that MNCs from emerging economies behave differently to those from advanced ones, managing their subsidiaries differently and in a distinctive fashion, due to their economic status in global market. As mentioned in chapter 2, the different approach strategies to internationalisation adopted by various MNCs are determined by their economic and cultural statuses. At the same time, according to Sorge (1995), a nation's culture develops over time and is influenced by national history, demographic and economic development, geography and the ecological environment. Hence, it can be assumed that the staffing orientations adopted by emerging economies to approach their internationalisation in foreign subsidiaries differ from those of developed countries because of their economic and cultural differences. This is a gap in the research that needs to be addressed (Aggarwal & Ghauri 1991; Yeung 1999).

MNCs from emerging economies perceive the weakness and lack of global dominance of their home country's economy. Based upon the 'dominance effects' of Smith and Meiksins (1995), which describe the hierarchical relationships between national economies within the global economy, Ferner, Almond and Colling (2004) stated that "Firms from countries lower in the hierarchy may perceive an interest in adopting practices from those based in more dominant economies. Conversely, firms from dominant economies may tend to assume that their practices are superior and capable of being transferred to less dominant hosts". Because MNCs coming from emerging economies countries tend to be smaller in size with less resources and international experiences, these conditions limit their capabilities of transferring management practice across subsidiaries (Guillén and García-Canal, 2009), especially ones in developed countries. Chang, Mellahi and Wilkinson (2009) stated that many MNCs from developing economies set up foreign subsidiaries in developed ones not only to exploit their own home grown core capabilities but also to augment them by learning from the latter. In other words, it can be assumed that the staffing orientations in foreign subsidiaries of MNCs from emerging economies are influenced by the 'dominance effects' of developed countries.

At the same time, in terms of human resource management, the 'dominance effects" make it likely for managers and employees of MNCs from emerging economies working in subsidiaries in developed ones to question the legitimacy and viability of

managerial practices established by their home country headquarters, as these may be perceived as possessing a poorer managerial and technical knowledge and development and be economically inferior; this is connected to the local ethnocentrism mentioned in chapter 2 which, in turn, influences the work relationships between expatriates and their locally hired colleagues. Local ethnocentrism may lead local employees working in subsidiaries in developed countries to believe in the superiority of their behaviours and practices. This and the 'dominance effects' mentioned above make it likely for local employees in developed economies to be less willing to provide support and information to expatriates from developing or less developed ones, negatively affecting their mutual work relationships and the former's adjustment toward the latter. Summarising, all this stresses the substantial effect of the home and host country economies on global staffing orientations and even expatriate adjustment.

In the 21st century, Asian MNCs are showing a trend to move their bases to North America and Europe in order to access new markets and technologies (Collinson and Rugman, 2007; Mathews 2006). Hence, there is the need for research into Asian-based MNCs in a Western context to expand the knowledge of the global market and also understand the cultural and business environments of American and European subsidiaries for global training purposes (Pananond & Zeithaml 1998; Tsang 1998; Sim & Pandian 2003; Tung 2005). Furthermore, newly industrialised countries, including South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, have reached a level of economic development approaching or equal to that of many Western ones (Bae et al. 2003). In order to develop a complete global market, these countries have expanded dramatically not only throughout Asia but beyond. Additionally, this is the major channel through which MNCs from developing countries can access advanced technologies. Therefore, it is essential to investigate the adjustment of expatriates from emerging economies in Western context workplaces.

Therefore, the way in which Taiwan's economic growth – driven by its MNCs' foreign direct investment (FDI) in developed economies, unique industrial development and HR practices – influences Taiwanese international assignments from a strategic and cultural perspective will be discussed in the following sections.

3.2.3 Taiwan's economic development and internationalisation

Taiwan's economic growth has been mainly driven by the electronics industry. In 1973, the Taiwanese government set up the Industrial Technology Research Institute, which was followed, in 1980, by the Hsinchu Science-Based Industry Park (Wade 2004). Taiwan has been transforming itself from an original equipment manufacturer to an original design manufacturer since 1983. Moreover, since 1995, Taiwan has become one of the world's most dynamic economies and an essential partner in a number of high-tech fields. In 2008, Taiwan was the world's 18th largest trading nation, the 26th largest economy and the fourth biggest holder of foreign exchange reserves. Moreover, in 2008, Taiwan was the world's second largest producer in the general field of information and communications technology goods (Government information office, Taiwan 2009). This shows beyond doubt that Taiwan has become a leading technology manufacturer, with the IT industry leading its economic development. Hence, it can be assumed that the IT industry, more than any others, is in the forefront of the Taiwanese internationalisation development.

Since 1985, through its adoption of favourable policies in terms of foreign investment regulations and foreign exchange, the Taiwanese government has been encouraging domestic firms to relocate their facilities in other countries for cost cutting purposes and outward FDI. For example, in 1987, the Taiwanese government created a watershed in the pattern and amount of FDI with a policy that allowed business organisations or individuals to invest up to five million US dollars overseas annually without having to apply for government approval. Since then, Taiwan has become a net capital exporter.

In terms of FDI trends, the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 and the rebalancing of FDI funds between crisis-affected South-East Asian countries caused Taiwan to shift its FDI destinations to China and South-East Asia. The host country's identity is the key factor driving FDI (Cheng & Kwan 2000; Eichengreen & Tong 2007; Hooper & Kim 2007; Jinjarak 2007; García-Herrero & Santabárbara 2007; Giner & Giner 2004; Mina 2007; Xu et al. 2008). For instance, the similar cultural background and regional distribution, as well as the geographical proximity, attracts Taiwanese FDI streams to China (Hsiao & Hsiao 2004), regardless of the differences in the economic and political systems. By contrast and in order to access a high quality

academic knowledge base, some Taiwanese MNCs have established connections with advanced regions that have very different identities to Taiwan. Furthermore, several scholars (e.g. Collinson & Rugman 2007; Mathews 2006) stated that Asian MNCs are showing a tendency to move their bases to North America and Europe to gain to access to new markets and technologies. Moreover, Makino et al. (2002) claimed that, when Taiwanese companies are motivated by strategic asset-seeking and market-seeking, FDI tends to be directed towards developed countries. The US and UK have been popular destinations for MNCs for these purposes (Lam 2003). In other words, Taiwanese FDI is directed towards a developed country when a technology is available there which is critical for Taiwanese MNCs to compete in the developed countries' market. This points out the main purpose behind the development of foreign subsidiaries in a developed country, such as the UK, by Taiwanese MNCs.

3.2.4 How Taiwanese MNC staffing strategies influence expatriation

As mentioned in chapter 2, expatriation is vital for the internationalisation and success of any organisation. MNCs with several subsidiaries in various countries need substantial support from their business expatriates to enable their headquarters to deal effectively with overseas assignments, especially when there is a shortage of qualified local country nationals. However, although some scholars (Barry Hocking et al., 2004; Chang and Smale, 2013) claimed that expatriation is a contingent mechanism of knowledge transfer, some scholars argue that this depends on the specificity of the location to which the knowledge is transferred. For instance, expatriates may have an insufficient understanding of the host countries' culture and institutions (Black and Mendenhall, 1991; Garcia-Pont et al., 2009) and also be faced by a language barrier (Lauring and Selmer, 2011; Selmer and Lauring, 2003), which would make it difficult for them to adapt to and understand the particular features of the local market. In other words, host nationals have an advantage over expatriates in their access to technology and knowledge of the local market. Thus, when Taiwanese MNCs adopt asset-seeking and market-seeking strategies in foreign subsidiaries, their expatriates may face difficulties in efficiently carrying out their international assignment duties due to their limited knowledge of local culture, institutions and language. At the same time, this situation creates some work role difficulties (e.g.

role novelty). This shows the impact of Taiwan's economic status on its MNCs' staffing orientations in developed host countries such as the UK. In turn, this shapes the different expatriation situations, including the international assignment conditions and specific work roles, and then influence expatriate adjustment accordingly.

Several studies (Perlmutter 1969; Heenan and Perlmutter 1979; Taylor et al. 1996) stressed the impact of organisations' global staffing orientations on the understanding of the different conditions of international assignment. As mentioned in the MNCs' strategy literature (see chapter 2), a polycentric strategy places the focus upon the application of local resources, including local labour, to fit into the local cultures and specific circumstances of foreign subsidiaries. In these instances, to reduce the linguistic and cultural barriers, host-nation employees will generally be placed at the management level in foreign subsidiaries. Accordingly, few expatriates are expected to take on critical strategic/exploring roles, which implies that MNCs might assign only a few expatriates abroad. Taiwanese MNCs, which adopt polycentric staffing strategies, implement low ratios of expatriation in their foreign subsidiaries.

Clearly, the different international assignment conditions – such as the foreign subsidiaries' expatriation ratios – are shaped by the different MNC staffing strategies. Therefore, when we look at MNC staffing strategies for their foreign subsidiaries in different regions, some explanatory factors linked to the home and host country economies need to be considered, such as the mode of MNC entry and the stage of the internationalisation process (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004). These factors shape the different international assignment conditions for expatriates and influence their overseas adjustment experiences.

In their study of Taiwanese MNCs in the UK, Chang, Mellahi and Wilkinson (2009) indicated that these, like other Asian and Japanese MNCs, show a marked preference for central control. Taiwanese MNCs consistently assign their expatriates to the top managerial positions of foreign subsidiaries, such as managing directors (MD) and finance managers. Taiwanese MNCs exercise their central control by extensive monitoring of the transfer of parent company/headquarter knowledge to local subsidiaries by means of trust and communication between headquarters and expatriates. Hence, it is clear that the Taiwanese MNCs' international assignment

purposes (e.g. dominance control), which draw upon their staffing strategies, drive the various expatriation situations (e.g. assigning expatriates in the managerial work roles with high role discretion). Similarly, Fang, Jiang, Makino and Beamish (2010), in their study of Japanese MNC subsidiaries, show that there is a relationship between high and low expatriation ratios in local subsidiaries – for knowledge transfer purposes – and subsidiary performance. In terms of technology transfer and compared to low expatriation ratios, high expatriation ratios result in better subsidiary performance in the early stages of a subsidiary's life circle. In contrast, the employment of local nationals – as opposed to expatriates – yields higher benefits in terms of location specific knowledge (e.g. marketing knowledge). In addition, MNCs tend to hire locals to enrich their networks and reduce the gap caused by different cultural environments in workplaces by adopting some of the values and beliefs of the host countries (Vaiman and Brewster, 2015); thus, in such instances, the ratio of expatriation is low. Therefore, in this study, it is important to understand the different adjustment issues experienced by Taiwanese expatriates in the UK as a function of the different categories of expatriation situations to which they are subjected as well as their work relationship/ situations from the perspectives of their locally hired colleagues, for the cohesive and sophisticated perspectives of among groups (Brewster et al., 2014).

As mentioned above, Chang, Mellahi and Wilkinson (2009) indicated that Taiwanese MNCs assign expatriates to local subsidiaries for purposes of central control, which is also achieved through trust and communication between headquarters and the expatriates themselves. Hence, some institutional factors (e.g. human resource management practices and management styles) are also driven by the cultural and environmental diversity between home and host countries and influence the expatriation situations (i.e. international assignment conditions and work roles) of Taiwanese expatriates from Asian contexts to Western ones).

3.2.5 How Taiwanese IHRM practices influence expatriation

Some scholars (e.g. Chang et al., 2009; Chen et al., 2005) indicated the MNCs' HRM practices in subsidiaries are influenced by the level of sophistication of management practices in the home and host countries. Hence, HRM practices from emerging economies can be expected not to be completely supported in developed countries. In

other words, MNCs from emerging economies tend to improve their HRM practices in their developed countries' subsidiaries by blending them with local ones. For example, in terms of Taiwanese international human resource management (IHRM) practices, (Chang et al., 2007), in their survey of 81 HR managers of Taiwanese subsidiaries in the UK, noted that they tend to either adopt a hybrid human resource management style, blending the practices of the home and host countries, or to espouse local human resource management practices. In order to understand the hybridisation of international human resource management of Taiwanese MNCs in the UK, this section, explains the main historical and contextual factors along with the strong pressures placed by local subsidiaries upon MNCs from emerging economies for the adoption of the local management style. This is followed by an examination of how hybrid human resource management practices influence expatriation situations, including expatriate international assignment conditions and work roles.

Redding (2000) claimed that several factors have institutionally influenced Taiwan. These include: being a Japanese colony for 50 years, the close ties with the US after WWII, the involvement of the state in important sectors such as banking, the government's direction of industrial development and internationalisation and the US based advanced technical education of key players. Because of these historical and economic influences, between 1965 and 1985, the HR practices of many local Taiwanese companies were strongly influenced by those of the numerous American and Japanese MNC subsidiaries operating in Taiwan (Wu 2004). It can thus be conceptualised that the Taiwanese management style has been shaped by a hybrid of Asian (i.e. Japanese) and Western (i.e. US) contexts, and not only by traditional Chinese Confucianism. Basically, these historical factors have led to the hybridisation of HRM practices in Taiwan.

In terms of contextual factors, the Taiwanese hybrid management style and MNC strategies exert a mutual influence on each other. Since the hybrid Taiwanese management culture and style was historically influenced by the Japanese and US ones, it is necessary to gain a brief understanding of the staffing strategies of Japanese and US MNCs. Japanese MNCs show a strong tendency to place expatriates in crucial positions in foreign subsidiaries in order to preserve their

management technologies and the systemic and organisational culture of the "collaborative national business system" and of the "personal" control approach. Therefore, in terms of global staffing, Japanese MNCs tend to adopt an ethnocentric approach. Conversely, Harzing (2001) stressed that US MNCs tend to apply a more "impersonal bureaucratic" type of control, employing more host country nationals and adopting a polycentric approach to global staffing. Vo (2009) claims that, regardless of the different approaches of Japanese and US MNCs, the international HR management practices of both are influenced to some extent by minimal formal mechanisms of constraint– i.e. local regulations – and informal ones – i.e. poor infrastructure, cultural values and environmental diversity. Therefore, the specific Taiwanese management style needs to be adjusted for the different locations/environmental conditions to which expatriates are assigned.

Looking at the HRM practices adopted by Taiwanese MNCs in developed nations characterised by low political risk, some researchers offer a perspective that can be linked to the asset- and market-seeking strategy motivations which were mentioned earlier. The ethnocentric staffing approach for control purpose employed in developing countries does not work exactly in developed ones. Therefore, MNCs have an inclination toward "hybrid" approaches combining the Japanese ethnocentric and US polycentric ones. These approaches place the headquarters in a position of responsibility for strategic issues and decision-making, leaving day-to-day HR policies and practices to follow the local style. As was noted earlier with regard to how Taiwanese MNC strategies influence expatriation situations, these approaches also influence two aspects which are driven by the purpose of their international assignment: 1) the HRM practices; 2) the expatriates' new work roles. In term of HRM practices and with regard to their ethnocentric staffing approach, Taiwanese MNCs tend to apply the hybrid management style in the local subsidiaries in order to exert a strong central control over local subsidiaries and to transfer headquarters knowledge. Consequently, expatriates do not need to change their attitudes and behaviours greatly when working in the UK. Conversely, those Taiwanese MNCs which incline towards a polycentric staffing approach promote the partial adoption of the host country's HRM practices by their expatriates for localisation purposes; this requires them to change their attitudes and behaviours when working in the UK. Furthermore, in terms of expatriation work roles, expatriates generally face role

novelty when transferring to culturally different host countries. At the same time, as mentioned above, Taiwanese MNCs tend to assign expatriates to managerial positions in local subsidiaries for central control purposes; this invests them with a higher decision-making autonomy which, in accordance to role theory, forces them to face some role transition issues (i.e. high role discretion). Thus, compared to expatriates from other nations, Taiwanese expatriates in the UK face a higher level of role development (e.g. role novelty and role discretion). Moreover, Nicholson's work role transition theory conceptualises that Taiwanese expatriates assigned under ethnocentric staffing orientations have a high role and a low personal development and tend to adopt a replication adjustment mode in work contexts. Conversely, expatriates assigned under polycentric staffing orientation have a high role and personal developments and tend to adopt an exploration adjustment mode to deal with challenging situations in work contexts. Summarising, different MNC staffing orientations towards its internationalisation stage and different international assignment purposes – which result in different expatriation situations – generate different international assignment conditions and work roles, which influence expatriate adjustment. Therefore, in order to understand the different patterns of adjustment of Taiwanese expatriates which are conducted by their various expatriate roles in host country, these are explored in this study by categorising expatriates based upon the different international assignment conditions and work roles which are linked to the different MNCs' staffing orientations. By doing so, *which* and *in what way* Taiwanese MNCs adopt specific staffing orientations in the UK (i.e. developed host country) are explored in this study which is the different case of Taiwanese MNCs in developing host country, in order to develop the knowledge of global staffing strategies, expatriation and expatriate adjustment in a rigorous manner

Conversely, Taiwanese MNCs assign expatriates to developing countries for special support purposes mainly related to localisation and political issues (Von Glinow & Teagarden 1988). In China, for instance, the power distance between managers and employees in organisations is smaller than it is in Taiwan. Although China is the area where Confucianism – which stresses collectivism – originated, local levels of individualism tend to be higher than they are in Taiwan because of the one-child policy. This policy cause Chinese employees to feel less identified with their organisations and to be more accustomed to express their own personal opinions and

behaviours (Wu, 2004). To be able to operate effectively within the cultures and political systems of less resourced and poorly developed areas, Taiwanese MNCs need to select expatriates who have better management, problem-solving, communication and culture adjustment capabilities. Harzing (2001) stated that MNCs tend to assign expatriates to subsidiaries in host countries in which there are high political risks for control purposes and as a means of reducing the chance of losing benefits and assets. Therefore, through the difference of staffing orientations adopting in developing host country (e.g. China), it shows the importance of examining specific staffing orientations for Taiwanese MNCs adopt in the UK in this study, in order to understand the situation of how MNCs coming from emerging economies operating in developed host countries.

3.3 Conclusion

As noted by Kim and Slocum Jr. (2008), the major limitation of expatriate studies is their external validity, which means that research findings relating to nations with radically different social, economic and cultural backgrounds and values (e.g., Western and Asian contexts) do not hold comparison value. Most prior studies of Taiwanese MNCs focussed upon the effects of organisational factors on expatriate adjustment; these include human resource management strategies (Chang et al. 2009; Wang et al. 2009; Sim & Pandian 2003; Bae et al. 2003), recruitment and selection, training (Lin & Wei 2005), performance evaluation and organisational communication and relations (Chang, Wilkinson and Mellahi 2007). There have been few empirical studies on expatriate adjustment based upon the specific economic and cultural influences of the home and host countries on MNC staffing strategic approaches and human resource management practices to explore more cohesively how the adjustment experiences of individuals in specific situations differ. The case of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK provides a pertinent example to explore the dynamic relationship between the nature of work roles and adjustment. Due to the cultural distance, one can expect most Taiwanese expatriates to experience a high degree of role novelty when they operate in the UK with a hybridised management style. Moreover, when Taiwanese MNCs have an inclination toward polycentric staffing orientation with a localization purpose for international assignment, few expatriates are assigned to the local subsidiaries for exploring role. This causes

expatriates to have a high role discretion and experience high role and personal development, which leads to the adoption of an exploration adjustment mode in work contexts. Conversely, the concurrence of an ethnocentric approach for central control purpose leads Taiwanese expatriates in the UK to high role and low personal development, which causes the adoption of a replication adjustment mode in work contexts. Hence, the examination of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences needs to take into account the economic and cultural influences of the home and host countries. In order to determine their potential influence on expatriate adjustment, all these factors and situations have been considered in this study, which categorises expatriates based upon specific situational/conditional factors, such as their international assignment conditions for pre-departure period shaped by economic and cultural influences of the home country. Following up the post-arrival period, the situations Taiwanese expatriates face in the UK which are influenced by local national culture and economies are explored in this study.

Having reviewed the existing empirical studies and relevant theories, together with Taiwanese MNCs and international assignment contexts, the next chapter discusses the choice of the most appropriate study methodology to be employed to collect and analyse the research data.

CHAPTER

FOUR

Research Methodology and Methods

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the justification of the methods employed in this research. Therefore, the theoretical and empirical justifications for the mixed method being an appropriate approach to achieve the research objectives of this study are presented in this chapter. The research contexts and fieldwork procedures are then outlined. Then, the detailed sources and techniques that were used to collect and analyse the data for this research are presented.

4.2 The Mixed Method Approach

The justifications for the mixed method approach adopted in this research are presented based upon evaluations of positivist and interpretive methodologies; these are followed by a discussion of the common and dominant methodology employed in the field of expatriate adjustment research. The research context and fieldwork procedure employed in this research are then outlined.

4.2.1 The theoretical justifications for a mixed method inquiry

Two main methodology paradigms have been widely accepted by social researchers – positivism and interpretivism. A failure to properly think through the choice of methodology can seriously affect the quality of management research, as it is the foundation of research design (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). Hence, understanding the methodology paradigms helps in clarifying the research design in terms of the data collection and analysis. From the theoretical perspective of the choice of methodology, the pros and cons of these two methodology paradigms have

been argued by several theorists. The contexts of these two paradigms – and their pros and cons – are presented further on in this chapter (see summary on table 4.1), with an explanation of why a mixed method was chosen for this research.

The positivist paradigm posits that the social world exists externally and emphasises the concept of science being the process through which ideas are tested and justified by means of objective methods. With regard to social science, this approach has to follow the hypothetical-deductive methodology and use evidence from natural science, i.e. obtained by using the experimental method. It represents an objective approach to social science. Positivism posits that knowledge is developed by observing objective facts on which researchers have no influence in the research process. It is akin to deductive theory in the way it looks for causal relationships and tends to produce what are deemed to be objective and generalizable conclusions in research studies. Thus, research studies which adopt a positivist approach focus on hard data rather than opinions and expressions while, at the same time, they look for regularities in the obtained data (Gill and Johnson, 2002) to generalise the conclusions drawn from a specific sample to a wider population which can be deemed to be representative of an objective whole. However, it has been questioned whether positivism has the capability needed to capture the complexity of social realities. Several researchers (Blumer 1956; Geertz, 1973) have stated that natural objects and social objects are context dependent and linked with each other in multifaceted and dynamic ways. Conversely, interpretivists believe that a simple fundamental assumption cannot be applied to every phenomenon, since social reality is created and influenced by social actors; hence, differently from the positivist approach, the generalisation of conclusions obtained from a sample population is hardly possible. The interpretivist paradigm, which was formulated by Weber, states that social actions have to be interpreted in order to formulate a social theory: it postulates the world to be subjective and socially constructed. To understand what is happening in the social world, researchers can inductively develop ideas from data that is generally obtained from small samples investigated in-depth or over time (Easterby-Smith 1997). At the most fundamental level, this paradigm involves the assignment of "meanings" to factual states in the external world, thus entailing subjective processes. However, the interpretivist approach has been criticised in that researchers/interviewers and respondents might define and construct meanings in

different ways.

In order to understand the two research paradigms and to choose the appropriate method for this research, a summary of their strengths and weaknesses is shown in the following table.

Table 4.1 A comparison of the paradigms' strengths and weaknesses

Paradigm	*Strengths*	*Weaknesses*
Positivism **(quantitative method)**	• Provides a wide coverage of a range of situations. • Fast and economical, especially when statistics are aggregated from large samples. These may be of considerable relevance to policy decisions.	• Methods used to be rather inflexible and artificial. • Not very effective in understanding processes or the significance that people attach to actions. • Not very helpful in generating theories. • Difficult for policy makers to infer what changes and actions should take place in the future.
Interpretivism **(qualitative method)**	• Data-gathering methods seem more natural than artificial. • Provides the ability to look at changes in processes over time. • Provides the ability to understand people's meanings. • Provides the ability to adjust to new issues and ideas as they emerge. • Contributes to the generation of theory.	• Data collection can be tedious and requires more resources. • Analysis and interpretation of data may be more difficult. • Harder to control the pace, progress and end-point of research processes. • Policy makers may give low credibility to the results of a qualitative approach.

Source: Adapted from Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) and Amaratunga et al. 2002)

Based upon the positivist (quantitative) approach's weaknesses, as identified by Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar and Newton (2002), it can be inferred that it is not very

effective towards the understanding of the significance that people attach to actions and is not very helpful in generating theories. Overmann et al. (1979) stated that the "quantitative methods are only research economic shortcuts of the data generating process, whereas only qualitative methods are able to provide the actual scientific explanations of facts" (cited in Flick 2009).

In other words, quantitative research designs lead to results by providing statistical evidence covering a wide range of situations. Conversely, qualitative research designs provide greater illustration. In general, both the positivist and interpretivist approaches satisfy different requirements in the achievement of the research objectives.

From a theoretical perspective, Scheele and Groeben (1988, cited in Groeben 1990) stated that semi-structured interviews help in the reconstruction of subjective theories as the subjects' viewpoints are more likely to be expressed in detail, compared to other standardised interviews and questionnaires (Flick 2009). Semi-structured interviews also allow interviewees to provide extra information beyond the strict scope of the questions for a deeper and wider understanding of the research field.

4.2.2 The empirical justifications of the mixed method inquiry

In expatriate adjustment research, quantitative methods have tended to be dominant; this is the case, for example, of the works of Gregersen & Black (1992), Black et al. (1991) and Kim & Slocum Jr. (2008). Shay and Baack (2004) stated that, due to methodological concerns, the degree of adjustment has been seen as a proxy of expatriate adjustment, instead of something that reveals a deeper understanding of expatriate adjustment itself, specifically of the overall experience through which it is attained. Furthermore, Kiessling and Harvey (2005) stated that the Western world had hitherto predominantly adopted the quantitative research method, which may not have been fully adequate to explore phenomena such as the complex interactions of culture, institutions and social norms. Hence, in this research, it is necessary to adopt a mixed method to approach the understanding of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK. During the design phase of a study, quantitative data can aid its qualitative aspect by finding a representative sample and identifying deviant ones, while qualitative data can help its quantitative traits by aiding its conceptual

development and instrumentation (Amaratunga et al, 2002).

In order to understand the nature of expatriate adjustment experiences and why they endure or change, this research required an approach that enabled it to capture the multi-dimensional experiences of individuals from their natural work roles and conditional settings. For example, the approach to understanding Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK is grounded in economic and cultural contexts and is led by Taiwanese MNC expatriation and Taiwanese expatriate roles in the host country. By adopting a hybrid quantitative/qualitative design, this research points out the relevant materials required to explore the expatriate adjustment issue and then leads to its in-depth illustration.

Based upon the strengths and weakness of the two approaches, shown in table 4.1, and upon the reasons given above, a mixed positivist (quantitative) and interpretivist (qualitative) approach is adopted as the basis for the research design of this study. The analysis of quantitative data can help to highlight the generality of specific observations and shed new light on qualitative findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thus, this research initially replicated earlier quantitative ones in order to try and understand the context patterns of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK, e.g. Taiwanese MNC expatriation situations/conditions. Subsequently and in order to achieve the research objective – the exploration of expatriate adjustment experiences in their international assignments – a qualitative approach was adopted. Qualitative interviews allow the construction of social explanations and arguments that emphasise depth, nuance, complexity and roundedness in data (Mason, 2002). It is clear that qualitative interviews are better suited to provide foundation for this research through the exploration of the experience of expatriate adjustment; these are followed by the quantitative research approach, which provides coverage of a wide range of situations. At the same time, to address the discourse of the experience of expatriate adjustment as a whole, the verbalisation of thoughts made possible by qualitative interviews was analysed. Therefore, based upon theoretical and empirical justifications, a mixed method was adopted for this research. The general situations/conditions of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK were uncovered through a quantitative intervention – i.e. a survey questionnaire – and the detailed illustration of the expatriate adjustment experience was explored through a qualitative method –

i.e. in-depth interviews – the latter acting as the cornerstone of this research.

4.3 The Research Fieldwork Procedures and Contexts

The fieldwork was conducted in four phases and completed over a period of about 20 months (October, 2010-May, 2012). The entire fieldwork journey involved a pilot study, conducting the expatriate survey and interviews, reviewing the results and then carrying out the expatriates' locally hired colleagues' survey and interviews.

4.3.1 Phase One – accessing potential participants and the pilot study

Phase 1 consisted of preparatory activities, including the hardest task; accessing potential participants. I started by contacting a number of Taiwanese companies to request access to their expatriates in the UK. Eventually, one company put me in contact with their UK expatriates. At the same time, I attended a number of Taiwanese business events in the UK in order to approach potential participants through some Taiwanese working in the UK for their home country MNCs.

At this stage, for the pilot study and before conducting the expatriate data collection, I also tried to contact some former expatriates who had previous international assignment experiences; specifically those who had worked in the UK. As Robson (2002) suggested, a pilot study is a good way to determine whether a research idea is feasible. Yin (2003) also indicated that a pilot study can help the researcher narrow down the research plans and refine the content of the data and research procedure. Accordingly, in this research, the pilot study was helpful in significantly focussing on specific Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences.

The pilot study involved a sample of eight Taiwanese employees of three different companies in Taiwan. All had previously been assigned abroad (i.e. six had been stationed in mainland China and two in the UK). I thus sought to determine whether not being posted to the same international assignment location had made a difference to their overseas adjustment experiences. I travelled to Taiwan and held face-to-face interviews with these eight employees in order to learn about their overseas adjustment experiences and identify any specific factors which might have an influence upon the research plans. The main focus of this research and the content of the research methods were shaped through this pilot study. The pilot study interviews

highlighted the importance of the following expatriate adjustment factors: the international assignment host nation, the ratios of expatriation in the host subsidiaries, industry sector variations with regard to different international assignment policies and, last but not least, marital/family accompaniment statuses.

The interviewees who had been assigned to Mainland China highlighted the difficulties and specific work experiences associated with the poor environment and resources of that developing country; these were contrasted with the experiences of those interviewees who had been assigned to an advanced country such as the UK. A comparison of the three companies highlighted their different international assignment policies which were linked to company size and to the degree of completeness of their respective international assignment systems. The employees who had been assigned to Mainland China reported that they had had other Taiwanese expatriates in the host subsidiaries to help and guide them – which reduced their adjustment difficulties – unlike the others, who had been assigned to the UK alone. In summary, through the pilot study for this research, I developed a new focus that had not been part of previous empirical studies. The sector in which companies operate, along with their specific international assignment patterns/conditions, ratios of expatriation in the host subsidiaries and family accompaniment statuses, needed to be included in the equation of this research. The major benefit of the pilot study was the testing and development of the interview protocol based upon the crucial cornerstone of expatriate adjustment experience differences mentioned above. Based upon the suggestions made by the pilot study interviewees, some questions were either removed, modified or added to render the interviews more effective for the research. Likewise, another key benefit of the pilot study were the modifications made to the survey questionnaire, aimed at more effectively uncovering the overall general state of affairs. For example, based upon the cornerstone of expatriate adjustment differences mentioned above, it became apparent that international assignment conditions and marital/family accompaniment statuses needed to be focused upon in the expatriate survey.

4.3.2 Phase Two – the expatriate data collection

The second phase involved collecting the main data from the Taiwanese expatriates in the UK and lasted about two months. All the efforts made during phase one in

attending Taiwanese business events in the UK and contacting relevant institutions paid off. I was introduced to the head of the Economic Division department in the UK's Taipei Representative's Office. To facilitate my approach to potential participants, he provided me with some contacts of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK. At the same time, I was also introduced to Taiwanese expatriates who were present at some events. After obtaining their contacts, I emailed them a research introduction letter and phoned them to explain the research purposes and to arrange their interviews. After they had agreed to take part in this research, I emailed them the research survey questionnaire for them to fill in. Through this, I was able to learn some basic background information about the participants; this helped me to prepare the modified interview questions accordingly. When I meet the interviewees, before conducting the interviews, I clarified the research purpose and enquired whether there were any questions in the survey questionnaire which they did not understand or whether they had any questions for me. The 40-minute semi-structured interviews were then conducted.

4.3.3 Phase Three – reviewing the collected expatriate data

Phase Three involved reviewing the quality of the collected data, which took up one year. I checked for any missing or incomplete information given by the participants. During this phase, I consistently attended social gatherings and kept in touch with the participants so that I could easily contact them for any further information I may have needed. After reviewing the collected expatriate data, I started the data analysis and, at the same time and specifically from their interviews on work relationships, I outlined the crucial issues which affect their relationships with their locally hired colleagues (e.g. language barrier and local ethnocentrism). It then outlined the survey questionnaire and interview guides for the locally hired colleagues' data collection.

4.3.4 Phase Four – collecting data from the locally hired colleagues

At the beginning of Phase Four, I contacted the expatriate participants to request access to their locally hired colleagues in order to conduct the second stage of the data collection. Having obtained some introductions and contacts for the locally hired colleagues, I approached them for the research purposes. I emailed them an introduction letter outlining the purpose of this research relating to the contribution

of locally hired colleagues. Having secured their agreement, I emailed them the locally hired colleague survey questionnaire in order to obtain some background information and their brief views on specific issues linked to the interview questions. This helped the locally hired colleagues to get an idea of the interview questions I would like to ask them; based on the answer they provided in the survey questionnaire, this also provided me with an indication on how to best ask them the interview questions. By doing this, their views on specific issues of expatriate adjustment related to their work relationships could be double-checked and expanded.

4.4 The Data Collection

4.4.1 The data collection strategies and methods

The research was conducted on a sample of Taiwanese expatriates working for 15 UK-based subsidiaries of Taiwanese MNCs within three main industry categories – IT and Electrical, Banking and Transport. This was backed up by a second stage of data collection involving 18 of their locally hired colleagues. Hence, the sample is drawn from two source samples: the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues, using a mixed purpose aimed sampling.

Sampling strategies

In order to obtain the target sample the strategies of homogeneous sampling, maximum variation sampling and snowball sampling were used; these will be explained in detail. This helped in terms of triangulation, meeting the multiple interests, needs and the main purpose of this study, and adjusting the interview questions.

With regard to the expatriate research sample, the homogeneous sampling strategy was adopted – i.e. the sample was only made up of Taiwanese nationals – in order to achieve the research objective and also to simplify the analysis process. Taiwanese expatriates in the UK can be seen as a relevant example of Asian expatriation to a Western context. Due to their previous work experience in Taiwan – an emerging economy – they are mainly familiar with an Eastern management style and living environment. When assigned to a UK subsidiary and exposed to a Western context, they are certainly affected by the differences which exist between Asian and Western

workplaces. Hence, in order to approach the potential Taiwanese participants, I initially contacted the headquarters of 12 Taiwanese MNCs which might have UK subsidiaries and asked them for cooperation in this research. Although most companies refused my invitation due to company policy, one company's HR manager provided me with the contact details for their single UK expatriate. Through the latter, I approached my first potential participants in this research.

At the same time, I became aware that the London Taipei Trade Centre (TEC) might hold the company profiles and contact information of Taiwanese MNCs with UK subsidiaries. Hence, I got in touch with that institution; however, I later found out that the information they had was out of date; some companies on their contact list no longer assign expatriates to the UK. This caused me further difficulties in accessing potential participants for this study. I therefore approached the head of the economic division of the London Taipei Representative's Office to request some contacts of UK Taiwanese expatriates.

In terms of the homogeneous sampling of the locally hired colleagues for this research, I asked the expatriates involved in the interviews to introduce me to some of their locally hired colleagues. In order to contain variation and simplify analysis, I requested them to possibly introduce me to their locally hired colleagues from different nations.

For the snowball sampling strategy – i.e. using information obtained from participants to find further ones – personal contacts were used to generate more participants, thus effectively increasing the data collected. For instance, my first participant, to whom I had been introduced by his Taiwanese headquarters, introduced me to another Taiwanese UK expatriate, a friend of his who was a doctoral researcher.

Moreover, I attended some Taiwanese association UK events to extend my network and to gain access to more Taiwanese expatriates. Thus, I created opportunities for adding participants from different industries and companies. Later on, at the end of each interview section, the interviewees were asked whether they could suggest anyone in their own or another company who would qualify to take part in this research and might be willing to be interviewed. In this way, interviewees named

potential others, enlarging the size of sample like a snowball and allowing for variation in conditions, such as diverse work experiences and professional backgrounds, for maximum sampling variation purposes. Indeed, I approached almost all the Taiwanese companies which employ expatriates in their UK subsidiaries, apart from one which enforces a very strict policy limiting outsider access.

Regarding the locally hired colleagues, I selected a number of Taiwanese expatriates from different industry sectors and then asked them to introduce me to their Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese colleagues.

In terms of maximum sampling variation purposes, there are good reasons for collecting data from different industries. Taiwanese MNCs operating in different industrial sectors employ different internationalisation strategies, which influence their international assignment strategies. For instance, the IT industry is one of the most important drivers of global industrialisation that has led to Taiwan's economic growth. Their internationalisation strategy involves expanding and seeking international markets to localise; this, in turn, results in their international assignment policy of assigning limited numbers of expatriates abroad. However, service industries, such as banking, are in the early stages of internationalisation and, for control purposes, tend to adopt an ethnocentric approach to UK subsidiaries by assigning a certain number of employees overseas from time to time or for a particular period of time. Selecting Taiwanese expatriates from different industries is, therefore, essential for the research objective purposes. As was mentioned in chapter 2 and 3, studying the UK subsidiaries of Taiwanese MNCs allows us to look at the specific expatriate adjustment of Asian expatriates in a developed country, which is influenced by specific approach strategies, such as asset-seeking and market-seeking. In other words, studying expatriates in different industry sectors can highlight inter-industry differences (e.g. staffing orientations and expatriation strategies).

As shown in tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 below, this research was conducted with a total of 42 Taiwanese expatriates and 18 of their locally hired colleagues working in the UK subsidiaries of 15 Taiwanese MNCs within three main industry categories – IT and Electrical, Banking and Transport – for practical reasons and ease of access.

Table 4.3 below shows the different international assignment conditions to which the expatriate participants are subject. The size of the sample studied was in line with similar qualitative studies on expatriates (Mohr and Klein 2004; Dickmann and Harris 2005; Okamoto and Teo 2011; Altman and Baurch 2012). The age group of the majority of participants was 46 and above, followed by the 36 to 40 group. Of the 41 males, 35 were married – a proportion consistent with the extant literature (Altman and Baurch 2012).

The participant locally hired colleagues shown in table 4.4 below were chosen according to two main criteria. One of these was also adopted for the expatriate participants, in that the locally hired colleagues work in different industries. This was done in order to reflect the data obtained from the expatriates and to understand the locally hired colleagues work relationships and views on expatriate adjustment. The second criteria involved selecting locally hired colleagues of different nationalities in order to understand the influence on work relationships and expatriate adjustment of the cultural differences between participant expatriates and locally hired colleagues. Altogether, 18 locally hired colleagues took part, 14 non-Taiwanese and four Taiwanese, holding both managerial and non-managerial positions. All 18 had been randomly chosen from the interviewed expatriates' companies. All four Taiwanese locally hired colleagues were born, brought up and educated in Taiwan. They were either permanently residing in Britain or holders of work permits/visas sponsored by their employers when they were hired in the UK. 8 were males and 10 females and 6 were native English speakers.

Table 4.2 Profile of the Sample Companies

Serial No.	Industry (code)	Company (code)	Size of the UK subsidiary	Number of expatriates	Number of expatriates interviewed
1	E	MO	27	1	1
2	E	TE	15	1	1
3	I	DL	60	2	2
4	I	TR	10	1	1
5	I	TH	3	1	1

6	B	FI	18	3	1	
7	B	TA	11	3	2	
8	B	ME	8	4	2	
9	B	HN	12	5	3	
10	B	CH	15	5	3	
11	T	YM	64	4	4	
12	T	ES	130	6	4	
13	T	EM	60	30	10	
14	T	CH	7	2	1	
15	T	EV	32	5	6*	

Note.

- Industry codes: E refers to electrical; I refers to IT; B refers to Banking; T refers to transportation service

- * refers that one of them was assigned back to Taiwan headquarter a month after the interview. The replacement expatriate conducted the interview later as well.

- Size of the UK subsidiary is presented by the number of employees in the UK subsidiary.

- Although there are two expatriates in DL company in IT industry, one of them coming from DL headquarter, another is indeed assigned by their sister/cooperation company to support the DL's UK subsidiary; hence, basically, they are the only one expatriate assigned to the UK subsidiary from their own Taiwanese MNCs.

Table 4.3 Profile of Participants –Expatriates

S.no	Interviewee Code	Gender	Age	Industry	Expected Duration of stay	Marital Status	Family accompaniment
1	T-CH-e01	Male	36-40	Transportation	2 years	Married	No
2	T-EV-e01	Male	46 or above	Transportation	3 years	Married	No
3	T-EV-e02	Male	36-40	Transportation	3 years	Married	No
4	T-EV-e03	Male	46 or above	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
5	T-EV-e04	Male	41-45	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
6	T-EV-e05	Male	41-45	Transportation	2 years	Married	No
7	T-EV-e06	Male	46 or above	Transportation	3 years	Married	No
8	B-CH-e01	Male	36-40	Banking	3-5 years	Married	No
9	B-CH-e02	Male	41-45	Banking	3-5 years	Married	Yes
10	B-CH-e03	Female	41-45	Banking	3-5 years	Married	No

11	B-FI-e01	Male	36-40	Banking	2 years	Single	No
12	B-HN-e01	Male	46 or above	Banking	Do not know	Married	Yes
13	B-HN-e02	Male	36-40	Banking	3-5 years	Married	Yes
14	B-HN-e03	Male	36-40	Banking	3-5 years	Married	Yes
15	B-ME-e01	Male	46 or above	Banking	3-5 Years	Married	No
16	B-ME-e02	Male	41-45	Banking	3-5 Years	Married	Yes
17	B-TA-e01	Male	46 or above	Banking	5 Years	Married	Yes
18	B-TA-e02	Female	41-45	Banking	5 Years	Single	No
19	E-MO-e01	Male	41-45	Electrical	Do not know	Married	Yes
20	E-TE-e01	Male	36-40	Electrical	Do not know	Married	Yes
21	T-EM-e01	Male	36-40	Transportation	Do not know	Married	No
22	T-EM-e02	Male	31-35	Transportation	4 years	Single	No
23	T-EM-e03	Male	36-40	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
24	T-EM-e04	Male	46 or above	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
25	T-EM-e05	Male	31-35	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
26	T-EM-e06	Male	36-40	Transportation	4 years	Single	No
27	T-EM-e07	Male	46 or above	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
28	T-EM-e08	Male	46 or above	Transportation	4 years	Single	No
29	T-EM-e09	Male	46 or above	Transportation	5 years	Married	No
30	T-EM-e10	Male	31-35	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
31	T-ES-e01	Male	46 or above	Transportation	3 Years	Married	No
32	T-ES-e02	Male	31-35	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
33	T-ES-e03	Male	36-40	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
34	T-ES-e04	Male	31-35	Transportation	4 years	Married	No
35	T-YM-e01	Male	46 or above	Transportation	3 years	Married	Yes

36	T-YM-e02	Male	46 or above	Transportation	Do not know	Married	No
37	T-YM-e03	Male	36-40	Transportation	4 years	Single	No
38	T-YM-e04	Male	31-35	Transportation	3 Years	Married	Yes
39	I-DL-e01	Male	41-45	IT	Do not know	Married	Yes
40	I-DL-e02	Male	36-40	IT	Do not know	Married	Yes
41	I-TH-e01	Male	36-40	IT	Do not know	Married	Yes
42	I-TR-e01	Female	31-35	IT	Do not know	Single	No

Note: Code (industry-company-expatriate)

Table4.4 Profile of Participants –Locally Hired Colleagues

	LHC Participant	Gender	Nationality	Industry	Occupation position	Tenure
1	I-DL-c01	Male	Taiwanese	IT	IT manager	8
2	T-EV-c01	Female	Slovak	Transportation	Traffic officer	1
3	T-EV-c02	Female	British	Transportation	Traffic officer	3
4	T-EV-c03	Female	German	Transportation	Sales coordinator	3
5	T-EV-c04	Female	Taiwanese	Transportation	Sales executive	2
6	T-EM-c01	Male	Lithuanian	Transportation	Pricing clerk	1
7	TEM-c02	Male	British	Transportation	Pricing clerk	1.5
8	T-EM-c03	Male	British	Transportation	Pricing clerk	6
9	T-ES-c01	Female	Taiwanese	Transportation	Assistance manager	6
10	T-ES-c02	Female	British	Transportation	Assistance manager	8
11	T-ES-c03	Male	British	Transportation	Transport officer	6
12	B-HN-c01	Female	Taiwanese	Banking	Senior officer	2
13	E-MO-c01	Female	British	Electrical	Company secretary	12
14	E-MO-c02	Male	British	Electrical	Technical engineer	2.5
15	I-TR-c01	Male	Portuguese	IT	Sales manager	1.5

16	I-TR-c02	Male	Polish	IT	Account manager	4
17	T-YM-c01	Female	Mexican	Transportation	Dep. Chief accountant	15
18	T-YM-c02	Female	British	Transportation	Accounts assistant	13.5

Notes: LHC-locally hired colleague

Code (industry-company-locally hired colleague)

Tenure refers to total years of the employee has been working in the current company.

Data collection methods

The data collection from both participant expatriates and locally hired colleagues was conducted by means of semi-structured interviews and survey questionnaires.

Before the interviews were conducted, both participant expatriates and locally hired colleagues were asked to fill in a survey questionnaire in order to get some of their background information. This information helped me to focus upon key issues I would need to explore further with specific interviewees. For example, when an expatriate interviewee indicated that his international assignment duration was uncertain – i.e. he did not know when it would come to an end – I focused upon exploring the attitudes and behaviours he adopted under these circumstances and relevant issues such as family relocation. For locally hired colleagues, for instance, the questionnaire explored the key issues they indicated having with expatriates in their work relationships. This information helped me to confirm and explore the reasons behind these issues during the interviews. Hence, the interviews covered a range of specific expatriate adjustment and relevant work relationship issues.

In terms of the expatriate interviews, most of them were conducted in a closed meeting room so that interviewees would feel more comfortable in airing their opinions on the questions asked. Further, the interviews were conducted in Chinese, the respondents' mother tongue, to make it easy for them to completely express their opinions and to communicate with me should they have any questions during the interviews. My Chinese language skills and Taiwanese background helped me to quickly connect with the interviewees and understand their personal opinions and adjustment experiences. Also, during the interviews, the questions were rephrased and presented in a way that reflected the interviewees' mother tongue and meanings. With the respondents' permission, recording equipment was used for the interviews.

The duration of the interviews ranged from 40 to 90 minutes.

In terms of the locally hired colleagues' interviews, most were conducted on the phone in order to allow them to contribute taking into account difficulties pertaining to travel and time off work The interviews conducted in person were conducted in a closed meeting room so that the respondents would not have concerns in freely expressing their opinions regarding their work relationships with expatriates and adjustment. Further, since I am also from Taiwan and had been introduced to the locally hired colleagues through their expatriate colleagues, before the interviews started and to assuage confidentiality concerns, I emphasized the professional nature of my relationship with the expatriates, that the research was academic-oriented and that anonymity was going to be strictly applied. Since English is neither my mother tongue nor that of some of the locally hired colleague participants, the survey questionnaire they filled in before the interviews helped them to understand what questions to expect during the latter. The duration of the interviews was limited to 60 minutes in order not to overly affect the locally hired colleagues work and personal lives.

4.4.2 The research tools design

The Expatriate Survey questionnaires

For the expatriate part of this study and based upon empirical studies and upon this research's pilot study, important demographic information was included in the questionnaire (see appendix 1). This had been modified from the one used in the pilot study. From the latter, it was revealed that personal backgrounds, such as family accompaniment, and the ratio of expatriation in the local subsidiary influence expatriate adjustment; thus, some sections were removed and others added in order to make the investigation more precise. Hence, personal background information – marital status, language and international assignment conditions – was included in the survey questionnaire in order to understand the particular determining factors which influence expatriate adjustment, and then explored during the interviews. A self-reported questionnaire provided respondents with a more efficient and comfortable process in order to outline the subjective values of their own adjustments in the UK.

The expatriate semi-structured interviews

In terms of the interview construction, semi-structured interviews, the most fundamental of all qualitative methods (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008), were conducted in this research.

In order to understand the expatriate adjustment experience, including how specific personal factors influence overseas adjustment and expatriate work relationships, a qualitative approach was selected. The interview question list was made up of three main sections (A, B, and C) and a feedback section D (see appendix 2). Section A, which is made up of eight main questions, explores adjustment experiences covering the pre-departure and post-arrival periods and the psychological, work and interactional dimensions to achieve a general picture. The first two questions were aimed at understanding the situations and feelings of the expatriates with regard to their international assignments during their pre-departure period. Questions 3 and 4 were aimed at understanding the general differences expatriates face in their new environment, particularly at work. The aim of question 5 was to explore the adjustment experience from arrival to the present in further detail. The sub-questions were intended to make the respondent relate how they feel, cope with, and change while facing the (cultural) differences in their new workplace in order to understand how they adjust to the new and different situations/environment. To find out more about the respondents' current situations following up the previous sub-questions, question 6 probed whether they were comfortable dealing efficiently with their work tasks or whether they were still trying to cope with them and learning to fit in. Having covered their personal opinions regarding their adjustment experiences, question 7 refers to their work adjustment to examine the expatriates' interaction and communication with others in the workplace. Finally, for more general interactional adjustment, question 8 was aimed at understanding adjustment experiences in terms of social life. The questions in section A were linked to the concepts of culture shock, culture difference and local ethnocentrism (see Chapter 2) with psychological and international adjustment concepts – bringing to light changes in attitudes, well-being and behaviours – as well as Nicholson's work role transition theory (see Chapter 2) to explore personal and role development for the mode of adjustment they might take place in.

With regard to section B, according to the pilot study, two main personal factors, marital status and language, have a great influence on the expatriate adjustment experience. Accordingly, this section was designed to bring out the expatriates' perceptions of how these personal conditions/skills influence their overseas adjustment experience. Regarding marital status, the issue of the different statuses of family accompaniment is focused upon and explored. The questions regarding language proficiency were asked in order to explore to what degree the language barrier exists and how it influences the expatriates' work and professional and social international adjustment.

Drawn upon cultural differences (e.g. Hofstede 1984; 2001), role theory (Kahn et al, 1964; Katz and Kahn, 1978) and local ethnocentrism (see chapter 2) linked to the expatriate role transition, the workplace relationship between expatriates and others is thought to influence their overseas adjustment. Therefore, the section C questions explored the work relationships and interaction between expatriates and locally hired colleagues (and maybe other expatriates). The pilot study highlighted the importance of the expatriation ratio in the host subsidiary. Hence, the questions in this section explored the relevant expatriation (i.e. work role expectation) and international assignment conditions (i.e. ratio of expatriation) in order to understand whether these factors influence adjustment experiences and work relationships. Specifically, question 3 in this section followed up on the ethnicity differences as well as the work role differences among the expatriates themselves, the locally hired colleagues and, possibly, other expatriates, to discover the different work styles and attitudes in their work relationships which influence their adjustment experiences. Lastly, the feedback section was placed at the end of the interviews, asking expatriates to formulate suggestion related to general Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK.

The locally hired colleagues study

As seen in the study by Kim and Slocum Jr. (2008), a field survey of US-based Korean expatriates, the use of a self-reported measure for the performance of international assignments can cause serious single source bias. Therefore, multiple perspectives, in this case including those of the locally hired colleagues, provide increased objectivity in this expatriation study.

Work relationships, which are considered to be one of main factors determining expatriate adjustment, comprise two main constructs: the perceived similarities in values among the expatriates, locally hired Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese staff, and their interactions. These two constructs are developed from role theory (Kahn et al. 1964; Katz and Kahn 1978) and concept of local ethnocentrism which inspired by intergroup theory (Tajfel 1979, cited in Tajfel 2010). Each will be discussed in turn.

Role theory comprises role conflict and role ambiguity. Role conflict is defined as the outcome of incompatible expectations between the role sender and the focal person (Katz and Kahn 1978). Role ambiguity is defined as lack of information or clarity as well as uncertainty in relation to one's role (Kahn et al. 1964; Katz and Kahn 1978). Due to both role conflict and ambiguity among expatriates, locally hired Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese staff, work relationships are influenced by different expectations, information levels and understanding of the contents of roles.

Furthermore, drawn on local ethnocentrism inspiring by intergroup theory, which draws upon social identity and divisions, people move into in-group and out-group relationships based upon different cultural heritages and mentalities. It is assumed that expatriates adjust better and quicker with in-group relationships rather than with out-group ones. Hence, both locally hired Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese staff have different work relationship experiences with expatriates as a function of the level of similarity in terms of cultural heritage and mentality. Based upon the above theoretical framework, the survey and interview questions were designed as follows.

The locally hired colleague survey questionnaire

From a locally hired colleague perspective, the survey questionnaire enabled them to provide a general idea of how they observe expatriate adjustment through interactions and work relationships. The self-reported questionnaire was made up of two main parts. The first explored the respondents' personal backgrounds and consisted of six questions, focusing on such matters as gender, fluency in the English language, national origin, work experience in the UK and current company and occupational position. This brief exploration of the respondents' backgrounds provided some explanation and understanding of their different cultural heritages and interaction patterns with the expatriates for the following section.

The second part consisted of 20 questions. It was aimed at understanding the perceived values of and interactions with expatriates in a multi-cultural workplace to explore the locally hired colleagues' work relationships with them and how the locally hired colleagues see the expatriates' overseas adjustment in the work contexts.

The second part of the questionnaire was created in reference to the questions raised in the study of Varma, Pichler and Budhwar (2011). It could be divided into three sub-sections. Firstly, there were some predictors to understand the work relationship between expatriates and locally hired colleagues, namely the respondents' view of perceived value similarities with the expatriates (i.e. whether or not the locally hired colleagues see their values as being similar to those of the expatriates), as well as the respondents' ethnocentrism and level of collectivism. Secondly, the locally hired colleagues' willingness and experience in terms of offering role information and social support to the expatriates are examined. Thirdly, based on the expatriates' interviews, specific issues between the expatriates and the locally hired colleagues, such as the language barrier and limitations in sharing information, are examined from the locally hired colleagues' perspective. In order to understand the degree of each predictor, especially with regard to the level of value similarities, local ethnocentrism and work role as well as information support, this questionnaire made use of the Likert scale. Thus, the relative intensity of each question can be determined and the level of the responses calculated.

Hence, questions 1 to 5 were aimed at understanding the similarities in the respondents' and expatriates' values, as well as the respondents' ethnocentrism, their ability to understand different cultural heritages and mentalities between expatriates and locally hired colleagues from the locally hired colleagues' perspective (e.g. Q. 2, "I am aware of our cultural differences when I am in contact with the expatriate(s)"; Q. 4, "I consider the expatriate(s) as *them* and the other locals in the organisation as *us*"). Through these questions, the examination of the degree of categorisation provides an understanding of respondents' inclination toward in-group or out-group relationships between themselves and the expatriates.

Some researchers consider host country nationals (host country nationals) to be more likely to offer assistance to expatriates, such as providing role information and social support, forming good work relationships and interactions, when they include

expatriates in their in-groups (Toh & Denisi 2007; Varma et al. 2006; Hogg & Terry 2001). Furthermore, Varma, Pichler and Budhwar (2011) outline a model suited to examine the respondents' in-group and out-group relationships by asking about their perceived values similarities with the expatriates, their ethnocentrism and collectivism. Hence, the results of the study of the categorisation relationship between locally hired colleagues and expatriates show that people tend to ascribe similar values to people from a background similar to theirs. Linking this with questions 1 (gender) and 3 (nationality) in the first part of the questionnaire allows us to explore whether non-Taiwanese and Taiwanese locally hired colleagues categorise expatriates differently, thus resulting in different interactions and levels of assistance.

Moreover, based upon how the host country nationals evaluate the expatriates' efforts to fit into the local customs and culture, namely local ethnocentrism (see chapter 2), they tend to group the latter in terms of ins and outs. Taking into account the individualistic nature of the UK culture, host country nationals who have a higher degree of collectivism are more likely to include expatriates in their in-groups. Categorisation is a significant predictor of the willingness to offer assistance to expatriates. Hence, the second part of this section, which relates to interaction, looks at the willingness of the locally hired colleagues to assist expatriates by offering role information and social support, which serves as a foundation to Questions 7 to 14 (Toh & Denisi 2007; Varma et al. 2006; Hogg & Terry 2001). It is reasonable to believe that a high level of social support and interpersonal interaction results in a higher degree of positive adjustment experiences. These questions reflect the degree of willingness to help and support expatriates in their new work and social contexts (e.g. Q. 9, "I provide the expatriates with information on what is expected of them in their jobs"; Q. 14, "I listen to the expatriates' personal problems if am approached by them"). In this way, the level of interaction and the provision of assistance between expatriates and locally hired colleagues can be understood from the locally hired colleague perspective.

Based on role theory (Kahn et al. 1964; Katz and Kahn 1978), role conflict and ambiguity influence the work relationships between expatriates and locally hired colleagues (Okamoto & Teo 2011). Essentially, the main causes of role conflict are the incompetence expectations between the role senders and focal persons. Varma,

Pichler and Budhwar (2011) argue that the occurrence of role conflict between expatriates and locally hired colleagues is associated with their different work attitudes and values. This reflects the focus of the questions in the first part of this section.

Furthermore, Varma, Pichler and Budhwar (2011) claim that role ambiguity is a result of language barriers, different communication styles, information shortage and cultural understanding. The interviews with the Taiwanese expatriates slightly modified these causes as follows: language barriers, different communication styles, limitations in the sharing of information and parent company cultural disclosure. Together, these factors greatly influence the expatriates' work relationships with their locally hired colleagues and determine difficulties in their adjustment. Thus, Questions 15 to 20 in the second section of the questionnaire were designed around the above four concepts.

The locally hired colleague semi-structured interview

Following the survey questionnaire, the qualitative part of the research (the in-depth semi-structured interviews) went on to elaborate a range of specific work relationship issues relating to expatriate adjustment. The locally hired colleague interview questions were refined based upon specific work relationship issues emerging from the expatriate interviews and elaborated based upon the locally hired colleague survey questionnaire, in order to understand, in a rigorous and cohesive manner, the work relationships between the expatriates and their locally hired Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese colleagues, as well as some specific expatriate adjustment issues, raised by the expatriates themselves, from an locally hired colleague perspective. To augment and enrich the qualitative data, a programme of in-depth semi-structured interviews was conducted with the locally hired colleagues. Information regarding work relationships and interactions was provided from a perspective of subjective values and opinions.

In order to elaborate upon the opinions expressed by the locally hired colleagues in their survey questionnaire, the interview questions were developed by following the flow of the survey questionnaire itself, which included issues of cultural differences and local ethnocentrism in work contexts, work relationships with interaction levels

between respondents and expatriates, work role/information offer and social support, language barriers and communication difficulties, limitations to the sharing of information and parent company culture disclosure. Examples of each section of the interview questions are catalogued in appendix 4.

4.5 The Data Analysis

In order to understand the correlation between the variables in this study for expatriate adjustment and work relationships, both the expatriate and locally hired colleague survey questionnaires were subjected to correlation analysis using SPSS. With regard to the expatriate survey questionnaire, correlation analysis was used to understand the relationship between the different expatriate demographics and international assignment conditions, in order to explore the different expatriate adjustment experiences and work relationships in their new environments and workplaces. In the case of the locally hired colleague survey questionnaire, correlation analysis was used to understand the relationship between their different categories in consideration of their work relationships and their effect on the overall expatriate adjustment experience. This statistical analysis and its results and reliability are presented in the following chapter.

The qualitative data obtained through both the expatriate and locally hired colleague interviews are the notes from the interviews and the interview transcripts used for the research analysis. The aim of the semi-structured interviews' analysis was to interpret common patterns in how Taiwanese expatriates adjust to life and work in the UK and their work relationships, which are related. In order to conceptualise the research phenomenon, the analytical approach described below was employed.

To ensure that the expatriate interview transcripts reflected a true record of the interviews themselves, they were fed back to the interviewees for verification. The interview questions were analysed in three main sections: (1) the expatriates' personal backgrounds, which relate to the examination of those differences in their expatriations (e.g. international assignment conditions) that they may have brought to their adjustment; (2) the cultural difference and work relationship issues they had faced (e.g. language barriers and communication styles) and which had influenced their different adjustment experiences; and (3) the adjustment patterns particular to

their psychological, interactional and work adjustment dimensions, which were adopted from Black (1991). All interview contexts were grouped into these three main sections or topics for the research analysis. Further, the research evidence was collected in a research log for possible future investigation by others. The data of the locally hired colleague interviews was analysed with respect to the topics of the expatriate ones in order to elaborate, support and develop the contexts of the latter.

Apart from an intensive and repeated reading of the individual interview transcripts, using tables and graphs to clearly present the interview results, the Nvivo 7.0 package was employed for the computer-assisted analysis of the qualitative data. This helped with efficiently coding and grouping the data in the first stage of its management. (Pole and Morrison, 2003) stated that the purpose of coding is to look for relationships in the data, construct new ideas, organise emerging topics into smaller and larger groups and reorganise the concepts. Hence, cross-case analysis – which groups together answers to common questions by different people, analysing multiple perspectives on central issues – was employed as this study's analysis strategy. It assisted in the initial stages in providing an outline of the shape of this thesis.

After coding, I read and looked for ideas and themes using an interview guide protocol, allowing answers from different people to be grouped by topic. In this way, the interview guide actually constituted a framework for the analysis (Patton 1990). A thematic analysis – a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns and themes within data as well as interpreting various aspects of the research topic, as defined by Boyatzis in 1998 – was carried out after the coding.

Having generated the initial codes, the process of thematic analysis then involved searching for themes, reviewing, defining and naming them; this lead to the production of the report. The advantages deriving from the use of thematic analysis in this research can be explained by reference to Braun and Clarke (2006): it offers flexibility; it is a relatively easy and quick method to learn and do; the results are generally accessible to an educated general public; it is a useful method for working within a participatory research paradigm with respondents as collaborators; it can usefully summarise the key features of a large body of data, and/or offer a "thick description" of the data set; it can highlight similarities and differences across the

data set; it can generate unanticipated insights; it allows for social as well as psychological interpretations of data; and it can be useful for producing qualitative analyses suited to assisting policy development. Based on the advantages mentioned above, this thematic analysis utilises the results of both the expatriate and locally hired colleague interviews to identify the similarities and differences regarding common issues/themes for comparative presentation. At the same time, the pattern of expatriate adjustment can be explored by means of thematic analysis. This, in turn, generates a framework for Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK through the categories and connections of related themes. The following diagrams (see figure 4.1 data analysis flow chart) provide an overview of how the data emerging from the interviews were analysed.

Figure 4.1 Data Analysis Flow Chart

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │      Interview Data      │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                 ↓
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │     Transcribing Data    │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                 ↓
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │          Coding          │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                 ↓
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │     Reducing codes to    │
                    │        categories        │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                 ↓
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │    Skeleton accounts of  │
                    │     individual stories   │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                 ↓
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │     Thematic Analysis    │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                      ↙                      ↘
     ┌──────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────┐
     │   Compared with previous │   │   Compared with previous │
     │  research (1) The idea of│   │  research (2) Revisiting  │
     │    chronological phases  │   │  the conceptual framework│
     └──────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────┘
                  ↓                              ↓
     ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
     │  Top down/bottom up analysis of themes, factors and        │
     │  consequences                                              │
     │  Identification of patterns of participation and adjustment│
     └───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                 ↓
     ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
     │  Models of expatriate adjustment with determining factors  │
     │  and influenced pattern of adjustment                      │
     └───────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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4.6 Summary

Through a preliminary discussion of each of its constituents, this chapter presented the mixed method chosen and used in this research. The methodology employed in this research was designed and executed in such a way that an understanding of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experience in the UK could be achieved rigorously and cohesively. By conducting the mixed quantitative/qualitative approach by means of combined expatriates/locally hired colleague survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as the major means of data collection, a deeper set of data and exploration regarding Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experience was gained. The quantitative data was subjected to correlation analysis to identify the relative variables which influence expatriate adjustment; then, a thematic analysis was carried out upon the qualitative data to elaborate the specific patterns of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences in the UK. The following chapters will expand on these findings in greater detail.

Taiwanese expatriates in the UK: MNC staffing orientations and international assignment conditions

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this and the following chapter is to present the quantitative and qualitative research findings from the questionnaire survey and interviews respectively. Within the general picture of overseas subsidiary environment in the host country in which Taiwanese expatriates stay, the analysis of demographic and adjustment survey, as well as in-depth interviews from expatriates and their local colleagues, enabled a closer examination of overseas adjustment experiences in the UK. The significant research findings are presented in the thematic way in order to fill in the previous literature gap.

Previous studies (see chapter 2) indicate that MNCs take different staffing orientations to their foreign subsidiaries. These orientations are normally linked to each MNC's specific stage of internationalisation in its host countries, leading to different international assignment conditions. In this chapter we will see how these international assignment conditions in turn will shape the different expatriate roles in the host countries. Response patterns are analysed which are obtained from survey questionnaires and in-depth semi structured interviews of 42 Taiwanese expatriates working in the UK for 15 different MNCs, with different patterns of international assignment. From this analysis specific international assignment conditions, such as fixed or open-ended assignment duration, different expatriation ratios at subsidiaries in the host country, and statuses of family accompaniment conditions are identified which is followed by the explanation of why these different patterns of international

assignment conditions are examined. Most current research focuses on standardised expatriates who may have a fixed contract.

In this chapter a connection between the different Taiwanese MNC's staffing orientations in UK and their associated expatriation conditions is established and explained. The purpose of this chapter is to show how the different Taiwanese MNC's staffing orientations in the UK and their associated expatriation conditions lead to the identification of the two distinctive conceptual categories, which are labelled as *Visitors* and *Explorers*. Further to this the defining features of these two conceptual categories are discussed and explained. In the following chapter six a discussion is presented on how these two conceptual categories along with UK contexts: cultural differences and work relationships with locally hired colleagues influence the expatriate's adjustment experiences in the three adjustment dimensions – psychological, interactional and work.

5.2 Staffing orientations of Taiwanese MNCs in the UK

In chapter 4, the basic personal background information (i.e. gender, age and marital status) about the research sample expatriates' profiles was introduced (Table 4.3), followed by their institutional and expatriation conditions (i.e. company industry sector and expected expatriation duration). In this study, the vast majority of expatriates (41 out of 42) were male. This male dominated trend in international assignments is not limited to Taiwanese expatriates in the UK but was also presented in previous studies (Caligiuri et al., 1999; Selmer et al., 2000) and explained by the effect of family support insufficiency. In this study, I do not take gender into account as an influential factor for expatriate adjustment experiences because there is only one female participant. All that is made evident is a pattern of a high percentage of male selection for international assignments. However, the only one female participant did mention that male expatriates find it easier to adjust as they are considered to be more capable of improving business through social events. The participant explained:

"(while doing business), I think there is still a difference between males and females. For example, a colleague of mine is a male who likes playing golf. Many business people play golf while doing business. However, as a female, I cannot play golf with them (for business purposes) so I cannot socialise in this way. It does not work. They

also won't invite me to participate in some events (to socialise for business purposes).
But gender is not a crucial factor, it is just a potential influential factor. The previous
(expatriate) managers in this office were males; I am the first female one, so it is hard
to judge whether the gender difference really makes a difference in the workplace (I-
TH-e01)."

In terms of age, it can be seen that Taiwanese MNCs tend to mostly assign expatriates with ages of 46 and above, followed by ages of 36 to 40, although Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao (2000) claimed that younger Chinese expatriates have a higher level of interaction with their colleagues. The main reason for this could be the different learning skills associated with different age groups. Older expatriates may tend to have old fashioned attitudes towards new techniques and may thus face interaction and work skills issues. In this study, it can be noted that Taiwanese MNCs tend to assign more mature expatriates to their UK subsidiaries. The reason for assigning mature expatriates can be explained with older expatriates potentially having more experience, enabling them to deal with work challenges and problems in various areas. This can be linked to what is reported in the literature, as mentioned earlier, of the Taiwanese MNCs' adopting a strategy of centrally controlling their foreign subsidiaries by extensively monitoring the transfer of knowledge to their local subsidiaries by means of trust and communication between headquarters and expatriates (see chapter 3). Hence, an experienced and trusted expatriate who has worked at the parent company's headquarters for a long period of time is deemed to be the ideal candidate to be assigned abroad. In this case, the examination of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences in UK subsidiaries needs to be tracked back to the different foundations of the MNCs' staffing orientations for their specific international assignment purposes.

In terms of marital status, it is obvious that Taiwanese MNCs tend to assign married expatriates to their UK subsidiaries; the results of this study show that 35 of 42 expatriates were married. The reason Taiwanese MNCs prefer to assigned married expatriates to their UK subsidiaries can be explained by Moore (2002), in that married expatriates have to feed their families, so they tend to carry out important assignments with a higher degree of responsibility to remain in step for promotion and earn a better pay. Regarding marital status, some scholars (see chapter 2) have stated that the

relationship between married expatriates and their overseas adjustment is strongly related to responsibilities linked to their family/children, which is also connected to their international assignment conditions in terms of being accompanied by their families during their assignments. In this sense, since the majority of expatriates in this study are married, consideration of the expatriation condition of family accompaniment is way more crucial while studying the adjustment experiences of married expatriates.

To sum up, in this study, the majority of expatriates were male, mature and married. The trends of expatriate personal backgrounds chosen by Taiwanese MNCs to be assigned to their UK subsidiaries shows a clear link to staffing strategies which are related to institutional and expatriation conditions.

Studies (Perlmutter 1969; Heenan and Perlmutter 1979; Taylor et al. 1996) have stressed the importance of organisations' global staffing strategies, in order to understand the different patterns of international assignment. As mentioned in the literature chapters (see chapter 2), the specific global staffing orientations of MNCs are linked to their stages of internationalisation, which are affected by the home and host countries' economic and cultural perspectives. Based upon the literature (see chapter 2), in order to compete the global market in the 21^{st} century, MNCs from newly industrialised/ emerging economies (such as Taiwan) develop their internationalisation and expand their markets toward North America and Europe. In other words, they are motivated to develop assets and market-seeking strategies in developed countries, the UK and the US being especially popular. Taiwanese MNCs have strategic asset-seeking and market-seeking motivations for developed markets such as North America, Europe and the UK (Collinson and Rugman 2007; Mathews 2006; Makino et al. 2002; Lam 2003). Furthermore, Taiwanese FDIs are motivated to invest in developed countries when they need access to a technology that is available there and which is necessary to compete in that country's market. This explains the main purpose of Taiwanese MNCs entering an advanced market such as the UK.

During the development of this study, it was observed that the staffing orientations of Taiwanese MNCs in the UK show an inclination toward adopting a mix of ethnocentric and polycentric strategies. This observation is based upon the purpose behind the participants' international assignments, as illustrated from the interviews

responses, and upon the profiles of the participants and their MNCs subsidiaries. Firstly, from the respondents' profiles in the methodology chapter (see chapter three), it can be observed that all the crucial positions in subsidiaries are occupied by expatriates. This is a criterion typical of an ethnocentric staffing orientation. The reason why Taiwanese MNCs adopt a staffing orientation based upon an ethnocentric approach in the UK can be explained from two perspectives: organisational development and national (Taiwanese) business culture.

From the organisational development perspective, Taiwanese MNCs are mostly in the first stage of their internationalisation, having begun this process in the 21st century; this explains why they adopt an ethnocentric staffing orientation in their UK subsidiaries. As an example of this, a respondent indicated the purpose of the expatriation:

> *"I keep telling them (the locally hired colleagues) that I am a visitor, that I am here to teach them how the work is done in the headquarters, so that they will know how to deal with them. (T-EV-e02)"*

This is confirmed by a European locally hired colleague of the expatriate from the same company:

> *"From my point of view, there was a very positive change in the office (department) when the Taiwanese way of dealing with issues was brought in… I would say that our office (department) did not function very well before the new Taiwanese expatriate was assigned. So he changed the way the office runs a little. He clarified the expectations of the Taiwanese headquarter, and how this office (department) should be run and gave us a clearer idea… (T-EV-c01)."*

This clearly shows that, in order to impose headquarters' culture and philosophy in the management of its UK subsidiaries, the parent company seeks to maximise its power and control over its subsidiaries by placing expatriates assigned from headquarters in positions which hold decision-making authority.

From a cultural perspective, a locally hired colleague of the expatriate during his interview expressed his perceptions on the matter:

"It is typical of the Asian mentality to place people that they know and trust in the key positions of an organisation like this and let them run it. (I-TH-c01)"

This also reflects that the high trust requirements is specific to the Taiwanese business culture, which result in MNCs electing to place Taiwanese expatriates from headquarter in the key positions of subsidiaries (Adler and Kwon 2002; Huang et al. 2005) for control purposes (Lin et al. 2012), clearly showing their ethnocentric staffing orientation. However, the levels of expatriation ratios in the participants' various company sectors (shown in Table 5.1) indicate that some MNCs show an inclination towards a polycentric staffing orientation. Table 4.2 groups the subsidiaries' by their industrial sectors, showing their sizes, presented in terms of their total workforces, the numbers of expatriates present and their ratios.

From the self-report survey filled by the respondents and following a semi-structured interview and As seen in Table 4.2, there are seven interviewees from five companies in the IT and electrical industry, eleven from five banks and twenty-five from two shipping companies and two airline companies which contribute to the transportation industry. The subsidiary's type of industry, size, number of expatriates highlights the similarities and differences between firms. For example, Taiwanese MNCs operating in the UK are generally small in size, while the electrical and IT industry tends to assign fewer expatriates compared with other industries. As noted in Chapter 3, Taiwan FDI tends to be a mix of an ethnocentric and polycentric strategy. Hence, the international staffing strategy tries to employ more local staff and few expatriates, who are mainly operating managers and financial managers to develop British market to help localisation. Most of industries are located in London area, but electrical and IT is outside London. Thus the industries have different needs when locating their subsidiaries. For example, costs and resources obliges electrical and IT industry to look beyond London for large spaces. Banking and the transportation service industry prefer a metropolitan resource for marketing purpose, tending to locate in the London area to control the whole market properly. Moreover, more than half of Taiwanese expatriate population in the UK is examined in this study. Other than one IT company which has access difficulty, the sample includes all Taiwanese MNCs which have expatriates in the UK. Therefore, the results are highly representative of the Taiwanese expatriates in this country.

Table 5.1 groups the subsidiaries' by their industrial sectors, showing their sizes, presented in terms of their total workforces, the numbers of expatriates present and their ratios. This table is derived from Table 4.2 Profile of sample companies.

Table 5.1 Expatriation Ratio in Sample Companies

Industry Sector	Numbers of subsidiary employees	Numbers of subsidiary expatriates	Ratios of expatriation %
IT	73	4	6
Electrical	42	2	5
Banking	64	20	31
Transport service	293	46	16

Table 5.1 shows that Taiwanese MNCs operating in the UK are generally small in size, with the IT and Electrical industry sector tending to assign fewer expatriates (6% and 5% respectively) compared to Banking and Transport industry (31% and 16% respectively). Based on the similarities in the international assignment conditions these four industry sectors are grouped together as IT and Electrical Industry and Banking and Transport Industry.

At the same time, the participants' company profiles in the methodology chapter (see chapter three), indicate that Taiwanese MNCs in the IT and Electrical industry sector show an inclination to mainly assign a single expatriate to their UK subsidiaries. This low ratio of expatriation is a reflection of a polycentric staffing orientation criterion, which focuses on local responsiveness. Although, as mentioned above, Taiwanese MNCs mainly adopt an ethnocentric staffing orientation, it can be seen that those in

the IT and electrical industry sector show an inclination toward a polycentric one. A respondent from the IT industry indicated the purpose of her international assignment:

> *"Assigning expatriates is costly, so the company tends to hire local labour. The company would also like to develop the UK office and market, so someone from headquarter is needed to start things up. That is why I was offered this international assignment opportunity. Then it will be possible to localise the UK subsidiary by hiring suitable local employees. That is my final target for this office's development (I-TH-e01)."*

Hence, some Taiwanese MNCs show an inclination toward a polycentric staffing orientation, which focuses on local responsiveness to achieve their asset and market-seeking objectives and gain an advantage over their competitors. This study's findings with regard to respondents who work in the IT and electrical sector support those of previous studies (Wang, 2007; Wang et al. 2009; Chang et al. 2009) which state that localisation is a key principle in that industry's global organisational development. Localisation is the main aim of MNCs that adopt a polycentric strategy (see chapter 2); they approach the management of local subsidiaries with a focus upon making use of local resources, including local labour, to fit into the culture and specific circumstances of foreign subsidiaries. In this respect, those MNCs assign expatriates to complete localisation tasks, such as finding suitable host-nation employees to be placed at the management levels of their foreign subsidiaries in order to remove the linguistic and cultural barriers. Summarising, it therefore can be assumed that Taiwanese MNCs generally adopt an ethnocentric staffing orientation. However, those in the IT and Electrical sector also show an inclination towards a polycentric staffing orientation for their local asset and market-seeking purposes and to reduce the costs of global competition; this gives rise to international assignment conditions differing from those imposed by other MNCs – such as low expatriation ratios – which will be presented and discussed in the following section.

5.3 Relation between MNC's Staffing Orientation and Expatriation Conditions

As mentioned above, Taiwanese MNCs generally adopt an ethnocentric staffing orientation, with the exception of those in the IT and electrical industry, which incline

towards a polycentric one for the purpose of exploring and developing the local markets (i.e. localisation). The latter therefore only assign in most cases a single expatriate to their local subsidiaries, as shown in Table 3.1 (see chapter three). These inclinations towards differing staffing orientations define the ways in which MNCs structure their expatriation conditions, to the point of producing the patterns which will be presented and discussed in the following paragraphs.

Table 5.2 The expatriate respondents' international assignment conditions

No.	Interviewee Code	Expatriate Ratio	Expected Duration	Family Accompaniment	Staffing orientation
1	B-CH-e01	High	Open	No	Ethnocentric
2	B-CH-e02	High	Fixed	Yes	Ethnocentric
3	B-CH-e03	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
4	B-FI-e01	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
5	B-HN-e01	High	Open	Yes	Ethnocentric
6	B-HN-e02	High	Fixed	Yes	Ethnocentric
7	B-HN-e03	High	Fixed	Yes	Ethnocentric
8	B-ME-e01	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
9	B-ME-e02	High	Fixed	Yes	Ethnocentric
10	B-TA-e01	High	Fixed	Yes	Ethnocentric
11	B-TA-e02	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
12	T-EV-e01	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
13	T-EV-e02	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
14	T-EV-e03	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
15	T-EV-e04	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
16	T-EV-e05	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
17	T-EV-e06	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
18	T-CH-e01	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
19	T-EM-e01	High	Open	No	Ethnocentric
20	T-EM-e02	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
21	T-EM-e03	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
22	T-EM-e04	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric

23	T-EM-e05	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
24	T-EM-e06	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
25	T-EM-e07	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
26	T-EM-e08	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
27	T-EM-e09	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
28	T-EM-e10	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
29	T-ES-e01	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
30	T-ES-e02	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
31	T-ES-e03	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
32	T-ES-e04	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
33	T-YM-e01	High	Fixed	Yes	Ethnocentric
34	T-YM-e02	High	Open	No	Ethnocentric
35	T-YM-e03	High	Fixed	No	Ethnocentric
36	T-YM-e04	High	Fixed	Yes	Ethnocentric
37	E-MO-e01	Low*	Open	Yes	Polycentric
38	E-TE-e01	Low*	Open	Yes	Polycentric
39	I-DL-e01	Low	Open	Yes	Polycentric
40	I-DL-e02	Low	Open	Yes	Polycentric
41	I-TR-e01	Low*	Open	No	Polycentric
42	I-TH-e01	Low*	Open	Yes	Polycentric

Note.   * The respondent is the only expatriate in the subsidiary.

(Local subsidiaries with only one expatriate are considered to be low expatriate ratio workplaces, while those with 2 and more than 2 expatriates are considered to be high expatriate ratio workplaces.)

5.3.1 The inclination to polycentric staffing orientation and its resulting international assignment conditions

Staffing orientations determine expatriation conditions, including ratios of expatriates in local subsidiaries and international assignment durations. Table 5.2, which illustrates the international assignment conditions experienced by the respondents, shows that expatriates assigned to low expatriation ratio workplaces are also subject

to open-ended international assignment durations (i.e. they do not know when their international assignments will end). They are assigned for asset and market-seeking purposes and are entrusted with localisation tasks; hence, the lengths of their international assignments depend on the development and achievement of their work targets. A respondent from the IT industry explained:

> *"I do not have a defined, fixed international assignment duration. Headquarter set up a work target for my assignment, which I am trying to achieve as quickly as possible to show them my work performance. When I will be able to confirm to headquarter that this UK office is ready for localisation, my assignment will be over and I will go home (I-TH-e01)."*

Expatriates are motivated to take on open-ended international assignments as they perceive that these will improve their career prospects. Married expatriates faced with such assignments are encouraged by their headquarter to relocate to the UK with their families. Accordingly, all married expatriates participating in this study who are assigned with open-ended durations are accompanied by their families. The only unaccompanied expatriate in this study who works in a low expatriate ratio workplace with an open-ended international assignment is unmarried. One respondent with an open-ended international assignment stated:

> *"Initially, I was here alone. Later, when headquarter was thinking of extending my stay here, they suggested I bring my family over. That is why my family only relocated here after six months. (E-MO-e01)"*

The pattern of international assignment conditions defined by the polycentric staffing orientation of MNCs mainly in the IT and Electrical industry can therefore be described as being characterised by low expatriation ratios, open-ended international assignment durations and family accompaniment.

5.3.2 The ethnocentric staffing orientation and its resulting international assignment conditions

Several scholars state that international assignment purposes and durations are linked (Meyskens et al., 2009 and Doherty and Dickmann, 2012). For example, long-term international assignments durations are linked to control and the transfer of

knowledge and technology purposes, which are the purposes of ethnocentric staffing orientation. Hence, fixed long-term international assignment durations are evidence of control purposes, which relate to an ethnocentric staffing orientation (Tung & Punnett, 1993). This study (see Table 5.2) found that expatriates in local subsidiaries with high expatriate ratios tend to be subject to fixed long-term international assignment durations (i.e. they are assigned for definite periods of more than one year; normally three to five).

Although in the few cases in which Taiwanese MNCs assign expatriates with open-ended international assignment durations to UK subsidiaries with high expatriate ratios, it is because these expatriates are the main top-level managers in charge of their whole subsidiaries. The length of their international assignment is open-ended and depends on headquarter decisions regarding local subsidiary development. However, their MNCs' staffing orientation still focuses on ethnocentric, which assign their expatriate colleagues relocating to the same subsidiaries for fixed long-term international assignment duration. Therefore, this can be defined as another pattern of international assignment conditions related to ethnocentric staffing orientation: high expatriate ratios and fixed long-term international assignment durations. In this study this was mainly observed in MNCs in the Banking and Transportation Service sectors.

At the same time, as these expatriates are assigned to the UK based upon an ethnocentric staffing orientation and mainly for control purposes, they tend not to be encouraged to be accompanied by their families. In fact, most of the married expatriates under this pattern of international assignment conditions actually stated that they were not encouraged by their companies to relocate with their families. Should they have chosen to do so anyway, they would have had to arrange everything – and bear the related expenses – on their own. About 26% of the married expatriates participating in this study that are assigned to subsidiaries under this pattern of international assignment conditions (i.e. fixed long-term international assignment durations and high subsidiary expatriate ratios) actually relocated with their families. One of the married respondents expressed his perception during his interview:

> *"Our company does not encourage us to relocate with our families. It is part of our company's culture. Of course, if you choose to, you still can, but you*

have to deal with all the expenses and everything else on your own, which is hard. The costs are too high. Of course, if you do relocate with your family, you will feel more inclined to remain abroad. Maybe this is one of the company's concerns". (T-EV-e03).

The above provides a clear picture of Taiwanese MNCs adopting an ethnocentric staffing orientation and assigning expatriates to their UK subsidiaries for pre-defined period of time; these MNCs do not encourage expatriates to relocate their families but to successfully complete their international assignment tasks and then return to the home country. Therefore, a specific link is identified between fixed long-term international assignment durations and the status of not being accompanied by family; this defines another pattern of international assignment conditions for Taiwanese expatriates in the UK. In other words, those Taiwanese MNCs which focus upon an ethnocentric staffing orientation adopt a pattern of international assignment conditions that consists of high subsidiary expatriate ratios, fixed long-term assignment durations and the status of not being accompanied by family.

5.3.3 Correlation analysis between the various international assignment conditions and industry sectors

Correlation analysis was used to examine the research questions extensionally: what pattern of international assignment conditions are shaped by Taiwanese MNCs' coming from different industries in the UK? By examining this question, the significant relationship between the expatriate roles in host country and their adjustment experiences can be explored in a more rigorous manner to understand what exact patterns of international assignment conditions are drawn on MNCs' staffing orientations and how they draw out the expatriate roles in host country accordingly.

Firstly, Correlation Analysis established the relationship between each of the international assignment conditions. In this way, certain international assignment conditions can be investigated to a pattern which drawn on MNCs' staffing orientations greatly. Following up this analysis, the interview data was examined coherently to gather the big picture of Taiwanese expatriates adjustment experience in

the UK. Due to the small sample size (N=42), Spearman coefficient is chosen for a nonparametric test.

Table 5.3: Means, standard deviations and correlations for specific international assignment conditions

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Ratio of expatriation (a)	1.86	0.35	_			
2. IA Duration (b)	1.76	0.43	.730**	_		
3. Family accompaniment (c)	1.69	0.47	.463**	.351*	_	
4. Industry (d)	2.45	0.74	.692**	.579**	.630**	_

Notes: N=42; *p<.05; **p<.01

a Coded one expatriate as "1" and more than one as "2"

b Coded open-ended international assignment (IA) duration as "1" and fixed IA duration as "2"

c Coded Yes as "1" and No as "2"

d Coded IT and Electrical sector as "1", Banking sector as "2" and Transport Service sector as "3"

Table 5.3 shows the result of Spearman's Correlation. Regarding the relationship between work industry and ratios of expatriation in the workplace, we have a medium level of positive correlation: .692. It can be explained in that different work industries have different expatriation situation regarding the number of expatriate position for the UK subsidiaries. In other words, Taiwanese expatriates who work in different industries are assigned in the UK subsidiaries with different ratios of expatriation. From the profile of the sample companies (see table 4.2 in chapter 4), it can be seen that IT and electrical industry has an inclination toward assigning only one expatriate in UK subsidiaries, which also means they are assigned to the low expatriation ratio workplace. Conversely, banking and transport service industries assign more than one expatriate to the UK subsidiaries. Overseas adjustment experience of expatriates is, therefore, explained and discussed under two circumstances: work environment with low and high ratio of expatriation.

In addition, from Spearman Correlation, it is shown that the work industry has a relationship with international assignment duration, too. The Spearman rho is .579,

which suggests a medium level of correlation between work industry and different type of international assignment duration. In this study, type of international assignment duration combined two variables: fixed and open-ended type of international assignment duration. Meanwhile, there is a medium level of correlation between type of international assignment duration and ratios of expatriation (Spearman rho= .730). From the result above, two key questions were answered: 1). expatriates who are from different work industries have different type of international assignment duration. 2). expatriates who are from different work industries are assigned to different UK subsidiaries with different ratios of expatriation. Hence, it can be conclude that expatriates from different work industries are assigned to the UK subsidiaries with different status of pattern of international assignment conditions which include ratios of expatriation and type of international assignment duration. Based on these results with profile of sample companies and profile of expatriate participants (see table 4.2 and 4.3), it can be seen that Taiwanese expatriates who have open-ended international assignment durations along with a low ratio of expatriation in the UK subsidiaries (i.e. only one expatriate in the workplace). In turn, those who have fixed international assignment duration operate in UK subsidiaries with high ratio of expatriation.

Table 5.3 also shows that there is a medium level of correlation between ratios of expatriation and family accompaniment (Spearman rho= .463). Moreover, there is a relationship between international assignment duration and family accompaniment (Spearman rho= .351). In other words, having either a fixed or open-ended duration is a condition that influences the decision whether to relocate their family to the UK. Moreover, there is a strong connection between expatriates who are assigned to the UK subsidiaries with low or high ratios of expatriation and whether they are relocated with their family or not. Therefore, based on the result of Spearman Correlation and variance analysis, it is necessary to consider the pattern of international assignment conditions, including ratios of expatriation, international assignment duration and family accompaniment together to elaborate the in-depth interviews for a coherent explanation of Taiwanese expatriates adjustment experiences in the UK. Therefore, Taiwanese expatriates adjustment experience in the UK is analysed through in-depth interviews under the pattern of international assignment conditions combined these

three: fixed/open-ended international assignment duration; low/high ratio of expatriation; with/ without family accompaniment.

5.4 Expatriation Conditions Leading to Expatriate Roles – *Visitor* Vs. *Explorer*

Most current research focuses upon standardised expatriates and examines their overseas adjustment as a function of each individual mediator. In order to fill the gaps in the research and broaden the understanding of expatriate adjustment in a more rigorous manner, this study explores empirical insights into overseas adjustment by looking at the different expatriate roles. Hence, based upon the patterns of three international assignment conditions (i.e. international assignment duration, subsidiary expatriate ratios and status of family accompaniment) resulting from the adoption of ethnocentric or polycentric staffing orientations, Taiwanese expatriates in the UK can be categorised, in this study, into two roles: *visitor* and *explorer*.

Table 5.4 Defining features of the two conceptual categories of Taiwanese Expatriates: Visitors and Explorers

Expatriate role in host country	Industry	Expatriation		Staffing orientation
		Task assignment (work role)	*International assignment conditions*	
Visitor (Case No. 1-36)	Mostly in banking and transport service	Go-between role between headquarter and local subsidiary (coordination)	-High Expatriation Ratio -Fixed International assignment duration -Family accompaniment not encouragement	Ethnocentric
Explorer (Case No.	Mostly in IT and	Localisation and market-seeking	-Low Expatriation Ratio	Polycentric

37-42)	electrical	(exploration; high discretion)	-Open ended International assignment duration -Family accompaniment encouraged	

5.4.1 The *visitor* role of expatriate

As mentioned in the staffing orientation section, Taiwanese MNCs adopt a mix of ethnocentric and polycentric staffing orientations. Some Taiwanese MNCs only focus on the former, while others show an inclination toward the latter for specific internationalisation purposes. Taiwanese MNCs which adopt an ethnocentric staffing orientation assign expatriates to act as bridges/boundary spanners between headquarter and local subsidiaries. In this way, expatriates can imprint the headquarter culture and philosophy and transfer technical skills to local subsidiaries for control purposes. They assign expatriates as part of a complete international assignment system in a developed country (i.e. UK) with specific numbers of expatriates assigned for specific periods to local subsidiaries from generation to generation. Consequently, as shown by the analysis conducted above, these expatriates tend to be subject to specific patterns of international assignment conditions (i.e. high subsidiary expatriate ratios, fixed long-term international assignment durations and not being accompanied by their families), which can define the *visitor* role.

5.4.2 The *explorer* role of expatriate

Conversely, some Taiwanese MNCs examined in this study show an inclination towards a polycentric staffing orientation; this is especially true in emerging industries (e.g. IT and electrical). Although they assign expatriates to top-level manager/crucial positions in UK subsidiaries following ethnocentric staffing orientation criteria, it can be observed from their expatriation purposes that they adopt a polycentric staffing orientation – they assign expatriates with localisation tasks, to

explore and develop the local markets and assets, which results in only a few expatriates – or even a single one – being assigned to local subsidiaries. Specifically, most of those participating in this study were found to be first-generation expatriates in UK subsidiaries, tasked with exploring and developing local assets and markets. Therefore, these expatriates tend to be subject to another specific pattern of international assignment conditions (i.e. low subsidiary expatriate ratios, open-ended international assignment durations and being accompanied by family). This can define the expatriates' *explorer* role.

5.5 Locally Hired Staff Members' Perspective on Working with Expatriates

This chapter has firstly presented expatriates' perspective on their work role transitions in two conceptual categories of *Visitors* and *Explorers*, to show how these different work roles influence their work relationship with locally hired colleagues and, in turn, influences expatriate adjustment. When expatriates are assigned to a new cultural workplace (the UK) as either *visitors* or *explorers*, they have to face some differences (the UK context) to which they need to adjust their new work roles and work relationships with the locally hired staff members. Hence, in order to examine specific Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences in UK workplace contexts, the perspectives of both expatriates and locally hired staff members are considered in this study. The purpose of this section is to understand the specific Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences in UK subsidiaries contexts by presenting locally hired staff members perspectives on working with expatriates and how contradicting their feelings are. Thus, this section begins by presenting the locally hired staff members' views about the cultural differences between Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese companies in the work environment in relation to the presentation of different work patterns and mentalities between themselves and the expatriates in the UK subsidiaries. Then, it presents how the locally hired staff members perceive working with expatriates as colleagues in the UK subsidiaries by exploring the former's expectations towards, level of interaction with and support for the latter. Further to this, the language barrier issue is observed. Following this, the issues faced due to the language barrier and to the way different communication styles influence work efficiency and the sharing of information are also discussed.

5.5.1 Work culture difference

Although the focus of this study is on Taiwan-based multinational companies with subsidiaries in the UK, the locally hired staff members are not just from Taiwan or the UK, but from many different countries; it is a multi-cultural work environment. The specific situation for Taiwanese expatriates in UK workplaces is that they are not just dealing with British citizens as locally hired colleagues but also with co-workers from other cultures. As a locally hired Taiwanese staff member stated:

> *"It is a very international company with a very diverse cultural mix. We have around 200 employees here from 22 nationalities; hence, you can see it is very multi-cultural. I am locally hired and work in a project management job. None of the colleagues in my team is Taiwanese. They are all British, from other European countries or even from North America. (I-DL-c01)"*

Of course, even if the locally hired staff members are culturally diverse, it does not mean the company's work culture is equally multi-cultural. The company's culture has its roots based in Taiwan's own. However, a few adjustments (explained later in this section) have been made to adjust to Western culture or even to multi-cultural workplaces. These adjustments are not documented from locally hired staff members' views. As the locally hired staff member stated in the interview, these adjustments were mostly observed over time as and how they occurred. This information about parent company culture was also sometimes provided by previous expatriates. Taiwanese companies prefer to place Taiwanese managers in their UK subsidiaries as most of the communication is done in Taiwanese. It is easy to manage such employees as they are Taiwanese and thus are well aware of the Taiwanese work culture and, secondly, they can speak both Taiwanese and English, thus being able to act as bridges between the subsidiaries and headquarters.

As was mentioned above relating to the go-between role played by expatriates, expatriates understand what headquarters expect from them in terms of their work, which is to help locally hired staff members understand the parent company's culture and act as a communication bridge between them. Moreover, most expatriates also face the tension of finding themselves in new managerial roles, which shows locally hired staff members the trust placed in Taiwanese expatriates by the company headquarters. However, the parent company strategy of assigning

expatriates to deliver the headquarters' messages and occupy managerial positions influences locally hired staff members in terms of cultural differences. The locally hired staff members' perception of cultural differences impacts their work relationship with the expatriates. The locally hired staff members are under a strong impression of the parent company culture being regimented and strict. Many locally hired staff members in this study expressed this.

The key aspects of Taiwanese work ethics, as perceived and conveyed by locally hired staff members, are honour and respect. It is paramount in Taiwanese work culture to show respect for superiors and get up to greet them when they approach. However, as much as this kind of behaviour is expected from Taiwanese staff members, both expatriates or a locally hired ones, it may be problematic to impose it upon all locally hired staff members, especially non-Taiwanese ones,. Based upon their home country standards, Taiwanese staff members are even expected to work harder than employees of other nationalities. A Taiwanese locally hired staff member described the different work expectations a (Taiwanese expatriate) manager had of her:

> *"For example, if someone walks into the office, no matter whether he or she is a manager or not, I am expected to stand up to welcome them ……… The previous manager told me that the company expects me to work harder than others because I am Taiwanese. Also because I am Taiwanese, my working hours cannot be like those of my foreign colleagues, who come to and leave work on time. We are expected to work more. (T-EV-c04)"*

Obviously, there are differences between Asian and Western cultures. In this study, we found how different Asian culture is from the Western one and what the significant differences from the point of view of the locally hired staff members are in relation to the work environment.

> *"We Europeans respect our superiors, but (the expatriate manager) respects his superiors even more. (For example) he walks one step behind, them and stands when he is being talked to. (T-EV-c03)"*

As mentioned earlier, two of the key aspects of the Asian work culture are honour and respect. Obviously, in other cultures, employees also respect their superiors; however, they are on more informal terms and may even address each other on a first name basis. Conversely, the level of respect shown by Asians (Taiwanese, in

this case) to their superiors is much higher and they are expected to be very particular about how they address their superiors; they have to address them by their formal job titles and not by their first names. Also they perceive the different work culture expectations that expatriates have of them, compared to non-Taiwanese locally hired staff members. A Taiwanese locally hired staff member stated:

> *"I have to address them (the Taiwanese managers) by their particular formal job title when I speak Chinese. I do not need to do so when addressing local managers; I can address them directly by their names, also when sending them emails. Therefore, there are many details/rules which I have to be careful about and follow. (T-EV-c04)"*

These concerns were basically expressed by the Taiwanese locally hired staff members. Whereas some non-Taiwanese locally hired employees are fine with this company work culture. Most locally hired staff members feel that the parent company imposes its home culture as it wants them to understand it and to become comfortable with or accustomed to working for a Taiwanese company. However, according to some locally hired employees, the different work culture creates tensions between expatriates and their locally hired colleagues and influences their work relationship inasmuch as both parties need to adjust to each other to some extent.

Culture-wise, it was also noted by many locally hired employees that, in the Western world, people are more laidback with regard to freedom of speech and feel free to express themselves. They are more independent in their work. Conversely, the Taiwanese culture highlights strict adherence to the rules. In the end, the expatriate managers' personalities determine to what degree they are willing to adjust to Western culture and Western work environments and relax a few rules. The culture difference does not only create the need for adjustment of work relationships for expatriates but also for locally hired staff members. Different attitudes and behaviours are shown in work contexts between expatriates and their locally hired colleagues. A non-Taiwanese locally hired staff member confirmed:

> *"If I look at us Europeans, I feel we are ruder, more direct and outspoken, whereas the Taiwanese are very polite even if they are angry. Whereas Europeans drop their tone, their voice changes (T-EV-c03)"*

These different cultures of work attitudes and behaviours bring up different work

patterns, which create various work situations between the two groups of people who share their workplace.

Differences in work patterns

In terms of cultural differences, differences in work patterns were also noted by the locally hired staff members in this study, in that expatriates tend to work longer hours than usual. They simply remain at work at the end of the day (usually after 5.00 pm or 6.00 pm) and put in a few extra hours. Some locally hired staff members mentioned that the expatriates sometimes worked until midnight. Locally hired staff members see expatriates as simply being more committed and much more passionate about their jobs, wanting to prove to the higher management that they are good at their jobs. Another main reason for expatriates working overtime is that the top management instructed them to do so. However, most Western companies are flexible about work hours. There is no pressure regarding working long hours. Of course, if employees wish to work overtime, they are allowed to do so, but never forced. That does not seem to be the case in Taiwanese MNCs.

> *"The main difference between us and the Taiwanese is that they are expected to work in a certain way; the Taiwanese (expatriates) may take less holidays or avoid taking sick leave, they (the expatriates) are expected to prepare more reports for head office in Taipei. We are not involved much in the main process anyway; in general, they (the expatriates) work longer hours than locally hired staff members, although our department is very busy so there isn't much difference and we all tend to work the same. Maybe on other floors it is different. Locally hired staff members leave at 5(pm.) as they are not being paid for overtime, but the expatriates will stay a bit longer, having been told to do so by their managers. (T-EM-c02)"*

> *"Especially with regards to work. The people in Taiwan work differently, I don't think they understand the way people work here; that people don't work until midnight. (E-MO-c01)"*

Even in Taiwanese MNC's, locally hired staff members are never forced to work overtime. They have the flexibility that comes with a Western work mentality. They can work flexible hours as long as they log in their required time. Conversely, the Taiwanese home management is not so forgiving with regard to the expatriates' time adherence. A locally hired staff member remarked:

> *"Locally hired employees aren't expected to work overtime; once they finish the work shift, they can go home. If they want to apply for overtime, they can. Expatriates are asked whether they were late for work and, if so, why. Locally hired staff members aren't asked those kinds of questions. (T-EM-c02)"*

From all the above, Taiwanese expatriates convey how the Taiwanese work culture is regimented and strict. On the other hand, Taiwanese expatriates take work seriously, as it is extremely important to them. They think about their careers and believe they should make the extra effort and go beyond what their job descriptions require. Conversely, locally hired staff members state that most of them, and especially the newly hired college graduates, look at it as just a job and their work day finishes at 5 o'clock. This creates contrasting work ethics concepts. However, the different work patterns shared in the same workplace create feelings of inequality and divide the staff into two groups based upon their different work attitudes and behaviours. Although most locally hired staff members are not concerned by these expatriate work patterns and behaviours, some did voice their concern as to why the expatriates work so much. They are worried that, because of the expatriates' example, the manager may also ask them to put in extra hours. Hence, these expatriate work patterns create tension for their locally hired colleagues sharing in the same workplace.

Different work mentalities

In addition, locally hired staff members observed that most expatriates tend to do their work and then go home. They think that, unlike local people, who like to socialise after work or during the weekend, expatriates prefer to put in extra work hours of work instead. A locally hired staff member stated:

> *"There is a cultural difference, we English like to go out for a few beers after work and sometimes on a weekend, I don't think the Taiwanese are that fussed about going out, they are more likely to stay in and do a few more hours overtime. They are more willing to do overtime. (T-EM-c03)"*

Their different socialisation inclinations create interaction issues between the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues.

In addition, in terms of work mentality, the locally hired staff members indicated that

the expatriates are helpful in the workplace. When asked, they are willing to provide any help necessary to get the job done. Also, the Taiwanese are passive in nature. They are very polite and tend not to use strong language or harsh words. Even when angry, they tend to remain calm, speak politely and try not to hurt anyone's feelings. This reflects the Taiwanese culture of collectivism and team harmony mentioned by several scholars (Chang et al., 2009; Wu, 2004). Hence, this difference shows specific Taiwanese interaction and interpersonal behaviours.

5.5.2 Expatriate as a work colleague

The difference of work culture and patterns between locally hired staff members and expatriates influences the relationship between them in the workplace. In addition, the specific expectations that locally hired staff members have of expatriates as new work colleagues influence the way in which they interact with them and support them.

Expectations of locally hired staff members with regard to expatriates

Regarding newly assigned expatriates, locally hired staff members do not expect much of them as they understand that they will not be acquainted with the established UK overall work processes or patterns. However, in general, they do expect expatriate managers to lead the team properly once they have familiarised with the entire process. By this, they mean that the expatriate managers should have good decision-making capabilities and wield strong influence with the head office. So Should any issues arise at the UK branch offices, these should be resolved quickly, as locally hired staff members sometimes complain of having to wait a long time to hear back from headquarters.

> *"I would expect them (the expatriates) to wield strong influence with the head office. (E-MO-c01)"*

The expatriates are supposed to act as a communication link between the UK subsidiaries and the Taiwan headquarters. Some locally hired staff members also expect the expatriates to adjust to the UK work style rather than stick to their original Taiwanese one. Furthermore, most expatriates assigned to the UK subsidiaries of Taiwanese MNCs are placed at the managerial level.

Since the expatriate hold managerial positions, locally hired staff members also expect proper guidance with regard to company policies and procedures. As one of

them stated:

> *"He (the expatriate) should adjust to the UK style rather than keep his Taiwanese one. So, in the beginning, he made some efforts to improve communications between the Taiwan headquarters and this office. (E-MO-c01)"*

Some locally hired staff members felt that, when their expatriate managers first arrived, their management style was not flexible at all. Some actually imposed the Taiwanese management style on locally hired staff members. Expatriates tend to work in ways similar to those they were used to in Taiwan, simply reproducing their home company culture in their new environment.

> *"But he (the expatriate) needs to be more open minded in his thinking; we try to remind him that he is not in Taipei but in the UK now. The market is different, but he still thinks as if he was in Taiwan. For instance, he constantly tells us how things works in Taipei and we should follow suit. (T-EV-c03)"*

After the expatriates have been a while in the UK subsidiaries, locally hired staff members feel that their management style has still not changed much. However, the expatriates have become more open-minded and they have realized that they are in a different market, so they have changed the way they think. When the expatriates first come to the UK, they have absolutely no knowledge of how things work here, but, after a while, they become aware of the difficulties faced by locally hired staff members and they convey those issues to headquarters to bring about changes in the management style.

> *"I think he (the expatriate) has improved. He has realised that he should adjust to the UK style rather than holding on to the Taiwanese one. So he has started to make some efforts to improve communications between the Taiwan headquarters and this office to avoid any issues. (E-MO-c01)"*

In general, locally hired staff members think that expatriates are extremely professional. However, it is evident that, for them, the expatriates are not just new work colleagues assigned from the Taiwan headquarters, but that they also might become their managers. Hence, not just only the differences in work cultures and patterns, but also the different work positions influence their interactions with the

expatriates.

Basically, locally hired staff members commented about their interactions with the expatriates both in and out of the work context. In the work context and based on what was mentioned above, most expatriates are assigned to managerial positions; thus, the level of their interactions with locally hired staff members depends on the expatriates' job positions. The higher the position, the less is the interaction, which is limited to situations in which some sort of authorisation is needed. However, the interaction level of the locally hired staff members with those expatriates who are immediate superiors or colleagues is very high. One of the locally hired respondents explained:

> *"Not so much with Ed (Director, name changed), but a lot more with Mike (name changed); we do a lot more work together,…with Mike, the interaction level is the same as it is with any other colleague, we are very good friends, professionally we are in the same office, in the same department, so we spend a lot of time talking about work, we chat about non-work topics as well. With Ed, he is our director, so I only speak to him when I need any help that Mike cannot supply, or when I am working on a project with needs director authorisation. We have meetings every week. (E-MO-c02)"*

The interaction with higher position expatriates is purely professional; for instance, in the form of regular meetings. When the locally hired staff members need help with work related issues, most expatriates are open to suggestions and are willing to discuss any new methods suggested by the junior staff. Some locally hired staff members said that their managers are easy to approach and, if they have any issues, they simply go and talk to them. In turn, the interaction with expatriate colleagues is more at a social level. In this study, the majority of expatriates are in managerial positions, hence their interaction with locally hired staff members is mostly professional. Hence, most of the interaction takes place during work hours and mainly consists of meetings and discussions about projects.

In addition, with regard to non-work contexts, some locally hired staff members said that it is difficult to become friends with some of the expatriates, as the latter are in the UK for a short time, and hence do not mix so easily with local people. They form their own Taiwanese group and mostly talk in Chinese. The locally hired staff

members understand the need for this and say that it is purely due to the fact that, being from the same country and speaking the same language, the expatriates obviously feel comfortable with each other as it is easier for them to communicate among themselves rather than with any English colleagues. Hence, in terms of socialising, locally hired staff members do not expect expatriates to mingle with them. However, locally hired staff members do have some work related expectations of expatriates.

Support provided by locally hired staff members to expatriates

With regard to the professional expectations of locally hired staff members towards expatriates, the former said that they provided the latter with a lot of help in various forms during the initial stages of their settling in to their new office environment. Also, the locally hired staff members indicated that the expatriates needed more social than logistic or work related support. For example, how to commute in the UK, any places worth going to on sightseeing trips, or things to do during the weekend. With regards to work related support, the expatriated would sometimes ask their locally hired colleagues some details on how to write an email in proper English, or some English pronunciation tips. English spelling, pronunciation and grammar were the kind of support the expatriates most commonly needed from their locally hired colleagues. In some cases, they would ask them about places to stay or how to go about daily non-work related activities. Obviously, from the locally hired staff members' perspective, the expatriates required more language support but, in a way, they also pointed out the language issues between them that influenced the level of communication and sharing of information in the workplace.

5.5.3 The language barrier & its influence on work communication and information sharing

Just like the expatriates, the locally hired staff members claimed that communication is one of the major issues for expatriate adjustment in the UK. Firstly, English is not the expatriates' first language; thus they do not have a good command of it. For example, this can be seen in the way they write emails to clients. Due to their limited vocabulary, the expatriates are unable to establish a rapport with the recipients in the way English speakers do, and tend to write more direct emails.

> *"They (the expatriates) are more straight to the point, whereas, when we*

write an email, we tend to be friendlier. The Taiwanese are more direct. (T-EM-c03)"

Obviously, the English language barrier mainly influences the expatriates' particular communication style. Hence, sometimes locally hired staff members find it difficult to understand exactly what it was that an expatriate meant to say. However, over time, once the locally hired staff members and the expatriates got to know each other they developed a certain level of understanding, through which they could communicate effectively. Of course, according to some locally hired staff members, coming to the point in those kinds of conversation can take a lot of time. As a locally hired staff member explained:

"I do understand what he (the expatriate) is saying, it just takes two or three attempts before I finally understands. For example, whereas Richard (name changed) is straightforward, Peter (name changed) goes around in circles before he comes to the point. Although Richard's English is not so clear, I understand him better than I do Peter. But, in the end, we get to a point where we understand each other. So I would not say there is a communication problem because we always get there somehow. (T-EV-c03)"

Although some locally hired staff members do not speak English as their first language either, one of the Taiwanese locally hired employees explained why English language issues matter more to Taiwanese expatriates than they do to others:

"English is a communication tool. By comparison, the Taiwanese are less comfortable with speaking English as a new language than Europeans are. It might be because of their mentality. We (Taiwanese) are worried about making mistakes and tend to listen more, whereas European tends to ask lots questions and speak their mind. Hence, English could be a barrier but so could be the mentality. (I-DL-c01)"

Because of the language barrier and the Taiwanese mentality, some expatriates tend to stick with other Taiwanese employees as, naturally, they find speaking in their own mother tongue to be more convenient. This language barrier thus has a negative effect on the confidence of the expatriates and has substantially influenced the work efficiency. A locally hired staff member explained:

"It does have some effect, but mostly in terms of time, what I have noticed is

that, when something is not quite understood, the required decision doesn't come straight away, and the colleague will come and ask again before making his final decision. All our colleagues are quite capable of doing their job; it's not a matter of capabilities, it's a matter of understanding, so it only causes delays in decision making. (T-YM-c01)"

Hence, the expatriates' language barrier wastes a lot of time when there is the need to explain something to someone and then to come to a decision. However, over time, the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues have found some common ground where they take the time to understand each other.

Furthermore, the language barrier not only affects the level of communication related to work efficiency, but also the information exchange between the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues. A non-Taiwanese locally hired staff member stated:

"Sometimes we are not sure what he (the expatriate) is saying. So, because of this, some information is lost along the way. For instance, when I have to tell him (the expatriate) something, but only the key points are understood. (T-ES-c02)"

In turn, the Taiwanese locally hired staff members think that the expatriates are able to express their thoughts more efficiently in their language; so, if the Taiwanese locally hired staff members speak to the expatriates in Chinese, they get more information across. A Taiwanese locally hired staff members stated:

"Most expatriates will not go ahead and chat with their locally hired colleagues because of the language barrier. They do not feel differently facing people like us, who do speak Chinese; As locally hired staff members, we do not have certain information (e.g. company policies)…As a Taiwanese, I would think that the reason the expatriates have this kind of information, unlike me, is because the company has a barrier policy because some information from Taiwan is in Chinese. If they send that information to locally hired staff members (who do not know Chinese), they cannot read it. (T-EM-c02)"

In brief, it can be seen that locally hired staff members think that expatriates face a language barrier while working in UK subsidiaries and that the limited level of communication between them affects work efficiency, although it does improve over

time. However, the language barrier has an effect upon the different information sharing contexts of non-Taiwanese and Taiwanese locally hired staff members, who, to some extent, receive different degrees of information.

5.6 UK Subsidiary Context: Cultural Difference, Local Support and Language Barrier

Pervious section we assess the responses from locally hired colleagues' perspectives of the work relationship in relation to expatriate adjustment. The main issues which greatly influence expatriate adjustment in UK contexts has been presented from the locally hired staff members' perspective. Hence, here, how contradictory or confirmatory their observations are with regards to the response patterns of expatriates are all discussed together to summarise the main UK subsidiary context that expatriates face to adjust while working in the UK.

Based on statistical and interview results from locally hired staff members, we see the importance of the language barrier and information/social support from locally hired staff members to expatriates, particularly on their arrival. Locally hired staff members also highlighted two other very influential factors, those of cultural difference and the expatriate's work position. Taking these altogether, cultural difference, support and work position, and language barrier are now focused on in a cohesive manner in the context of previous empirical and theoretical studies.

Different culture and mentalities between locally hired colleagues and expatriates

Organisational cultural novelty refers to the culture difference between the subsidiary organisation in the foreign country and in the home country. For example, with regard to the British mentality, in opposition to the Taiwanese mentality in terms of work format, some expatriate interviewees indicate that British staff tend to be inefficient and passive, i.e. showing a low level of initiative, whereas locally hired colleagues think that the Taiwanese expatriates are overzealous about their role and like to work hard naturally, resulting in overtime work. It can be assumed that the Taiwanese imitative work culture might be the result of its performance examination system and high social competition. In Taiwan, employees tend to work under responsibility system which means they work until the work responsibility is finished rather than

time-oriented work system. Furthermore, in Taiwan, the work format is more teamwork/group orientated, which is different to the individual task/orientation in the UK. These are reflective of Hofstede's culture difference, in that the Taiwanese culture is more about collectivism and uncertainty avoidance. It also relates to a different boundary between work relationships and what happens outside work. In the UK, people respect one another's private life; hence, they have less social events with colleagues, compared with Taiwan work culture where people have to attend unofficial social events for business purposes. This applies with regard to their patterns of work breaks, too. Work patterns like overtime and work role such as *Visitor* have also created distance between themselves and locally hired colleagues. This is seen by locally hired staff members as the Taiwanese people grouping together with other Taiwanese and that they are not very much into socialising with locally hired colleagues. These distances between different cultures influence the depth and degree of their working relationships.

Support and work position

The work position of expatriates influences the degree of their interaction. This supports the study of Varma, Pichler and Budhwar (2011), which examines 493 host country nationals (HCNs) in the UK. Its result indicates that HCNs tend to include expatriates who have similar values and backgrounds, especially in terms of ethnicity or national origin, in their in-groups. In addition, HCNs tend to offer more social support and role information to those expatriates categorised as in-group, especially to peers and subordinates as opposed to supervisors. However, Taiwanese expatriates tend to be assigned abroad at manager-level roles. The dissimilarity of values between Taiwan (an Asian culture) and the UK (a Western culture) is likely to exclude Taiwanese expatriates in HCNs' in-groups. Moreover, the superior work role can also increase the chances of Taiwanese expatriates not being accepted by HCNs. Hofseted's high power distance for Taiwanese culture is also relevant. Due to the higher work position, Taiwanese expatriates have a mainly professional work relationship with locally hired colleagues. Why locally hired colleagues feel that expatriates tend to ask them for social rather than logistic or work-related support can be explained as reinforcing their professional work role as managers. It can therefore be predicted that Taiwanese expatriates might face more difficulties in their work

relationships than expatriates of other nationalities, which would influence their adjustment experience.

Language barrier

The *visitor* role for expatriates necessitates a stronger communication bridge being built between the Taiwanese headquarter and UK subsidiary. This should result in headquarter understanding the Western work culture a little better and, it is to be hoped, providing adequate support both to expatriates and locally hired staff members. However, from the data gathered through interviewing both expatriates and locally hired staff members, we can clearly see a communication gap between Taiwan and the UK. The language barrier is a very important issue that needs to be considered while addressing the expatriate adjustment experience. It can be seen from the interviews how the language barrier leads to the expatriate not communicating efficiently with their locally hired colleagues, which in turn results in the locally hired colleagues not understanding the expatriates' situation and expectations. Several interviewees stated that the degree of English fluency influences involvement in culture and environment, as well as communication in the workplace and social life. There are several studies showing that the relationship between fluency in the language of the host country and expatriate adjustment is straightforward (Kraimer & Wayne 2004; Nicholson & Imaizumi 1993; Shaffer et al. 1999). That head-start provides expatriates with a useful tool for interpersonal networking and information gathering (Kim & Slocum Jr. 2008). As supported by Kraimer and Wayne (2004), there is a positive relationship between language ability and adjustment in general. Moreover, the meta-analytical review by Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) found a positive relationship between expatriate work and interaction or socialisation adjustment. However, Takeuchi, Yun and Russell (2002) argued that it influences work adjustment alone and not any other dimension. From the interviews conducted, we can see that lack of language skills affects expatriates self-confidence, restricting them from enjoying a candid conversation with the local people. Additionally, due to commonalities of culture and language, Taiwanese expatriates found it easier to communicate with people at work back home. Furthermore, they tend to work more with Taiwanese locally hired colleagues or even stay with people who speak Chinese. Overall, not only can the language barrier cause major problems for initial work

efficiency but it can also play an important role in the expatriate's psychological, interaction and work adjustment.

Moreover, this finding corroborates the claim by Kim and Slocum Jr. (2008) that English fluency plays an important role especially for Asian expatriates in the English speaking workplace. All the various cultures and languages have an effect on expatriate communication at work with local colleagues and clients in the UK, which in turn influences their work relationships and the speed with which they may blend into the new environment. By comparison, and supporting by the study of Selmer (2006) which examined Western expatriates in China, the host national language itself is a crucial instrument through which to develop understanding of the new culture as well as how it facilitates the adjustment. In addition, being a Western advanced economy has resulted in a British superiority complex in terms of management. Taiwanese expatriates have to face not only a different work mentality which can involve negative attitudes, e.g. superiority from Westerners over Asian methods, but also language difficulties. In summary, the culture difference of attitudes and behaviours at work, limited support from distance, the turmoil of newness, work positions and language barrier all increase the challenge of overseas adjustment for go-between Taiwanese expatriates in the UK – something that is confirmed both by expatriates and locally hired staff members.

5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the study of the determinants of expatriate adjustment focuses upon external influences – for instance, organisational staffing orientations and international assignment conditions – to understand *how* expatriates interpret their role based upon Taiwanese MNC influence. In order to understand in a cohesive manner "how Taiwanese MNCs' staffing orientations diverging the patterns of international assignment conditions distinctly map out Taiwanese expatriate roles which differently influence Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences in the UK", the profile and interviews of expatriates and Locally hired Colleagues were analysed and presented. Firstly, the different expatriate roles (i.e. *visitor* and *explorer*) were mapped out based upon MNC staffing orientations and the connection of related international assignment condition patterns. Furthermore, the locally hired staff members' perspective on working with expatriates was explored to contribute to the

understanding of the main issues (i.e. work culture difference, local support and language barrier) that expatriates face to adjust in the UK subsidiaries' context. By looking at expatriate adjustment in this cohesive manner, this study would suggest previous studies (e.g. Black et al. 1991; Shaffer et al. 1999; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. 2005) to develop the model on expatriate adjustment and fill in some research gaps, which will be presented in the discussion and conclusion chapter.

Based on the different staffing orientations adopted by Taiwanese MNCs in the UK, which define specific and different patterns of international assignment conditions, expatriates who are assigned to the UK take on the roles of *visitor* and *explorer*. Hence, by looking at the different expatriate roles of *visitor* and *explorer*, the differences in the expatriates' work roles for their international assignments (i.e. Taiwanese MNCs contexts), their work relationships with the locally hired colleagues and culture difference in the UK (i.e. UK contexts) can be examined. In this way, the overseas adjustment experiences of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK can be accordingly explored and will be presented and discussed in next chapter.

Specifically, *visitor* expatriates are assigned by MNCs which adopt an ethnocentric staffing orientation, which defines a pattern of international assignment conditions consisting of high subsidiary expatriate ratios, fixed long-term international assignment durations and not being accompanied by family. Conversely, *explorer* expatriates are assigned by MNCs with an inclination towards polycentric staffing orientation, which defines a pattern of international assignment conditions consisting of low subsidiary expatriate ratios, open-ended international assignment durations and being accompanied by family.

In next chapter, "how being in different expatriate roles distinctly influences Taiwanese expatriates' adjustment experiences in the UK" will be presented and discussed in three adjustment dimensions (i.e. psychological, work and interactional).

CHAPTER

SIX

Taiwanese expatriate adjustment: visitors vs. explorers

6.1 Introduction

Following up on the previous chapter on Taiwanese MNCs' staffing orientations diverging the patterns of international assignment conditions, two distinct Taiwanese expatriate roles in the UK are mapped out as *visitors* and *explorers*. The purpose of this chapter is to study the response patterns of adjustment experiences of these two roles: *visitor* and *explorer*, in order to understand "how being in different expatriate roles distinctly influences Taiwanese expatriates' adjustment experiences in the UK".

The expatriate adjustment experiences are examined from three different contexts. Firstly, from expatriate role context, the different influences of distinct features of these two roles (i.e. *visitor* and *explorer*), which consist of the different Taiwanese MNCs' staffing orientations focuses and the formed patterns of international assignment conditions. Secondly, from Taiwanese MNCs context, the different influences of *visitors* and *explorer's* predetermined work roles for international assignment on adjustment experiences are examined. Thirdly, from UK context, the different influences of *visitors* and *explorers'* perceptions on culture difference/ novelty, as well as work relationship with their locally hired colleagues on adjustment experiences are examined. These relative expatriate adjustment experiences are separately presented into the three dimensions of adjustment: psychological, work and interactional, through in-depth interviews from expatriates and their locally hired colleagues. The notion of "the experiences of integrated roles of being an expatriate in a working relationship" in relation to the overseas adjustment experience are discussed through the perspectives of both the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues along with a discussion of the adjustment

experiences related to each of the three adjustment dimensions (i.e. psychological, work and interactional) in which the *visitors* and *explorers* are categorised.

This chapter is organised in four sections. First, following up the previous chapter, Taiwanese expatriate's roles (i.e. *visitors* and *explorers*) in the UK are briefly presented. Second, based upon the roles of visitors and explorers, a cross-sectional model of Taiwanese visitor and explorer expatriate adjustment in the UK (table 6.1a and 6.1b) is presented. These tables (6.1a and 6.1b) shows an overview of how and what the expatriates' adjustment experiences differ based upon the features of being *visitors* or *explorers*, the predetermined work roles for international assignment from their MNCs and culture differences as well as work relationships in the UK they experience related to each of the three dimensions of adjustment in which *visitors* and *explorers* are categorised. And then the next two sections presented and discussed the detailed of *visitor* and *explorer* patterns of adjustment experiences in the three dimension adjustments indecently.

6.2 Taiwanese Expatriate Roles in The UK

From the previous chapter, this study finds that Taiwanese MNCs' staffing orientations in the UK are either based upon an ethnocentric approach – mainly found in the transport and service industry – or a polycentric one – in the IT and electrical industry – which, in turn, draw specific patterns of their international assignment conditions (i.e. consisting of international assignment duration types, expatriate workforce ratio level in foreign subsidiaries and status of family accompaniment). Based on these two specific patterns of international assignment conditions, the analysis identifies the roles of Taiwanese expatriates into two categories – henceforth labelled '*visitors*' and '*explorers*'.

The data shows that expatriates in the *visitor* role are typically subject to fixed long-term assignment durations (i.e. expatriates who have a clear idea about how long their international assignment will last and at least for more than 12 months), work in Banking and Transport Service industry, with relatively high subsidiary expatriation ratios (i.e. work environments with equal 2 and more than 2 expatriates) and shows inclination toward unaccompanied by their families in the UK.

Conversely, the 'explorer' expatriates usually occur to have open-ended international assignment durations (i.e. they do not know how long they will be assigned abroad), commonly work in IT and electrical industry, with low subsidiary expatriation ratios and are usually encouraged to relocate their families with them to the UK.

From an expatriate role perspective, drawing on the role theory and Nicholson's work role transition theory, expatriates face specific role situations due to role development and changes linked to their international assignments, hence, this study categorised these two expatriate roles: *visitors* and *explorers*. In this way, by taking Taiwanese expatriates in the UK as the example, these two roles provide an exploratory understanding of how being different expatriate roles (i.e. *visitors* and *explorers*) diverging from the specific patterns of international assignment conditions (i.e. consisting of international assignment duration types, subsidiary expatriation ratio levels and family accompaniment statuses) variously shape the different levels of role development/changes, which can elaborate and develop the role theory. In turn, in this study, the results of how these role differences distinctly influence their work and adjustment experiences can elaborate and develop Nicholson's work role transition theory.

6.3 Taiwanese Expatriate Adjustment in The UK as *Visitors* and *Explorers*

Black (1990) states that expatriate adjustment is "the individual's affective psychological response to the new environment". As shown by previous chapter, Taiwanese MNCs' staffing orientations diverging the patterns of international assignment conditions, two distinct Taiwanese expatriate roles in the UK are mapped out as *visitors* and *explorers*. Hence, the cross-sectional model of Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK as *visitors* and *explores* (table 6.1a & 6.1b) has been developed to understand how being in different expatriate roles distinctly influences Taiwanese expatriates' adjustment experiences in the UK in terms of their internal, psychological, emotional states.

Hence, the following expatriate adjustment models are discussed and presented from the three adjustment dimensions– namely: psychological, work and interactional, in accordance with Black's adjustment categories (see chapter two). The psychological

adjustment dimension explores the expatriates' well-being in their new workplaces and environments, the work adjustment dimension explores their attitudes towards their professional tasks and the contexts surrounding these and the interactional adjustment dimension explores how comfortable they are with their interpersonal information exchanges and communication in terms of their attitudinal and behavioural interaction with the people and the environment in their new local workplace.

Furthermore, based upon Black's model – which states that organisational factors include local co-worker support – this study identifies and explores the role information offer and social support in the work relationship from the expatriates' locally hired colleagues perspective to provide a cohesive result in visitors and explorers' work and adjustment experiences in the UK subsidiaries.

Table 6.1a Cross-sectional model of Taiwanese *visitor* expatriate adjustment in the UK

EXPATRIATE ROLE	PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT	WORK ADJUSTMENT	INTERACTIONAL ADJUSTMENT
VISITOR	INFEXLIBE	REPLICATION MODE ORIENTED	RESTRICTED
	1) "Heart at home" ↓ 2) Awareness of temporary international assignment as part of career advancement plan ↓ 3) No long-term plan in the host country ↓ 4) Limited adjustment restricted to workplace	1) Boundary spanner/ go-between role between headquarter and local subsidiary ↓ 2) Facing high work expectations from headquarter (KPIs*), expatriate colleagues and locally hired colleagues ↓ 3) Support and experience-shared by previous and current expatriate colleagues ↓ 4) Some information exchange locked within the expatriates group	1) High local language barrier and ↓ 2) And no family accompaniment in the UK, hence, feeling frustrated and isolated ↓ 3) Forming a group with expatriates under similar conditions as themselves ↓ 4) Restricted and selective interaction with locally hired colleagues

Note. * - key performance indicator

Table 6.1b Cross-sectional model of Taiwanese *explorer* expatriate adjustment in the UK

EXPATRIATE ROLE	PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT	WORK ADJUSTMENT	INTERACTIONAL ADJUSTMENT
EXPORLER	FLEXIBLE	EXPLORATION MODE ORIENTED	OPEN
	1) Awareness of uncertain assignment duration and low subsidiary expatriation ratio* 2) Family accompaniment for emotional support 3) Proactive adjustment to the new work and living environment.	1) Localisation and market seeking, (some are even first-generation business explorers) 2) Expectations from headquarter and locally hired colleagues for explorer's high discretion role 3) Facing vital work responsibility with no routines but innovation and being in the key position 4) Independent exploration and self-learning 5) After prolonged efforts, willingness to stay further in the subsidiary permanently	1) Facing the culture difference (i.e. power-distance) and culture shock 2) Accepting the culture difference to have open interactions with locally hired colleagues for localisation work task completion; with locals for family settlement 3) Adaptive behaviour on making efforts to blend in with locally hired colleagues

Note. * - Single expatriate assigned to the subsidiary.

Summarising, in this section, the exploration of different Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences from being in *visitors* and *explorers* in the UK is presented in Table 6.1a and 6.1b, – in order to present, compare and contract expatriate adjustment in three different dimensions (i.e. psychological, work and interactional) in the categories of visitors and explorers. Following up the detailed presentations and discussions in the next sections– by the explorations of the kinds of scenarios in which *visitors* and *explorers* take place – to identify the different feelings which guide them; finally, the different types of adjustment in will be correlated with the three adjustment dimensions by understanding how the various kinds of scenarios differently shape expatriate adjustment patterns. All of these are presented and discussed through the in-depth interview contexts from expatriates along with the locally hired colleagues' perspective on work (relationships) and adjustment experiences, following table 6.1a and 6.1b.

6.4 The *Visitor* Pattern of Adjustment Experience

From the profile of participants and results in previous chapter (see chapter 5), expatriates see themselves as *visitors* can be defined by their features as: expatriates who are assigned to a workplace with high subsidiary expatriation ratios (i.e. with equal 2 and more than 2 expatriates), work in Banking or Transport Service industry, with relatively fixed long-term assignment durations (i.e. expatriates who have a clear idea about how long their international assignment will last and at least for more than 12 months), and are unaccompanied by their families in the UK. Following up table 6.1a for the *visitor* expatriate adjustment, it is noted that the *visitor* type of expatriates consists in an inflexible psychological adjustment, a career advancement-oriented work adjustment and a restricted interactional adjustment. Therefore, in order to understand how visitor's adjustment experience is in the UK, their each adjustment mode is discussed and presented separately in three adjustment dimensions, based on the specific features of *visitor* role (i.e. their MNCs' ethnocentric staffing orientation and pattern of international assignment conditions), along with Taiwanese MNCs contexts (i.e. predetermined work roles for international assignment) and UK contexts (i.e. culture difference and work relationship with locally hired colleagues).

6.4.1 Inflexible psychology adjustment

From the psychological perspective, *visitors* tend to go through an inflexible adjustment mode, which means they are less willing to change or adapt to the changes in circumstances from home to host country.

1) Awareness of temporary international assignment as part of career advancement plan

Due to domestic MNCs related to ethnocentric staffing orientation, Taiwanese headquarters assign *visitor* type of expatriates from one generation to another; with a certain number of them always present in order to ensure that the organisation meets systematic international assignment work goals. In turn, for *visitors*, they look forward to the experience and see the assignment as a proof of highly regarded previous work performance, which cultivates pride. Likewise, *visitor* expatriates who see an international assignment as an indispensable part of their career advancement process think of it as being integral to their overall job context. They do not therefore see themselves as being 'special'. When the time comes, they will be assigned back to headquarters and then it will be someone else's turn to work in a foreign location. A respondent expressed his perception during the interview:

> *"As expatriates, we strive to achieve specific work targets within the three year period in order to show headquarter that we did our job properly and performed well (T-EV-e01)."*

2) No long-term plan in the host country

Thus, they are *visitors* who know they will go home soon and are only abroad temporarily to complete their international work assignment as part of career advancement plan. They reckon that, no matter what they have to deal with this situation. As it is only temporary and they can look forward to it coming to an end. A respondent expressed his perceptions about this during the interview:

> *"I tell them (locally hired colleagues) that I am a visitor here, so I will not build relationships for my own benefit. I am only here for three years and I will do my best in the job. I am only here for a specific period of time. I am a visitor here, so why should I build up connections and interact with so many people? I will leave after three years, so too many connections and interactions might be troublesome.*

Basically, we expatriates spend the first year adjusting to our new lives and jobs. The second year, we have a good idea of how to deal with things, so we focus upon what we need to do. The final year, we are preparing to go home. Time flies! (T-EV-e02)"

In other words, these expatriates understand that they are only in the UK for a specific work task and for a defined period of time. They reckon on completing the work within the limited time allocated. Thus, *visitors* do not have a long-term plan or the impetus to try to integrate with the local people and environment.

3) "Heart at home"

Since the expatriates are aware of their predetermined and temporary assignment duration, they tend not to make long-term plan in the host country as they leave their heart at home. Meaning the expatriates long to be at home and intend to finish their international assignment and return home to the family and resume work back home (e.g. in headquarter). Since the expatriates know that this is a temporary situation, they tend to adjust themselves limited to workplace and in work contexts. In other words, they tend to be unwilling to make changes in their attitudes (i.e. they are psychologically inflexible) since they do not have to face demands to change their attitudes and values to adapt to the local environment. As a respondent stated:

"I do not plan to stay here for any longer than necessary as my family is in Taiwan (T-ES-e03)."

4) Limited adjustment restricted to workplace

Furthermore, they know they are boundary spanners/go-between role (i.e. as communication bridge between headquarter and local subsidiary) which mediate the requirements of the headquarter and those of the UK subsidiary, but leave their "heart at home" due to the MNCs' ethnocentric approach which assigns expatriates to local subsidiaries for specific periods of time. This scenario limited their attitude in adjusting to the new situation or, at least, tolerating it. As *visitor* role, expatriates do not make much effort to interact with people, but just enjoy their stay and take in the sights of the host country. Hence, in short, *visitors* have limited adjustment restricted to workplace, which, in turn, their adjustment mode is psychologically limited – henceforth labelled '*inflexible*' psychological adjustment.

6.4.2 Replication mode work adjustment

From work perspective, for visitors, they focus on adjusting in work contexts toward replication mode. As mentioned earlier, visitors are aware of the international assignment as part of their career advancement plan so it is an opportunity to showcase their professional capabilities to the company for their future career advancement back at home. It means that they are willing to accept to the new work roles for international assignment (i.e. "boundary spanner"/ "go-between" role), work experiences/ relationships (i.e. work expectation and support among themselves, expatriates colleagues and s) and even work tasks (i.e. following headquarters' orders and key performance indicates– KPI) for their career advancement plan.

1) "Boundary spanners" and "go-between" role

Following up what mentioned above, from work perspective, expatriates as *visitors* are assigned as "boundary spanners" and "go-between" role. The headquarters assign them as "boundary spanners" to mediate between the demands of the Taiwanese headquarter and those of the host country's subsidiaries. This can be seen as a "go-between role" which sees the expatriates taking on boundary roles spanning the different work requirements and expectations of the headquarter and their UK subsidiaries. As one respondent confirmed:

> *" I act as a bridge between them (the headquarter and the UK subsidiary). I have to properly assign tasks and achieve targets. If the headquarter believes that the UK subsidiary is not working well, I have to supervise them and ask them to report to me. I worked at the headquarter for a long time, so I know the headquarters' requirements and what work targets they expect to achieve. I have to convey these expectations to the local (UK subsidiary) manager (T-YM-e01)."*

Therefore, it can be seen that expatriates have to deal with multiple work roles and expectations from headquarter and subsidiaries in the host country.

2) Facing high work expectations from headquarter (KPIs), locally hired colleagues and expatriate colleagues

Based on the role theory (see chapter 2), it can be assumed that these expatriates tend to experience work role conflict and tension due to conflicting the demands from the different parts of the organisation (i.e. the headquarter and local subsidiaries). Due to the ethnocentric

control of local subsidiaries which results in the "go-between" roles of *visitor* expatriates whose "heart is at home" and who take on a "bear role" (i.e. see chapter 2 on Hazing's international assignment expatriate types definitions), it creates expectations from headquarter, and locally hired colleagues in the UK subsidiaries, which increase their workload and, in turn, creates stress to *visitor* type of expatriates. For example, the Taiwanese MNCs expects expatriates to perform better than other employees because of having been specifically selected for the position abroad, in which the company invests many resources. A respondent who was selected for a UK subsidiary as part of his future promotion process, remarked:

> *"In my bank, lending is the main activity that brings benefits to the company. Expatriates are in charge of it, so the manager focuses on this field and puts pressure on us. The manager told us clearly that the company had assigned us overseas with a high investment cost, so, although work pressure is high, we expatriates should not complain but get on with our work tasks. It also means that our workload is heavier than that of other colleagues. Also the manager pays more attention to expatriates and expects a higher performance from us than he does from others, which I need to come to terms with. Should I not be able to adjust my attitude accordingly, I would experience adjustment difficulties (B-FI-e01)."*

A respondent indicated that fulfilling the boundary role is challenging:

> *"This situation has been going on for a long time in this local branch. Several locally hired colleagues worked here for one to two years and then left. Therefore, the most important work, and especially the work which requires internal cooperation, will be placed upon the shoulders of the expatriates, rather than upon those of their locally hired colleagues. We have a heavy workload. Also, headquarter colleagues always prefer to go through the Taiwanese expatriates although the work in question may be the duty of a local staff member. All of these situations create role overload for the expatriates and puts them in an ambiguous position, which creates fatigue and stress. (T-EM-e10)"*

Obviously, all expatriates in ethnocentric MNCs perform this role to a greater or lesser extent; the "go-between" role is highly demanding and difficult. For instance, the "go-between" role also creates stress for the expatriates in their work relationship with locally

hired colleagues. From a locally hired colleagues perspective, they are well aware of the position and work duty of the expatriates assigned to the local subsidiaries for this "boundary spanner" and "go-between" role. From the study conducted, some locally hired colleagues of the expatriate clearly expressed these concerns – they feel that the parent company (i.e. the Taiwanese MNC) imposes its culture to impress upon them the Taiwanese work culture and to make them be accustomed to working under the ethics of Taiwanese MNCs. A locally hired staff member stated:

> *"The way the company works is that they want us to have the ability to work with someone who has got the experience and comes directly from headquarter, basically trying to implement Taiwanese work ethics" (I-TH-c02).*

Moreover, a European locally hired colleague observed:

> *"The new Taiwanese expatriate changed the way the office runs a little. He clarified the expectations of the Taiwanese headquarter, and how this office should be run and gave us a clearer idea about the systems (T-EV-c01)"*

In other words, this "go-between" role creates stress and mixed messages for the expatriates and their work relationships. For instance, when expatriates are assigned to subsidiaries based upon a systematic international assignment policy, they face the different expectations of their managers in the headquarter and of their locally hired colleagues in the subsidiaries due to the key performance indicators (KPIs) and the stress linked to issues of comparison with the work performance of the previous expatriate incumbents. A respondent confirmed this:

> *"When I arrived here, my priority was to take over my work duties (from the previous expatriate incumbent) as quickly and smoothly as possible. The company has set up some work targets and KPIs (key performance indicators), so I have to follow the KPIs and check the performance of my predecessor in order to catch up (T-YM-e01)"*

In other words, it can be stated that Taiwanese expatriate roles are tied in with society's expectations. Expatriates are expected to perform extra work not only by other expatriates, but also by their managers and other colleagues in the headquarters and local subsidiaries.

3) Support and experience-shared by previous and current expatriate colleagues

Additionally, most well-developed Taiwanese MNCs in the UK have well defined international assignment systems, meaning that the majority of expatriates either apply for these positions or are aware that their international assignment could play a key part in their career advancement and have to comply with their companies' future arrangements accordingly. One of the benefits of this systematic international assignment policy is that expatriates profit from the experience shared by previous expatriates, and from the professional support of those who joined the office/workplace earlier than them. They are given support and shared experiences by previous/experienced expatriates. This helps their work adjustment and also influences their psychological adjustment. A respondent asserted:

> *"I was looking forward to being assigned, because of the different advanced country environment. Although I did not know much about this place, I was not worried because my company has a set of international assignment plans which provide accommodation. Also, there are many Taiwanese expatriate colleagues here already who share their life and work experiences (T-ES-e07)."*

Thus, Based upon Nicholson's work role transition theory, it can be seen that *visitor* expatriates go through a low role development but a low personal one as they follow KPIs which provide clear guidelines regarding what to do and what work targets to achieve. Hence, *visitors* tend to adopt a reactive mode of adjustment. As mentioned in inflexible psychological adjustment above, *visitor* expatriates do not make much of an effort to integrate into their new environment, as their assignments are time limited.

Expatriates feel comforted by the knowledge of there being professional guidance in the new workplace, which benefits their adjustment progress. One of the respondents, who worked with other expatriates, explained:

> *"I was not the first expatriate in this branch. All work systems are complete. When I was assigned here, there were the manager and two experienced colleagues who supported me. Because of this supportive, joined-up system, it does not take long for us to adjust to our new environment (B-CH-e01)"*

In general, expatriates are assisted and guided by the expatriate group, which enables them to follow up on work and life in their new environment. This help and support is essential for the expatriates' well-being. In turn, the other expatriates also expect to be helped, which

creates a heavy workload circle with high expectations. This is supported by a respondent's statement:

> *"Sometimes, my direct manager, who is also a Taiwanese expatriate, assigns me work that is supposed to be part of his job. Although he is well aware of this, as a Taiwanese expatriate, he expects me to help. (T-EM-e10)"*

In this way, expatriate groups are somehow invested with extra duties and responsibilities.

4) Some information exchange locked within the expatriate group

From the study conducted, it shows that Taiwanese expatriates experience this situation particularly when they operate in an environment with other expatriates and tend to form their own group. In turn, the formation of exclusive expatriate groups in local subsidiaries limits the sharing of expatriate work concepts to those outside the group. The effect on attitudes and behaviours of the formation of expatriate groups can be seen from a respondent's statement:

> *"We are management. If we were to share too much information outside the expatriate group, it could cause some management difficulties. Basically, even if some would like to break down the barriers between expatriates and their locally hired colleagues, other expatriates would stop them. Thus, the block on sharing information and interacting with the locally hired colleagues is always there (B-CH-e01)"*

This information exchange locked within the expatriate group means that they share similar work duties and responsibilities so it is easy for expatriates to share guidance and suggestions amongst themselves. This can carry out effective communication between them, which binds them even more close together. Intergroup supervision and support also causes expatriate behaviour to consistently comply with the group's self defined standards. Larger the expatriate group, the stronger its empowerment as the help and assistance supplied in collectively shared similar situations and experiences provides psychological support. Hence, the benefits brought upon work and psychological adjustment by the support and presence of other expatriates also confine interaction and interpersonal relationships within the expatriates' comfort zone. In other words, established routines/procedures and the presence of other expatriates provide expatriates with guidance and aid 'internal adjustment' processes but, somehow, also constrain/inhibit 'external adjustment' ones, such as local integration.

Likewise, there are certain sources of information and a 'grapevine' that are exclusively available to the expatriate group. Hence, expatriate attitudes toward work contexts are preserved in order for them to play their work role properly. Furthermore, based upon their ethnocentric approach, Taiwanese MNCs prefer to appoint Taiwanese managers to their UK subsidiaries and most of the communication is carried out in Taiwanese. It is easy to manage such employees, firstly because they are Taiwanese and thus well aware of the Taiwanese work culture, and secondly because they can speak both Taiwanese and English and can play the vital expatriate role of bridging between the subsidiaries and the headquarter. Locally hired staff members working in Taiwanese companies are well aware of this culture and state of affairs. As a locally hired staff member observed:

> *"It is typical of the Asian mentality to put someone that they know they can trust in an organisation like this and let them run it because they speak the same language, Working for a Taiwanese company, I think that having someone that understands Taiwanese definitely helps because a lot of the communication is still being carried out done in the home country's language (I-TH-c01)"*

Hence, it is clear that due to their international assignment strategies (i.e. based upon an ethnocentric approach), which builds strong connections and high levels of communication requirements between expatriates and headquarter. Since one of the main purposes of the expatriates' international assignments is to provide a communication bridge between headquarter and foreign subsidiaries, the English language barrier influences the degree of information that the locally hired staff members can receive.

Because expatriates form groups, they speak their home language among themselves within the group and headquarters, these results in a communication gap between expatriate and locally hired colleagues. This also results expat not improving their proficiency in local language-English. The only time they need to speak English is when they have to give the instructions to or when they require information from locally hired colleagues in work contexts. This restricts the level of interaction between expatriates and locally hired colleagues.

6.4.3 Restricted interaction adjustment

As mentioned above, the ethnocentric approach and culture of Taiwanese MNCs causes them to assign abroad expatriates who have strong connections with the headquarter. Thus, fluency in local language- English is somehow not a vital requirement concern for Taiwanese MNCs in the expatriation. However, the language barrier influences the communication efficiency and even becomes one of the critical mediators in expatriates forming into groups, which limits information sharing and interaction with people outside of them (i.e. the locally hired colleague). For instance, a locally hired colleague explained how the language barrier influences work efficiency:

> *"It (the language barrier) does influence things a little bit, but this is in regards to time; what I have noticed is that, when something is not quite understood, a decision isn't made straight away and the colleague will come and ask you again before making his final decision. All our colleagues are quite capable of doing their job. It's not a matter of capabilities; it's a matter of understanding, so it only causes delays in the decision-making process (T-YM-c01)"*

Furthermore, due to the language barrier, not only work efficiency is affected but also the level of information sharing. Firstly, the effect it has upon the expatriates' self-confidence, combined with their limited vocabulary, results in a reduced information exchange. Naturally, expatriates are capable of expressing their train of thought more efficiently in their native language, so the locally hired colleagues feel that, if the expatriates speak to someone in Chinese, they will get more information, but the others will get less. The limited vocabulary also results in partial information being delivered, as expressed by a locally hired colleague:

> *"Sometimes, we are not exactly sure what they are saying. So, because of this, some information is lost along the way Sometimes, I have to tell him some things but only the key points are understood (T-ES-c02)"*

As is supported by the interview statements of both expatriates and his locally hired colleagues, communication is one of the major issues pertaining to the expatriates' adjustment in the UK. The local language- English is not their first language; therefore, they may not always be sufficiently fluent in it and find it difficult to communicate effectively. In

turn, it limited visitors' interaction with locally hired colleagues. One of the expatriates shared his experience from the language barrier perspective:

> *"English is not my mother tongue, so it can be a problem for me to express myself correctly. Because of this, I do not express my thoughts to the others (the non-Taiwanese) directly. Hence, the language barrier is one of my main problems (T-EM-e10)"*

At the same time, a locally hired staff member stated that the language barrier not only influences communication efficiency but also the level of understanding each other from the way they express themselves:

> *"They (expatriates) go straight to the point; for example, when we send an email, we tend to use a friendly tone. The Taiwanese are more direct (T-EM-c03)"*

This can be seen in the way they write emails to clients. Due to their limited English vocabulary, the expatriates find it difficult to create a rapport with the recipient – the way an English person would – and tend to write more directly. Obviously, the language barrier mainly results in different communication styles between expatriates and locally hired colleagues. Initially, the locally hired staff members find it difficult to understand what the expatriates mean to say thus adding to the difficulty of understanding what the speakers are actually trying to say. In some cases, this also prevents the locally hired colleague from having a candid conversation as, at some point, the conversation grinds to a halt. Notwithstanding these teething problems, a modus operandi emerges:

> *"It is difficult to understand the Taiwanese expatriates with the phrases they use; however, once you get to know them better, you start to learn and it gets easier to understand them (T-ES-c02).* "

In turn, as pointed out by one of the Taiwanese expatriates, they are afraid to make mistakes when speaking English. They are self-conscious and hence prefer to listen rather than speak their mind. This reflects their feelings of frustration and isolation that they cannot express themselves freely. Moreover, because of this language barrier, some of the expatriates tend to stick together, thereby minimising the negative effects on their confidence, as highlighted from a locally hired colleague's perspective:

> *"I think it is because of the language barrier; it takes a few months for the Taiwanese to blend in before they have the confidence to start speaking to the locals" (T-EM-c03)"*

Obviously, this builds up an invisible wall between expatriates and locally hired colleague. Although expatriate English fluency is not the main concern of Taiwanese MNCs, as they assign expatriates in a "heart at home"/*visitor* role should consider this issue. It does have a certain effect on work efficiency, which has an impact on work contexts and performance. Also it restricts the interactions between expatriates and locally hired colleagues, resulting in expatriates form themselves a group with expatriates under similar conditions so that they can express themselves freely and sharing the similar values.

2) Unaccompanied by families in the UK

Furthermore, there is another main reason push *visitor* type of expatriates to form a group with expatriates under similar conditions as themselves, which is without family accompaniment in the UK. Due to this condition of *visitors*, they tend to feel isolated and alone being in the host country. This statement is backed up by another respondent who works for a company which does not encourage family relocation:

> *"I leave the office only when I finish my work, although it is past office closing time. It does not matter to me, because I would still be alone if I left work earlier (T-ES-e03)"*

Therefore, the interview data show that expatriates unaccompanied by their families appear to work harder and do not leave their offices until they finish their work; even if it is past closing time, they do not care. Most of them express the view that they would still be alone when leaving the office, so they will rather stay and finish the work. This means that these expatriates focus on their work much more than those who are accompanied by their families. At the same time, they tend to work overtime. However, most of them share the same basic concept – that they would rather have their families relocated and that the main reason they would not consider staying longer in the UK is because of their families being in Taiwan. These concepts reflect back to the Taiwanese MNCs' ethnocentric staffing orientation (see chapter 4), which assign expatriates in a *visitor* and "heart at home" role. The MNCs expect expatriates to work hard and achieve their assignment goals within the specified time and then successfully return home to their company/country.

However, from an expatriate individual perspective, it can be noted that expatriates generally feel isolated in the UK. They are clear in their minds that they are working in the UK subsidiaries as part of their career advancement plan. They look forward to finishing the task and going back to be with their families, which defines their overseas adjustment experience as that of *visitors*. A respondent asserted:

> *"Being assigned abroad is a big challenge for my family. I have to deal with my family complaining that I am away. Also I feel frustrated, as I cannot be next to my family when something happens. It is a big challenge to be alone abroad. Of course, we expatriates would prefer to relocate with our families but sometimes this is not practicable (e.g. due to the children's education system connection and the spouse's career) (T-EV-e04)."*

3) Forming a group with expatriates under similar conditions as themselves

Likewise, as some respondents expressed, they are merely *visitors* because they have come to the UK for a specific work purpose. They interact with their new environment by behaving like *visitors*. Most respondents who are assigned without their families state that they are here for a temporary period only and do not have a life circle here. They tend to be alone or to hang out after work with other expatriates who are in the same situation. Specifically, those expatriates who are married but whose families have not relocated tend to spend their free time keeping in touch with their families in Taiwan through the internet. A respondent observed:

> *"When my wife was here, we kept each other company and went out to visit many places together. Since she has gone back and I am alone here, I tend to stay home after work because I do not want her to feel insecure by worrying about me going out (B-HN-e04)."*

4) Restricted and selective interaction with locally hired colleagues

Expatriates in these situations tend to interact more with other Taiwanese expatriates, as they feel that they have something in common as *visitors* to a foreign land. In general, people learn new things or are forced out of their comfort zone when requirement arise that cannot be satisfied from their original position, as is confirmed by the adjustment literature. In other

words, people tend to hold on to their own way of thinking and operating when they are in a familiar environment which supports their original needs, as was stated by a interviewee:

> *"Basically, we are all assigned from Taipei, so we share similar ways of thinking. Hence, it is easier to communicate with each other. Also, being expatriates, we definitely have to support each other because we cannot lose credibility in front of others. Even if we disagreed with each other, we would not show it in front of others, as this would give the impression of us Taiwanese being incapable of cooperating (T-EV-e02)"*

But also restricts their interaction with their locally hired colleagues because they share similar backgrounds and, logically, find it easier to interact with each other.

6.5 The *Explorer* Pattern of Adjustment Experiences

Taiwanese MNCs' in the UK use a mix of ethnocentric and polycentric staffing orientations (details in chapter 5). Ethnocentric staffing orientation results in the key positions of local subsidiaries being occupied by Taiwanese expatriates assigned from headquarter, for control purpose over local subsidiaries in the UK. However, some MNCs adopt an internationalisation strategy mainly oriented to asset and market-seeking tasks (details in chapter 5), in order to complete localisation purpose later which is the key criteria of polycentric staffing orientation. These MNCs assign very few expatriates and in most cases a single expatriate to the host country subsidiaries in order to achieve these goals. In other words, the expatriates' international assignment task comes to an end when they achieve their work goals. In this case, expatriates can be characterised as *explorers* who are assigned as being in charge of the international assignment task –investigate and expand the business field and, in turn, to complete the localisation task. Thus, this explains why explorers are assigned for uncertain/ open-ended international assignment duration with low subsidiary expatriation ratio (i.e. the only one expatriate in the local subsidiary). Also they are encouraged to relocate in the UK with their families due to the open-ended international assignment durations. Thus, the specific pattern of international assignment conditions for *explorers* in this study is conducted as expatriates facing open-ended international assignment durations, working in IT or electrical sectors, with low subsidiary expatriation ratio (the only one expatriate in the subsidiary), and usually being encouraged to have family accompaniment in the UK.

The literature of past research is far less cohesive as most of them focus on different lengths and types of fixed international assignment durations, including short-term and long-term ones, and overlook those groups of expatiates who have the open-ended international assignment durations. Meanwhile, one of international assignment conditions of *explorer* is that they are assigned to the UK during the initial stages of their Taiwanese MNCs' internationalisation, which makes them first-generation expatriates and, in most cases, a single expatriate is assigned to the subsidiary (i.e. low subsidiary expatriation ratio). These all features of *explorers* were not considered in the previous studies, which are scrutinized in this study. Based upon the specific features of *explorer,* the presentation and discussion of their attitudes and behaviours toward the work roles for international assignment (i.e. Taiwanese MNCs contexts) and culture differences and work relationship with locally hired colleagues (i.e. UK contexts) are compliant with the three adjustment dimensions (i.e. psychological, work and interactional). Due to the uncertainty of the assignment duration, *explorers* exhibit a more flexible psychological adjustment, adopt a professional development-oriented work adjustment and experience an open interaction with the locals and locally hired colleagues. All the details are discussed in the following sections for each adjustment mode that *explorers* take place, which be compliant with table 6.1b.

6.5.1 Flexible psychology adjustment

As mentioned earlier, *explorers* face open-ended or uncertain international assignment durations, experiences of being the only expatriate in the local subsidiary (i.e. low subsidiary expiration ratio) and encouraged for family accompaniments in the UK. Due to these features of *explorers*, they exhibit a flexible psychological adjustment, which means they adapt willingly to suit the new situations and environment.

1) Awareness of uncertain international assignment durations and low subsidiary expatriation ratios

Expatriates were assigned to the UK subsidiaries as *explorer* for market-seeking purpose to complete localisation assignment task. Hence, they do not know how long they will stay in the UK. In some cases, the headquarter assigns expatriates over for a temporary period of time to evaluate whether the person is suitable for the specific assignment task, especially for localisation. Hence, many expatriates were assigned to the UK alone for an uncertain period of time but temporary. As a respondent clearly stated:

"Before I was assigned officially for the localisation task, I was assigned over here for a temporary period of time. During that time the headquarter evaluated whether I can adjust well to the new environment. Because the headquarter aims to localisation purpose, they do not want to assign me over for only few months and reassign me back due to the difficulty of adjustment… (I-DL-e01)"

Obviously, in the beginning, when expatriates are alone in the UK, being in a workplace with few fellow expatriates (or even being the only expatriate) have cause to feel a little isolated due to social and professional factors. They feel insecure or isolated due to the uncertainty of their work conditions but have proactive attitude and behaviours toward the situation, as stated by a respondent:

"My career situation is uncertain. I need a great deal of mental strength to face these circumstances. As time goes by, I have to adjust and compromise with the current uncertain situation and accept it. Of course, I sometimes feel that I am not in control of my own fate (I-DL-e02)."

Because of these "proactive" attitudes linked to the newness of the work situations and the uncertainties of international assignment conditions – especially the open-ended international assignment durations – expatriates are well aware that they will be spending a long time in the UK for vital work goals.

Meanwhile, in some cases, before assigning to the UK, expatriates have planned to relocate in the UK alone for the beginning few months, in order to get to know the local work situation and living environment first. After being in the UK for few months, they revaluate the local situation along with their work condition of uncertain international assignment durations, they are encouraged and decide to have their family relocated. Supporting this finding is a statement made by a respondent:

"The headquarter assigns people for their specific demands and it might be urgent. Hence, they might tell you to assign you for maybe one or two years for a temporary period of time. Due to the expectation of being assigned for temporary, I did not plan to relocate with my family. However, after being in the UK for a while, the headquarter encouraged me to have family accompaniment since we do not know how long I will be assigned here (i.e. in the UK) (E-MO-e01)"

2) Family accompaniment for emotional support

Although, being first-generation or/and a minority in local subsidiaries, expatriates feel isolated, due to their international assignment conditions (i.e. open-ended international assignment durations), they are encouraged by their headquarter to relocate to the UK with their families, where they perceive they will gain better career prospects from their Taiwanese headquarter, based on their localisation strategies. A respondent stated:

> *"Initially, I was alone here. Later, when headquarter was thinking of letting me stay here longer, they suggested I bring my family over. Therefore, my family relocated here after six months. Since they have been here, I have not thought about going back to Taiwan so much because I think there are some benefits for them here, such as the children's education (E-MO-e01)."*

This respondent's statement was shared by many expatriates in their interviews: family accompaniment is one of the main reasons that may encourage them to be assigned abroad. Two respondents asserted:

> *"When the company presented me with the possibility for this international assignment, it was a very important decision, but also an opportunity for me. My two children had never been abroad, so I thought this would be a good chance for them (I-TH-e01)."*

At the same time, the interview data show that family accompaniment as a mediator does not only influence the expatriates' willingness to be assigned abroad but also their well-being, especially if they experience negative feelings at work from the new and uncertain international assignment conditions/situations (e.g. open-ended international assignment durations and being new/a minority in the local workplace). A respondent stated:

> *"Initially, I was assigned here alone. My family relocated here after six months. While I was alone here, I felt insecure and uneasy. Once my family relocated here, I felt that I could concentrate on working hard with my family's support. I think this is also my company's reason for doing this. With my family here, I am motivated to compromise and blend into this society, besides doing my job well. Of course, there is some stress that comes from dealing with family issues. In general, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages (I-DL-e01)."*

3) Proactive adjustment to the new work and living environment

Clearly, for expatriates, family accompaniment is a motivation for working hard and seeking positive compromises with their new environment. In other words, family accompaniment influences the expatriates' focus and adjustment attitudes and behaviours, making them more pro-active towards the local people and environment in general. For instance, a respondent stated:

> *"Before my family was relocated here, I spent most of my time at work. After they arrived, I interacted with the locals, such as my neighbours and my child's classmates' families, for reasons not related to my job. My wife told me that we are not only here to work but also to live, so I made more of an effort to involve myself in family and local events (E-MO-e01)."*

It can be noted that family accompaniment motivates expatriates to get involved in the local environment. However, it can isolate them from their individual social lives. A respondent explained:

> *"Sometimes, we take part in events with other families to allow our children to interact with each other. In such occasions, it is impossible for me to go out to watch a football match on my own (with other expatriates whose families are in Taiwan) because I have to look after my family (I-TH-e01)."*

Although they have to make some sacrifices, expatriates accompanied by their families show a more pronounced tendency to adopt a proactive approach in adjusting to their new environment. On the other hand, however, married Taiwanese interviewees face the potential interruption of their children's education and of their spouse's career, with consequent negative influences on their overseas adjustment. For instance, if their children are pursuing an education in the UK, their willingness to stay in this country will be increased. Moreover, as a result of being accompanied by their families, they will make an effort to fit into their new environment or interact with other families whose children attend the same school as theirs. In other words, they will make adjustments to their new environment in order to become better adapted and create a suitable work and living atmosphere for their uncertain durations of stay in the host country.

Meanwhile, in terms of work, *explorers* face the challenge of being one of only a few expatriates – if not the only one – in the workplace; thus, they do not have the benefit of the encouragement and experience of either their home organisation or other experienced expatriates in familiarising with their new environment. As they face these challenges with limited resources/support, they have to take an approach of proactive adjustment to their local work group and environment by themselves in order to complete the localisation task, which is the main purpose of their international assignment. In other words, expatriates are placed under pressure by these challenges; however, their mind-set drives them to try their best nonetheless. As supported by Hofstede's culture difference theory (see chapter 2), the Taiwanese are inclined to feel nervous about uncertainly and ambiguity, but are nevertheless determined to keep trying to achieve the company's requirements.

Summarising, *explorers* are willing to change their attitudes (i.e. are psychologically flexible) in order to adjust well to their new professional and personal environments. Since they enjoy the psychological support of their families who have relocated abroad together with them, they need to be flexible and explore their new environments in order to provide suitable living conditions for their families.

6.5.2 Exploration mode work adjustment

In this section, this study tries to explain coping strategy of the *explorer* type of expatriate in their work environment. The expatriates are assigned to the UK subsidiaries for localisation and market- seeking purposes; in most cases these expatriates are first generation ones. This means they have to start the task assigned to them right from scratch. With high expectations from both the headquarter and locally hired colleagues in local subsidiary, the expatriates are encumbered with a lot of responsibilities, thereby expatriates face the work role changes to a high discretion role from home to host country, resulting in the expatriates' key positions in the subsidiary. In turn, in most cases, single expatriate is assigned and as the first generation, he/she has to perform all tasks through self-learning and independent exploration. After prolonged stay in the subsidiary, the expatriates expressed their desire to stay in the UK subsidiary permanently as they put in so much efforts and for family benefits. Due to these situations and coping strategies, it can be assumed that explorers exhibit an Exploration mode work adjustment, which including their personal development and career development.

1) Localisation and market-seeking for first-generation expatriates

From the research participants in this *explorer* role, it can be seen that polycentric staffing orientation, relatively aims to localisation task, predominantly applies to expatriates in emerging industries such as IT and electrical. This explains why there are so few expatriates in the IT and electrical industry and also why most of them are assigned as first-generation expatriates and in manager positions in the local subsidiaries. The general adjustment experience of this type of expatriates, as *explorers*, is illustrated in the interview conducted with TTMe01, a first-generation expatriate in a UK subsidiary:

> *"Headquarter is planning to localise the UK market with its own dedicated office. Therefore, I am here in this market-seeking phase to set up the office. In the beginning, it was difficult. I first came here alone to find a house and faced many difficulties in dealing with renting and estate agents. I also needed to buy a car; otherwise we would have no means of transportation. At the same time, I needed to deal with all the insurance companies. (As a first-generation expatriate), I not only have to deal with personal issues but also work ones. Hence, the first month I was like a candle burning from both ends. I also needed to visit clients to get the business going as soon as possible – in order to extend the business market on my own. All of these things came together in the first month, which was very stressful and hard for me. When I was assigned here, it meant that I had to be qualified. I have to know everything about finance, production, marketing and sale, because I have to do everything on my own. I came here alone in the early stages of market-seeking. Company policy does not tend to rent a warehouse, an office and get all facilities settled straight away, because we would have to hire an accountant and administrator, which costs too much. The policy is to see whether I can increase the marketing scale here. If this yields positive results, the office will be set up step by step. So, for the time being, we (me and three local colleagues) work from home (I-TH-e01)."*

2) Expectations from headquarter and locally hired colleagues for explorers' high discretion role

In other words, the novelty of the changes in work role for the expatriates concerns the differences between their past roles and their new ones. Based on the role theory, the *explorer* profile of expatriates faces role novelty and role discretion because of their role development

as critical managers assigned from headquarter to local subsidiaries and of their personal development as *explorers* and even first-generation expatriates in terms of work contexts. For example, expatriates face differences in the work culture such as the shift from long to short power-distance and the new work requirement of having a high degree of decision-making autonomy; this increases the degree of unfamiliarity with their new role. Moreover, it is likely to decrease the degree of predictability of the circumstances (Black 1988).

Being *explorers* in their new markets/offices, they need to perform well to meet the high expectation of headquarter but also to set a good example to show their locally hired colleagues how to work well locally and, at the same time, fulfil headquarter expectations; this is particularly true when these expatriates are placed at management level, as mentioned above. The expatriates at management level increase their own performance standards and performance-orientated approach in order to show their capabilities, determination and to provide a good example of how things need to be operated while managing local staff well. Hence, *explorer* expatriates not only face vital work responsibilities, but also high expectations from the headquarter, their locally hired colleagues and also from themselves; all this influences their work attitudes and behaviours. Despite being provided with limited resources, the international assignment purposes of these *explorer* expatriates in UK subsidiaries are to achieve specific business targets (i.e. developing local office operation and seeking markets).

Furthermore, since they are first-generation and may be working alone in exploring the new market and managing their local subsidiary, they not only feel isolated but also have to face high expectations of both the headquarter and their locally hired colleagues who also expect them to effect the development and localisation of the subsidiaries in order for these to function successfully and meet the headquarters' expectations. For example, with regard to the locally hired colleagues expectations, they initially do not expect much as they understand that the expatriates will not be knowledgeable about the entire process or about the work patterns already established in the UK. However, in time, they will expect the expatriate managers to act as leaders and properly direct their teams once they will have familiarised themselves with the entire process. To them, being good leaders' means that the expatriates show good decision-making capabilities and exerts a strong influence towards head office. So, should they have any issues at their UK branch office, the locally hired colleagues expect them to be resolved quickly, as sometimes they complain about having to wait a long time to

hear back from the headquarter. A locally hired colleague respondent clearly expressed what would be expected from the expatriates:

"I would expect him to have a strong influence with head office" (E-MO-c01).

Therefore, all these expectations place expatriates in the *explorer* position with vital work responsibilities and create high stress levels, especially if they are either the only or one of the very few expatriates in the office. The same respondent who is the only one expatriate in a local office opined:

"When I was in Taipei, I had an easy job. My only job was to run the sales department and to reach the sale targets. There were many people to help me in dealing with the various aspects of my work. However, as I am here alone, I have to make judgments and decisions as well as collect the data all by myself. But, looking at it from a positive angle, I also learn many things (I-TH-e01)"

The interview data show that most first-generation expatriates face many personal and professional challenges on arriving, especially within the first two months. They are well aware of being assigned to the UK for a vital work task, which also implies critical work responsibilities with little resources. This kind of situation has mainly been experienced by Taiwanese expatriates as *explorers* in the UK.

3) Facing vital work responsibility with no routines but innovation and being in the key position

Most of the Taiwanese expatriates who are assigned to the UK with multi-functional work tasks are overloaded with responsibilities, especially at the managerial level. In relation to this, Lin et al. (2012) explained that, compared with Western MNCs, Taiwanese MNCs do not always have sufficient resources to compete for high-calibre local staff. In such cases, expatriates have to deal with role overload to fill the human resource gaps. In this study, the *explorer* type of expatriate, who is assigned to explore and develop a local market in order to complete a localisation task, is expected to be multi-functional and ready for his international duties from the first day, even when provided with limited resources by both the headquarter and the local subsidiaries. They have to cope with the responsibilities of a new job position and work task and with the increased decision-making autonomy of the unfamiliar overseas work environment. These expatriates transferred from headquarter to local subsidiaries face

huge work-role changes and responsibilities which influence their attitudes and behaviours with regard to both overseas adjustment and their work relationships with locally hired colleagues.

What they attest is that an absorbing international experience in a developed market, such as the UK, is vital both for the development of the Taiwanese expatriates and of their organisations. This reflects Thite's (2009) statement that MNCs from emerging countries, such as Taiwan, tend to be smaller compared to their developed country counterparts and hence have less resources and international expertise. Thus, this explains why most expatriates – and especially those who are selected for these positions are limited in number – appreciate the opportunity to be assigned abroad and how this expectation from the company also puts stress upon the expatriates.

4) Independent exploration and self-learning

First-generation expatriates experience loneliness in their new environments and insecurity/uncertainty due to being assigned abroad without a fixed timeframe to finish their assignment and return to their home country. However, they feel they have to remain strong and learn everything by themselves in order to achieve their assignment targets. The situation faced by this particular type of expatriates requires them to be independent in tackling the work challenges but may make them feel isolated. However, these expatriates tend to take a self-learning approach to handling the challenge. These huge changes in role and personal development reflect Nicholson's work role transition theory in that they lead Taiwanese expatriates in the UK, with their specific international assignment conditions, to the *exploration* adjustment mode. A respondent who is the only expatriate in the subsidiary asserted:

> *"In terms of work, I feel tired through having to transform the subsidiary and adjust to the new group of people (on my own). When I was in Taipei, I had many people who dealt with things for me. Here, I have to be very independent in judging, making decisions and collecting data by myself. In the beginning, I felt isolated because it took me time to understand anything. I observed their ways and their attitudes toward work and then tried to find a way to change and adapt to the situation (I-TH-e01)."*

5) After prolonged efforts, willingness to stay further in the subsidiary permanently

From this study conducted, it can be observed that expatriates as explorers have made so much effort in setting up this subsidiary based upon local market and asset-seeking purpose and localisation assignment task, which mean they have built up a strong connections with locally hired colleagues. Meanwhile, their family is here as well and they have made proactive adjustment to the local environment, made friends within the local people have learnt so much and are now feeling used to this new place. They know relocating again is a problem as they are not familiar with the work contexts and environment back home (i.e. in Taiwan). Also for their family, they do not want to leave their current life and start all over again somewhere else. Especially for family benefits, expatriates are unwilling to go through it once before when they relocated here. Thus, after prolonged efforts, expatriates are willingness to stay further in the subsidiary permanently. A respondent expressed his perception during the interview regarding the changes of the level of connection with headquarter and local subsidiary:

> *"When I just arrived in the UK, I feel strongly connected with (the headquarter) in Taiwan. But after three years, I found many things have changed there. When I went back to Taiwan (for the meeting), I do not feel like I belong there but more like a guest. Before, when I went back, I know people (in the headquarter),… Now, I noticed that I am not familiar with (people and things) in Taiwan. (E-MO-e01) "*

Likewise, another respondent stated clearly why he is willing to stay in the UK subsidiary:

> *"(After being in the UK for a while), I think my family would like to stay here and I respect their choice…I feel more connected with local subsidiary than with headquarter so I would prefer to stay here (permanently) because of this reason. (E-TE-e01)"*

6.5.3 Open interaction adjustment

In this section, we will see the situations faced by the explorer expatriate and see how they adjusts to the situations. We will see how they face cultural difference – power- distance - and experience culture shock. We will also see how expatriates accept the cultural differences and openly interact with locals and locally hired colleagues for family settlement and localisation purposes respectively. Along with this we will also see how the expatriates

adaptable behaviour to the new interactional situation by trying to blend in with the locally hired colleagues. Hence, in general, expatriates as *explorers* experience an open interactional adjustment.

1) Facing the culture difference (i.e. power-distance) and culture shock

From the cultural perspective of their work relationships with their locally hired colleagues, the expatriates in this study stated that the high power distance-work culture of Taiwan makes management easier. However, the British culture and the advanced Western economy have resulted in a British superiority complex in terms of management. For example, locally hired colleagues expect expatriates to share their traditional workplace culture and behaviours Taiwanese expatriates have to face a different work mentality and business culture, as well as negative attitudes –the Westerners' self-appointed superiority. Based on Hofstede cultural difference concept (see chapter 2 and 3), the power distance in Taiwan is greater than it is in Western countries (e.g. the UK); this means that the inequality gap between superiors and subordinates is different in the respective local workplaces. The new work culture and management style represents a challenge for expatriates with its need for huge work role changes. A respondent expressed some impressions regarding the work culture shock associated with managing locally hired colleagues having just arrived in a UK subsidiary. The following recollection of managing a local member of staff was shared as an example:

> *"From the beginning, I worked with a locally hired member of staff. He had worked in that UK office for a long time. Hence, he was used to how things worked before I arrived. He once came to challenge me regarding a pricing deal for our customers. He argued with me that he was right and I was wrong in the way prices were set for customers. I asked him to show me evidence but he couldn't, but still raised his voice to argue with me and accuse me of misjudgement. This conversation took place in front of everyone in the office. Normally, in Taiwan, people would not expect this kind of thing to happen, as we had both raised our voices as if we were having a fight. In Taiwan, (as a manager) you do not expect subordinates to come and argue with you like that. But here people can speak freely. (I-TH-e01)"*

Obviously, to expatriates, the management and work relationship culture is different between Taiwan and the UK; it is therefore a challenge for them to adjust to it. In Hofstede's power distance applied to Taiwan, the concept of individuals of a lower status required to be polite

to individuals of a higher one is not the same in the UK as it is in Taiwan. In Taiwan, the power distance is greater than it is in the UK, which means that staff shows respect and politeness towards their managers and would never argue their decisions vehemently face to face with them. A locally hired respondent from the same company as the expatriate respondent above stated the difference in the work culture and even in the power distance:

> *"In general, the Taiwanese people are very respectful of their colleagues, whereas people from Europe tend to treat their colleagues or managers as equals; in the Taiwanese culture, if someone is a manager, you can really see the difference: managers hold high levels of authority (I-TH-c02).*

Therefore, according to some locally hired colleagues, the different work culture creates tensions between locally hired colleagues and expatriates and influences their work relationship; both locally hired colleagues and expatriates need to adjust to each other to some extent. For example, some locally hired staff members stated the difference between the Taiwanese and the UK work environment and culture. The Western world is more laid back in terms of freedom of speech and people are free to express themselves. They are more independent while working, whereas the Taiwanese culture requires strict adherence to the rules. Hence, this difference creates the need for a work relationship adjustment not only for expatriates but also for their locally hired colleague. The latter adopt different attitudes and behaviours in the work context when they are among themselves than when they are in the presence of expatriates. To illustrate this, a few interesting quotes from the locally hired colleagues interviews are reproduced below to show the differences between Western and Taiwanese cultures from a locally hired colleagues perspective.

> *"We are quite laid back, whereas, in Taiwan, everything has to be regimented and structured. The Taiwanese attitude is "we are happy to have a job and we will do what we can to make it work", but in the UK it's "Okay, I have a job but I don't want to do anything extra, I just want to get paid and go home". The expatriates seem to be a lot more committed and a lot more passionate (E-MO-c02)."*

2) Accepting the culture difference to have open interactions with locally hired colleagues for localisation work task completion; with locals for family settlement

Obviously, these different cultural attitudes and behaviours create variable work patterns which, at times, bring about problematic work situations between two groups of people

sharing the same environment. Since expatriates as *explorer*s are mainly assigned for localisation purposes (e.g. exploring and developing local markets and assets), they have to respect local culture and labour in order to fit the local environment. At the same time, the locally hired colleagues also expect expatriates to adjust to the UK work style rather than imposing the Taiwanese one. Furthermore, since the expatriates occupy managerial positions, the locally hired staff members anticipate proper guidance from them with regard to company policies and procedures, as was asserted by a locally hired respondent:

> "*They (the expatriates) should adjust to the UK style rather than holding on to the Taiwanese one. So they initially made an effort to improve the communication between the Taiwanese headquarter and this office (E-MO-c01).*"

Following up the locally hired colleagues perspectives, the awareness of uncertain international assignment durations and localisation task influence expatriates' interpersonal behaviours in the new environment. Initially, expatriates focus on the development of their work tasks in order to achieve the organisational goals as quickly as possible. Thus, they try to understand local interaction behaviours and improve themselves in that respect for work purposes. They also tend to accept and interact with their local colleagues by understanding the local work culture and behaviours in order to blend in with the group and contribute to the teamwork. At the same time, in their role of business *explorers*, expatriates gear their social lives mainly towards business purposes. These changes can be seen from another respondent's interview:

> "*I have to accept the way my local colleagues talk and I compromise by using the same means to communicate with them in order to get them to work effectively. In this way, it is easier for them to accept me, to the benefit of the teamwork. (Since I do not know how long I will be working here), I believe I have to adjust to their culture and improve myself by absorbing some local information in order to build up a trusting relationship with them. Because I am assigned here to explore the (business) market, most of my social life revolves around business purposes. I have to attend social events for the company (whether I like them or not) (E-TE-e01).*"

3) Adaptive behaviour on making efforts to blend in with locally hired colleagues

In order to achieve their targets, most expatriates focus on the local business market/office as if they were running their own business, instead of merely just acting like any employee and

only dealing with their personal workloads. In these cases, expatriates tend to have a blend-in work attitude in dealing with local people in their workplaces. In other words, *explorer* expatriates are more likely to change in order to adjust to the work situation, partly because there are no established routines, especially for first-generation expatriates, or examples to follow (from previous or other expatriates). In this situation, hence, they can be proactive in integrating themselves with their new colleagues/environment in terms of adjustment behaviour in order to achieve the assigned task and localisation targets. This situation is inevitably and much more obvious to those who are the only expatriate in their workplace, as can be seen from this respondent's observations:

> *"In order to explore the local market, I need to involve myself into their (locals') life to understand their preferences and interests (I-TH-e01)."*

Therefore, they adjust their work attitudes/contexts to blending in with their locally hired colleagues and local people due to the mediators of having to complete their main assignment tasks of efficiently localising the subsidiaries. Meanwhile, in order to achieve their overall task goals, other respondents share the same blend-in orientation concept in their work attitudes:

> *"(In order to achieve the work target assigned from headquarter), I have to quickly build up my credibility to show my colleagues that I am here to help them. We all are working towards the same target – to help the subsidiary move towards a better future (E-MO-e01)."*

Therefore, explorers, being assigned under these particular assignment conditions (e.g. first-generation/manager positions, low expatriate ratio work environments and open-ended international assignment durations), have the benefit of being motivated to adopt an active adjustment attitude to blend into the local environment and work team in order to conduct work efficiently.

6.7 Conclusion

Summarising, due to the fixed long-term international assignment durations, the high subsidiary expatriation ratios and the statue of no family accompaniment in the UK, Taiwan expatriates, as *visitors*, experience various work and overseas adjustments experiences with an inflexible psychological adjustment, career advancement-oriented work adjustment and

restricted interactional adjustment, resulting in their coping behaviours. For example, due to the fixed long-term international assignment durations, most expatriates do not have a long-term plan or the impetus to try to integrate with the local people and environment. Due to being assigned to work environments with high expatriate ratios by MNCs with complete international assignment systems – which assign expatriates from generation to generation with an ethnocentric approach – expatriates tend to absorb their predecessors' experiences by learning the system and patterns and form their own group of expatriates sharing a similar work culture, pattern (e.g. overtime work) and responsibilities (e.g. the "go-between" role, delivering messages from headquarter to subsidiaries and acting as a communication bridge between them). At the same time, due to the expatriates' local language barrier and the Taiwanese MNCs discouragement of family relocation, expatriates stick more with their own groups in their comfort zones because of cultural and conditional similarities. When they face this low role development (i.e. a similar work role contexts from home to host country) and low personal development (i.e. little attitudinal and behavioural change), they tend to adopt a reactive coping strategy, lacking determination for overseas adjustment. This means that they will not make any extra effort to adjust to their new environments.

These expatriates, as *explorers*, working in, emerging industries such as the IT and electrical industry, adopt localisation strategies in developed host countries such as the UK. At the same time, this polycentric strategy mainly focuses upon local resources, including the workforce, to fit into the local culture and environment, which is one of the main international assignment purposes of *explorer* expatriates. Although previous studies state that polycentric staffing orientation assigns expatriates for short-term assignment durations (i.e. less than or equal to 12 months) until suitable local employees and managers are found to run the local subsidiaries, this study provides a different situation – to which previous studies had paid little or no attention. The main purpose of which is to complete market exploration and localisation assignment tasks. This type of task makes it hard to determine a fixed timeframe, as everything is a function of local situations. Hence, this study focuses on those expatriates who are assigned mainly for localisation purposes and face uncertainty in their work conditions. Meanwhile, this study also found that although explorer expatriates are assigned with uncertain international assignment durations, the predetermined uncertain durations are mainly more than 12 moths, unlike the short-term duration for polycentric staffing orientation, which previous studies state. In order to achieve their localisation tasks, these expatriates are assigned abroad with open-ended international assignment durations,

work in environments with low expatriate ratios and are likely to be accompanied by their families. They face high levels of role discretion and novelty, according to role theory, due to their role development as critical managers and/or first-generation expatriates from headquarter to local subsidiaries. Furthermore, they tend to accept/compromise with the differences they find in their new local situations and have adaptive behaviour, resulting in making an effort to socialise for either work or family purposes. In other words, they become greatly involved with the local people and environment with proactive approach adjustment attitudes and behaviours, similar to those of the exploration adjustment mode in Nicholson's work role transition theory. This is either due to their work roles as task goal achievers (i.e. mainly for localisation tasks), to the mediator of feeling isolated (as first-generation and/or minority expatriates) with limited resources and/or the influence of family accompaniment. Therefore, *explorers* experience a flexible psychological adjustment, Exploration mode work adjustment and open interaction adjustment.

In contrast, those *visitor* expatriates are mainly assigned through the ethnocentric approach of Taiwanese MNCs towards UK subsidiaries. Hence, they are assigned in "heart at home" and "go-between" roles as communication bridges between headquarter and local subsidiaries. These roles cause them to face role conflicts and place stress upon them and in their work relationships with their locally hired colleagues. Furthermore, they are well aware of having to complete their tasks within their allocated time (for fixed long-term international assignment durations) and then leave, just like *visitors* abroad. Due to these reasons, they adopt a more replication mode toward their adjustment into their work context. They do not have long-term plan in the host country and in turn, are unwilling to adjust to the new environment but have limited adjustment restricted to workplace, namely inflexible psychological adjustment. Putting this inflexibility psychotically to actions, they do not make much of an effort to interact with people but expatriate group and then just enjoy their stay and behave as *visitors*, reflecting to restricted interactional adjustment.

In short, in this study, based upon the Taiwanese MNCs' staffing orientations, which diverge the patterns of international assignment conditions, two distinct Taiwanese expatriate roles in the UK are mapped out as *visitors* and *explorers*. The *visitor* and *explorer* chapters (chapter 5 and 6) study the response patterns of adjustment experiences of these two roles, in order to understand "how being in different expatriate roles distinctly influences Taiwanese expatriates' adjustment experiences in the UK". Based on the findings (chapter 5 and 6) a

conceptual framework or a model has been designed and presented (Figure 6.1). From this study conducted, it can be argued that patterns of expatriate adjustment are powerfully influenced by their international assignment conditions and the nature of work roles. Moreover, it also shows that local employees play a crucial role in influencing the adjustment experiences of expatriates. This is especially notable in the case of 'new comers' operating in a novel cultural environment. This study represents the first attempt to explore the unique adjustment experience of expatriates from emerging economy MNCs operating in an advanced economy. Further discussions with previous literatures and theories are presented in the next chapter, along with the contribution and implication of this study.

Figure 6.1 A conceptual framework: MNC staffing orientations, expatriation and expatriate adjustment:
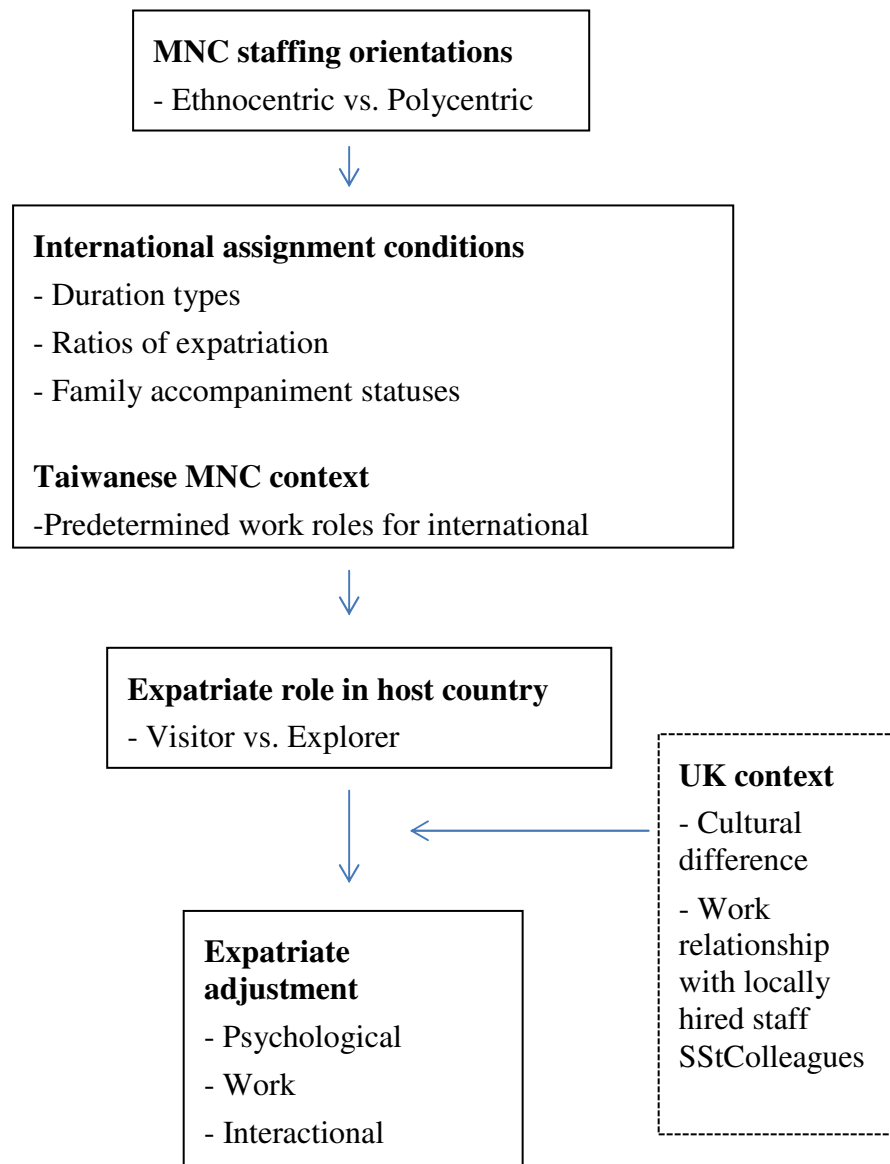
Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This research study explores expatriate adjustment which makes reference to various MNC staffing orientations for internationalisation and international assignment purposes. These engender various expatriation situations in terms of, among others, international assignment conditions and work roles, generating different expatriate roles in the host country, which, in turn, bring about various patterns of cross-cultural expatriate adjustment. The previous chapters presented and analysed the detailed key findings which are associated with these elements of the conceptual framework for the selected sample of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK and their locally hired colleagues. The materials from the survey and interviews carried out with individual participants were also presented and analysed.

This chapter provides an overview of the contextual information related to the research findings, beginning with a summary of the key implications of the research findings. Through the overview of the key research findings – including the discussion of *which* and *in what way* determining factors systemically influence expatriate adjustment and *in what way* the various roles (i.e. *explorers* and *visitors*) taken on by expatriates in their host country follow the various patterns in the psychological, interaction and work adjustment dimensions – this chapter illustrates how the research aims were achieved, leading to how the research questions were was answered. Next, an overview of the conclusions drawn from these key findings is provided, emphasising the contributions made by this research study from both the empirical and theoretical perspectives, with a discussion of the existing literature. This chapter concludes with an assessment of the limitations of this research study, with

recommendations for future ones.

7.2 Summary of the Research Findings

This is an inductive research study focussing the adjustment of expatriates from a newly industrialised and emerging economy (in this case, Taiwan) in an advanced host country (i.e., the UK); its nature is therefore primarily exploratory.

Specifically, it seeks to shed light upon the following research question:

"What are the overseas adjustment experiences of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK?"

To this end, four research aims need to be addressed:

1). In what way do Taiwanese MNC staffing orientations influence their international assignment conditions in the UK?

2). In what way do Taiwanese MNC international assignment conditions influence expatriate roles in the UK?

3). How do expatriates in different roles adjust to their experiences in the UK?

4). How do expatriates in different roles adjust to new work relationships and environments based upon cultural differences?

To indicate how the research questions were answered and the research aims were achieved, this section consists of two main parts, summarising this research's key findings. First, the specific determining factors which systemically influence Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK are explained and, second, the Taiwanese expatriate's roles of *visitors* or *explorers* in their host country are categorised through specific patterns of international assignment conditional factors. The different patterns of adjustment experiences of Taiwanese *visitor* and *explorer* expatriates in the UK are presented and discussed below.

7.2.1 The factors influencing Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK.

Drawing from role theory and Nicholson's work role transition theory (1984), the adjustment modes show how significantly the differences between the home and host environments (e.g., new situations and conditions) influence the nature of the Taiwanese

expatriates' work roles. Based upon Taiwanese MNC contexts, the nature of the various international assignment work roles, which determine the adoption of the different adjustment coping strategies, is effectively influenced by the differences in the economic and cultural conditions between the home to the host country. Lii and Wong (2008), who state that company size, corporate ingenuity, the locus of control and the work role significantly influence expatriate adjustment. In other words, different types of organisations in the home and host countries result in the adoption of different strategies which influence expatriate adjustment experiences. It is necessary to look at the different approach strategies adopted by Taiwanese MNCs in the UK to understand the different kinds of international assignment conditions (e.g., the level of control locus and the nature of the work role in the international assignment) that expatriates face and which influence their adjustment experiences. Therefore, in order to understand expatriate adjustment experiences in a systemic and cohesive manner from an international assignment strategy perspective, this study looked at the patterns emerging from the research participants' profiles to categorise them into different types based upon their adjustment experiences linked to their specific situational/conditional factors.

The expatriate participants' profiles show that expatriates working in different industries with differing staffing orientations are subject to different statuses of specific patterns of international assignment conditions – namely: different types of international assignment durations (i.e. fixed and open-ended) and different expatriation ratios in local subsidiaries – which also influence their family accompaniment status. As a result, the expatriate roles in the host country were categorised into two different types – *visitor* and *explorer* – based upon those three criteria (i.e. the type of international assignment duration, the level of expatriation ratios in the host country workplace and the status of family accompaniment abroad) to shed light on their different patterns of adjustment experiences.

Also, besides discussing the patterns of expatriate adjustment from the perspective of the *visitor* and *explorer* types of expatriate roles in the host country, there is the issue – highlighted in this research study – to shed light upon their work relationships linked to expatriate adjustment in cross-cultural/culturally diverging environments.

Based upon the analysis of the expatriates' locally hired colleagues' survey and interviews, it contributes a clear understanding of the main issues (i.e. work culture difference, local support and language barrier) that expatriates face to adjust in the UK subsidiaries' context

while working in cross-cultural/culturally diverging environments. According to every locally hired staff member, the primary behaviour in relation to the expatriates' culture difference was their work mentality. Especially how the expatriates actually choose to work extra hours or do overtime at the end of the day. They feel that they have been given an opportunity to prove their worth and they will do anything to impress the higher management. Of course, in certain companies, they are actually forced to work overtime, regardless of whether they are expatriates or locally hired Taiwanese employees. The expatriates (managers) actually feel that they should work harder. Naturally being hard workers, the expatriates adapt quite well to this, which is also part of the parent company's culture. Furthermore, the level of interaction between locally hired staff members and expatriates depends on the work positions held by the latter. If the expatriates occupy higher-level positions than the locally hired employees, their interaction is purely professional and work oriented. With expatriates as colleagues, the level of interaction is much higher and friendlier. They tend to socialise, thereby increasing the expatriates' learning experience. Regarding the support provided by locally hired staff members to expatriates, during the initial period of the expatriates' stay in UK, they ask their locally hired colleagues for non-work oriented help; for example, how to spend their weekends or for places to visit. In terms of the work context, locally hired staff members understand and are willing to help the expatriates to settle in as they are new to the workplace. However, locally hired staff members have certain expectations of expatriates as they are assigned from the company's home country and, mostly, to managerial positions. In general, the locally hired staff members pointed out that they are mainly asked by expatriates to provide English language support. In terms of the language barrier related to work contexts, from the locally hired staff members' perspective, the limitations in the expatriates' English language fluency reduces their self-confidence and they tend to shy away from situations in which they would have to interact with English speakers. Due to different communication styles, the language issue limits work efficacy between locally hired staff members and expatriates and also reduces the level of information shared in the work context. Hence, the work relationship between locally hired staff members and expatriates encompasses many different levels of interaction and support which differ from what expatriates are used to face in their home country. as in the home country for expatriates to face. Obviously, from the locally hired staff members' perspective, it can be concluded that the expatriates need to deal with the cultural differences, including work culture and mentality, and their work relationships with their locally hired colleagues when working in UK workplaces/contexts.

In addition and based on the results provided by locally hired staff members, followed by the interviews held with the expatriates themselves, the influence of the language barrier on work relationships and expatriate adjustment is highlighted in this study and discussed here in a cohesive manner. Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen (2003) stated that language abilities are significantly and positively related to interaction but not to general or work adjustment, but that co-worker support is positively related to all general, interaction and work adjustment. These statements were elaborated upon in this research study. Several interviewees stated that the language barrier causes a conversation block between expatriates and their locally hired colleagues which influences the flow of work information and social support between them; this, in turn, strongly influences expatriate adjustment in work contexts. As was noted by Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer and Luk (2005), fluency in the host nation's language, which is also labelled as an anticipatory factor, facilitates cross-cultural adjustment. Although previous research had not paid attention to the language barrier, this study, taking its lead from perspectives of local ethnocentrism/superiority complexes, has focused upon it in terms of its effect upon expatriate adjustment. In this study, the language barrier is discussed from two perspectives: the barrier experienced by expatriates with regard to English and that experienced by locally hired colleagues with regard to traditional Chinese; this leads to the presentation of local ethnocentrism. Firstly, from a local ethnocentric perspective, locally hired UK colleagues expect Taiwanese expatriates behave in conformity to the local culture and values and to speak English. The more the expatriates conform their behaviours to the local culture, the more their locally hired colleagues are willing to offer them information and social support; this, in turn, influences work relationships and, subsequently, expatriate adjustment. However, the level of fluency in English is not the key criterion by which most Taiwanese MNCs select and assign expatriates to the UK; this is especially true of those MNCs which adopt an ethnocentric approach in their staffing orientation towards their UK subsidiaries. Besides being an important part of the expatriates' career development, the main purpose of international assignments is to achieve a high level of control of local subsidiaries; however, expatriates are also assigned abroad to act as communication bridges between headquarters and local subsidiaries. Based on this work role, fluency in the local language becomes an anticipatory factor of the conversation block and is related to the willingness of the locally hired colleagues to offer information and social support to the expatriates. Thus, expatriate fluency in the local language is positively linked to their work performance and adjustment, especially in terms of work relationships.

The second language barrier perspective concerns the expatriates' home language. This occurs in situations in which expatriates are assigned to host country workplaces with high expatriation ratios. These results in a tendency for expatriates to form exclusive groups and speak their home language among themselves instead of the local one. Since locally hired colleagues do not speak the expatriates' home language, this behaviour negatively influences the level of information transmitted by the expatriates to their locally hired colleagues. Hence, this creates an invisible barrier, affecting the work relationship between expatriates and locally hired colleagues and hindering expatriate adjustment. This situation was observed especially with regard to the *visitor* expatriate role. This language barrier issue is presented and discussed through the *visitor* and *explorer* patterns of expatriate adjustment in the host country.

7.2.2 The comparison of *visitor* and *explorer* work and adjustment experiences

As mentioned above, based upon the patterns of international assignment conditions (i.e. type of international assignment duration, ratio of expatriation in local subsidiaries and status of family accompaniment) which emerge from different MNCs staffing orientations, Taiwanese expatriates in the UK can be categorised into the categories: *visitors* and *explorers*. Drawing from role theory, Nicholson's work role transition theory, Hofstede's culture difference and the concept of local ethnocentrism, *visitors* and *explorers* experience different cross-cultural adjustments in the psychological, interaction and work dimensions.

According to the findings of this research study, expatriate adjustment in work contexts elaborates and develops Nicholson's work role transition theory (1984) by exploring the effects and associations of the replication adjustment mode which is the coping strategy adopted by the *visitor* type of expatriates, and of the exploration adjustment mode which is the coping strategy employed by the *explorer* type of expatriates. Basically, in terms of changes in attitudes and behaviours, the replication adjustment mode adopted in work contexts by the *visitor* type of expatriates is associated with inflexible psychological adjustment and restricted interaction adjustment. Conversely, the exploration adjustment mode of the *explorer* type of expatriates is associated with flexible psychological adjustment and open interaction adjustment.

Explorers are assigned under international assignment conditions of open-ended assignment durations, workplaces with low expatriation ratios and are encouraged to be accompanied

abroad by their families. On the other hand, *visitors* are assigned under international assignment conditions of fixed assignment durations, workplaces with high expatriation ratios and, generally, are not accompanied abroad by their families due to being discouraged in doing so by their MNCs. An overview of the status of these three condition scenarios, linked to MNC staffing orientations, which shape the expatriate *visitor* and *explorer* roles in the host country are discussed and presented. These roles define the different patterns of adjustment in three dimensions (i.e. psychological, interaction and work). In this way, the comparison of *explorer* and *visitor* expatriate work and adjustment experiences is summarised in the following two sections.

Explorers

From the perspective of international assignment condition patterns, some Taiwanese MNCs show an inclination towards the adoption of a polycentric staffing orientation in the UK. This is especially true for emerging industries, such as IT and electrical. In order to achieve their localisation tasks, they tend to assign relatively few expatriates to the UK for market-seeking purposes. Hence, not only do these MNCs assign expatriates to their local subsidiaries in low numbers, but they also do so with indeterminate (i.e. open-ended) international assignment durations, lasting until the localisation of overseas subsidiaries is deemed to be completed (i.e. until suitable local employees and managers are found to operate the local subsidiaries and market). Furthermore, as noted by Lin (2012), Taiwanese MNCs have limited resources; this affects their international asset and market-seeking strategies in developed countries, with limited numbers of expatriates being assigned. Some expatriates indicated that, in view of their market-seeking purposes, international assignments are constrained by the limitations of Taiwanese MNCs' sizes and budgets. Taiwanese expatriates can count on less teamwork support and resources compared to those they would get in Taiwan (Adler and Kwon 2002; Huang et al. 2005). Expatriates with limited resources are required to take on multi-functional work tasks to fit the needs of the new work markets. Some scholars have demonstrated that lower perceived levels of organisational support negatively influence expatriate adjustments and outcomes (Wu and Ang 2011; Kraimer et al. 2001). Overall, it is argued that the turmoil linked to the newness of their job roles, in terms of the limited support and resources offered by Taiwanese MNCs, creates a stressful environment for Taiwanese expatriates. Despite some studies (Munton and West 1995; Black 1988) having concluded that there is no significant relationship between role novelty – i.e. differences between host and home

country work roles – and adjustment, the study of Japanese expatriates in the UK by Nicholson and Imaizumi (1993) and that of 452 expatriates from different nations in 45 host countries by Shaffer, Harrison and Gilley (1999) showed evidence to the contrary. At the same time, due to the low numbers of expatriates assigned to local subsidiaries for market-seeking and localisation purposes, these tend to be assigned to key managerial positions and are faced with the demands of increased decision-making autonomy compared to their work roles in the home country. Hence, based on role theory, it can be posited that *explorer* expatriates in the UK face the newness linked to the difference between their host and home country work roles (i.e. role novelty) and as an increase in their decision-making autonomy (i.e. role discretion). Nicholson (1984) argued that greater role discretion results in better adjustment, because it allows individuals to adapt their work setting to themselves, rather than having to change themselves to fit into their new environment. Accordingly, greater role discretion makes it easier for individuals to utilize successful behaviour patterns which, in turn, reduce uncertainty in the new situation and facilitate adjustment (Black, 1987). Furthermore, referring to Nicholson's work role transition theory, in this research study, expatriates who experience overseas adjustment as *explorers* face huge changes in role and personal development; they tend to have an active approach to adjustment and experience an exploration adjustment mode in work contexts. This mode of adjustment in work contexts also reflects the needs of either first-generation expatriates in local subsidiaries or expatriates with limited resources and home organisation support to investigate and develop a local market with increased role discretion during their international assignment.

Furthermore, the profiles of the participants in this study show that *explorer* expatriates who are assigned to low expatriation ratio workplaces with open-ended international assignment durations are primarily first-generation expatriates in UK subsidiaries. As mentioned above, due to this scenario characterised by limited home organisational support, these expatriates adopt a pattern of flexible psychological and open interaction adjustment. They enjoy the psychological support of their families, who have relocated abroad, and they feel the need to be flexible and explore their new environments in order to provide them with suitable living conditions. Meanwhile, in order to efficiently achieve their international assignment task, which determines when their open-ended assignment will end, they are willing to change their attitudes (i.e. are psychologically flexible) in order to adjust well to their new professional and personal environments. At the same time, *explorer* expatriates go through an open interaction adjustment. Working in subsidiaries in which there are no other

expatriates, they tend to blend-in with their locally hired colleagues in order to achieve their assigned localisation tasks.

This study's findings on the *explorer* expatriate role in a host country broaden the knowledge of expatriate adjustment with some newly uncovered notions. Most previous studies had not considered expatriates with open-ended international assignment durations, assigned as first-generation expatriates to local subsidiaries with low expatriation ratios. Obviously, the specific scenarios faced by *explorer* expatriates influence their adjustment experiences and necessarily determine their specific flexible psychological, exploratory work and open interaction pattern of adjustment.

Visitors

On the other hand, MNCs which adopt an ethnocentric approach towards their UK subsidiaries tend to assign expatriates to act as communication bridges between headquarters and local subsidiaries, placing them in go-between roles. In other words, these expatriates act as go-betweens to bring together the different work requirements and expectations of both foreign subsidiaries and home headquarters. This results in a massive work challenge for them. Furthermore, these MNCs have a complete international assignment system: they assign expatriates from generation to generation with specific numbers assigned from time to time. These expatriates tend to be assigned with fixed international assignment durations, thus retaining a "heart at home" emotional state.

Their go-between and heart at home roles place these expatriates in a position in which they face role conflicts in local subsidiaries. It also means that they tend to benefit from the overseas work experience, information sharing and support of previous or other expatriates. They even tend to form their own groups, to the exclusion of outsiders. All of these situations and work role conflicts cause tensions in their work relationships with their locally hired colleagues and result in reduced mutual interaction. These challenges influence the expatriates' psychological, work and interaction adjustment in relation to the work relationships with their colleagues. Overall, based on the finding of the present study, I argue that the go-between roles – in relation to the stress of work requirements and expectations from both host and home country – and the turmoil resulting from the newness of their job roles, in terms of the limited support and resources offered by Taiwanese MNCs, create a stressful environment for Taiwanese expatriates.

Furthermore, these expatriates are discouraged by their headquarters to relocate with their families; thus, this situation acts as a kind of mediator encouraging them to group with other expatriates who are in a similar predicament. Specifically for this study, it should be noted that, due to company culture and market needs, *visitor* Taiwanese expatriates from the banking industry face immensely different adjustment experiences to those of expatriates from other industries, as Taiwanese banks tend to hire employees who speak Chinese or who have a Chinese background. Therefore, expatriates not only work in environments which feature high expatriate ratios but are also surrounded by people who share similar backgrounds. This means that banking industry expatriates do not need to adjust much at all while abroad; this strongly influences their communication style and interpersonal behaviours regarding interactional adjustment and also highlights the influence of the language barrier on interaction/communication between expatriates and locally hired colleagues. Home and local language barrier issues are especially evident when *visitor* expatriates work in environments featuring high expatriation ratios. In these circumstances, expatriates tend to speak Chinese among themselves. However, since the locally hired colleagues do not understand Chinese, this situation influences the level of information sharing and work efficiency between them and the expatriates. At the same time, expatriates tend to remain within their comfort zone by speaking Chinese and see no strong need to express their feelings in English; thus, their willingness to make an effort to improve their English fluency is low. However, as mentioned above, the main purpose of *visitor* expatriate international assignments is to provide communication bridges between headquarter and local subsidiaries, which highlights the importance of communication skills, involving fluency in the local language. The expatriates' limited local language fluency influences not only their low level of interaction with their locally hired colleagues but also the low level of information sharing and work efficiency, which all lead to restricted interaction adjustment. Overall, drawing upon Nicholson's work role transition theory, although these expatriates experience a huge role development (i.e. role conflict in go-between and heart at home roles), they form themselves into expatriates groups, with little willingness of change behaviours and attitudes from home to host country, which results in the adoption of an inflexible psychological adjustment and a replication mode of reactive adjustment in work contexts. Based on Hofstede' culture difference study, this pattern of *visitor* expatriate adjustment partly reflects the Taiwanese mentality, which is characterised by high perseverance and uncertainty avoidance and places an emphasis upon multiple work requirements and expectations.

Overall, it can be seen that a general pattern of adjustment is not applicable to all Taiwanese expatriates; it depends on the scenarios they face. For example, it can be seen that, from a cultural perspective, the Taiwanese mentality comes strongly into play when expatriates find themselves in a workplace with a high expatriation ratio, with the establishment of groups who share a similar cultural background and values. Hence, in this study, *visitor* Taiwanese expatriates who are assigned to a workplace with a high expatriation ratio tend to adopt a restricted interaction adjustment with the locals and their locally hired colleagues, showing less willingness to adjust to the culture and values of the host country (i.e. inflexible psychological adjustment), which, based upon a cultural perspective (i.e. Hofstede's study), reflects their mentality. Consistently, applying this to work contexts, *visitor* expatriates who are assigned to workplaces with fixed assignment durations and high expatriation ratios tend to adopt a replication adjustment mode.

Conversely, when expatriates find themselves in a workplace where most people have different cultural backgrounds and values, their response does not strongly reflect their original home country mentality; they adopt an open minded interaction adjustment with the locals and their locally hired colleagues and show more willingness to adjust to the culture and values of the host country (i.e. flexible psychosocial adjustment), as revealed by *explorer* expatriates in this study. Consistently, applied to work contexts, *explorer* expatriates who are assigned to workplaces with open-ended assignment durations and low expatriation ratios (even being first-generation expatriates) tend to adopt an exploration adjustment mode. In general, a mentality trait based upon a cultural perspective cannot be seen as the only indicator of an adjustment pattern. The expatriates' overseas adjustment is influenced by situational/conditional factors; hence, this study broadens the knowledge for the development and elaboration of cultural difference theory contexts in expatriate adjustment.

Furthermore, this study's results in terms of patterns of adjustment, consistently with the psychological, interaction and work adjustment dimensions, provide an elaboration of the knowledge connected to Nicholson's work role theory (1984). In general, in this study, *explorer* expatriates are associated with an inflexible psychological, exploratory work and an open interaction adjustment, and, at the same time and drawing upon Nicholson's work role transition theory (1984), tend to adopt an exploration adjustment mode in work contexts. Hence, it can be elaborated that the exploration adjustment mode in work contexts can be associated with an inflexible psychological and open interactional adjustment. Conversely,

visitor expatriates adopt a flexible psychological and a restricted interactional adjustment and, at the same time and drawing upon Nicholson's work role transition theory (1984), tend to adopt a replication mode of adjustment in work contexts, which can thus be assumed to be associated with flexible psychological and restricted interactional adjustment. Overall, through this study, the expatriates' psychological, work and interactional adjustment profiles can be predicted based upon the situations/conditions they find themselves in. Also, the exploration and replication adjustment modes from Nicholson's work role transition theory (1984) can be explained in detail, somewhat developing and elaborating upon Nicholson's theory with regard to the expatriate adjustment research field.

7.3 The Research Contribution

This research study makes several theoretical and empirical contributions to the expatriate adjustment literature, with particular reference to the context of expatriation from Asian emerging economies to advanced Western ones. At the same time, it suggests a systemic conceptual framework for MNC staffing orientations, expatriation and expatriate adjustment in order to examine *how* expatriates respond to a cross-cultural environment from the perspective of their *visitor* and *explorer* roles in their host country. Hence, this study provides a sophisticated analysis which enriches the expatriate study field by incorporating different perspectives, as suggested by Brewster, Bonache, Cerdin and Suutari (2014) for its development. These contributions are outlined in the next two sections: 1) the theoretical implications and 2) the implications for MNCs practice.

7.3.1 The theoretical implications

As mentioned in the introduction and literature chapters, the expatriate adjustment field presents four main research gaps which this research study aims to fill. Hence, in this section, how these gaps were filled and developed in this study is presented and discussed.

Takeuchi (2010) stated that a sufficiently large number of empirical studies allowed for meta-analyses (e.g., Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Hechanova et al., 2003) which were adopted from Black et al.'s (1991) model. However, these restricted the focus of subsequent studies to (1) only examining those variables included in the model, (2) investigating simple, direct, or linear relationships among antecedents and adjustment and (3) looking more exclusively at the expatriate employees themselves and at the variables associated with them. This research

study has removed these limitations with reference to the research gaps mentioned earlier.

The first gap emerges from the fact that, rather than contextualising the determining factors in a systematic manner, previous studies limited themselves to investigating the factors affecting the degree of expatriate adjustment individually, as was mentioned in the literature chapter, and only those variables influencing the models which were adopted from Black et al.'s (1991) model mentioned by Takeuchi (2010). As Werner's (2002) international management research review illustrated, the expatriate adjustment issue is embedded in the larger context of how MNCs manage their expatriate employees; in turn, expatriate management issues are embedded within the MNCs' control of foreign subsidiaries or their human resource management issues, such as staffing strategies (Gong, 2003a, 2003b) and subsidiary-headquarter relations. Furthermore, Aycan (1997) pointed out the importance of the parent company context, including its MNC structure, strategic planning, and organisational support, as a possible predictor of expatriate adjustment. Thus, the strategic human resource management perspective underscores the importance of the organisational context for expatriate adjustment, which has not been examined in depth to date. All of these scholars point at how examining the staffing strategic and conditional effects of MNCs on expatriate adjustment would be useful in furthering our understanding of the boundary conditions in which expatriate-related variables affect expatriate adjustment or how expatriate adjustment relates to parent company variables. Hence, in this research study, the expatriation situations, including the conditions and work roles of international assignment, which are drawn from the MNCs' staffing orientations, are examined in order to outline the different expatriate roles in the host country. In this way, before focusing on the expatriates themselves from a role perspective to examine their adjustment, *which* and *in what way*, expatriates play their different roles and carry out their different patterns of adjustment in the host country is examined. Through the understanding of these boundary conditions of expatriates in their international assignment, this research study explored an expatriate-related variable (i.e. expatriate roles in host country) and, through this variable, how expatriate adjustment relates to parent company variables is also explored in a systemic manner. In brief, this study suggests a conceptual framework, in the expatriate adjustment research field, comprising MNC staffing orientations, expatriation situations, expatriate roles in the host country and their adjustment to provide a cohesive and systemic picture. This contextualised study provides a new insight into the expatriate adjustment research field from previous researches limited by individually investigating the factors affecting the degree of expatriate adjustment.

This study also elaborates and develops the examination of the variables from the models of previous studies, which had been adopted from Black's model.

Furthermore, with regard to the limitations of the existing studies which investigated the simple, direct or linear relationships between antecedents and adjustment pointed by Takeuchi (2010), this research study develops the examination of the relationship between antecedents and adjustment in the expatriate adjustment research field through an examination from the expatriate role perspective. As mentioned above, it explores, through an expatriate-related variable (i.e. expatriate roles in host country), *which* and i*n what way* related antecedents contextually shape the different expatriate roles in the host country and how expatriate adjustment relates to parent company variables through an investigation into *how* their different roles in the host country adjust. Through the perspective of expatriate roles in the host country aimed at understanding adjustment patterns, this research study provides a new insight into the expatriate adjustment field by not just exploring expatriate adjustment from the expatriate" role as a general job role for international assignments but by also looking at the different roles (i.e. *visitor* and *explorer*) that expatriates play in their host country – which are variously shaped by their expatriation situations – in order to understand how expatriates adjust to the cross-cultural environment in accordance with their roles in their host country.

This study also elaborates and develops the contexts of role theory (Kahn et al, 1964; Katz and Kahn, 1978) and the theory of Nicholson's work role transition (1984), in the sense that expatriates face the different nature of their new *visitor* and *explorer* roles in their host country in situations specifically stemming from their various expatriation situations, including specific characteristics of the new work roles, such as high role discretion, and then produce different levels of role and personal development for their aforementioned roles to carry out their different copying strategies for adjustment. Role theory states that the characteristics of the new work roles are strong predictors for expatriate adjustment. In this study, *explorers* – who are assigned based upon polycentric staffing orientations – develop a high role discretion in their expatriation situation. Consistently, Nicholson's work role transition theory (1984) is elaborated and developed with regard to expatriate adjustment; for instance, *explorers* in this research study face a high level of role and personal development due to their specific expatriation situations (i.e. open-ended assignment durations, low workplace expatriation ratios and high role discretion) to reach an inclination toward

exploration adjustment in work contexts. Summarising, by examining expatriate adjustment through the perspective of the expatriate roles in their host country, this research study helps to elaborate and develop role theory and Nicholson's work role transition theory with reference to the expatriate adjustment research field.

At the same time, the *explorer* role in the host country was revealed in this research study through the examination of different expatriate responses to adjustment in relation to patterns of psychological, interaction and work adjustment,. Hence, not only the patterns of adjustment but also the expatriation situations of *explorers,* which had not been considered by previous studies, are revealed. Although it only made up a small sample in this research study, the *explorer* role may prove to be common for expatriates coming from emerging economy MNCs assigning expatriates for market and asset-seeking purposes with limited resource support. At the same time, the specific international assignment conditions which draw out the *explorer* role in the host country have been highlighted to provide a new insight into the expatriate adjustment research field for further studies to examine.

Furthermore, through the discussion of the findings from the different types of expatriate roles in the host country which are shaped by the different international assignment condition patterns, the context of how cultural differences influence expatriate adjustment is elaborated upon from situational/conditional perspectives.

The gaps mentioned in the research design refer to the fact that most previous studies took a quantitative approach to understanding the degrees of adjustment, looking exclusively at the expatriates themselves, as pointed out by Takeuchi (2010). Conversely, this research study, by taking a mixed quantitative and qualitative research approach through a survey and in-depth interviews from the perspectives of both the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues, develops the context of the expatriate adjustment field in a systemic and cohesive manner with regard to *how* expatriates differently experience overseas adjustment in the psychological, interaction and work dimensions to achieve a general picture.

As mentioned above, most existing studies had taken a multidimensional perspective on adjustment adopted from Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) to examine the direct relationship between the determining factors and the degree of adjustment in the general, interaction and work dimensions. In order to understand *in what way* expatriate respond and adjust to a cross-cultural environment, this research study has refined that multidimensional

perspective on adjustment by looking at the psychological, interaction and work dimensions. Through this, the mechanism of expatriate adjustment can be explored through the changes in attitudes (psychological), behaviours (interaction) and the specific work contexts (work). As mentioned in the literature chapter (see chapter 2), these three refined adjustment dimensions were obtained by examining those of Black (1991) and those of the acculturation framework (Searle and Ward, 1990; Aycan and Berry, 1996; Hawes and Kealey, 1981). Moreover, with reference to Nicholson's work role transition theory, the work adjustment context in this study was made more specific based on role and personal development to indicate the adjustment mode in work contexts. Hence, the three refined adjustment dimensions adopted provide a rigours manner by which to examine *how* expatriates adjust/respond to their new cross-cultural environment for further studies to consider.

Furthermore, as most previous studies had focussed exclusively on the expatriate employees themselves, the findings of this research study enrich the knowledge of expatriate adjustment by taking into account the perspectives of both the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues. This comprehensive perspective approach highlighted and stressed specific determining/crucial issues, such as the language barrier, which influence the expatriates' work relationship and, in turn, their adjustment. Hence, these specific issues, which had not been focused upon in previous studies, can be considered in future ones.

Finally, one more research gap stems from the fact that most previous research was conducted in Western contexts, mainly in developed nations, with very little focus on emerging economies in Asian contexts. Hence, this study makes a significant contribution to the field of the existing expatriate adjustment literature by providing the knowledge of expatriate adjustment in Asian and emerging economic contexts. Similar levels of economic development among countries usually imply comparable levels of internationalisation, with much the same expatriation purposes and staffing orientations. Therefore, the findings of this research study may be applied to Asian and emerging economies with MNCs in the early stages of internationalisation applying ethnocentric and polycentric approaches to assign their expatriates to advanced host countries within Western contexts.

7.3.2 The implications for MNCs practice

By expanding the understanding of the process of expatriation adjustment, this study will specifically help Asian organisations to scrutinise their overall strategies for international assignments. The findings of this research study could help Asian organisations to understand the specific issues they need to address when they define their specific international assignment conditions to ensure that their expatriates will be able to adjust satisfactorily. For example, *explorer* expatriates who are assigned with open-ended assignment durations and are alone in their local subsidiaries would benefit from the support and help of their MNC in terms of resources and family accompaniment, which would be important for their successful adjustment in the host country. Furthermore, using this study as a reference, they would be able to understand the specific cultures and needs of Asian expatriates, as opposed to simply accepting Western systems as a reference. For example, as Asian culture focuses on collectivism, *visitor* expatriates show an inclination to form groups among themselves in workplaces with high expatriation ratios. Also, compared to Western expatriates, Asians are faced with more pressure from other expatriates in their workplace in terms of their work performance. At the same time, the findings which this research study produced by examining the perspectives of both the expatriates and their locally hired colleagues highlighted certain issues that can analysed more specifically. For instance, Asian organisations should pay more attention to the issue of the language barrier, as it influences the work-related flow of information for Asian expatriates operating in a Western host country. Overall, by understanding the specific issues faced by Asian expatriates operating in advanced Western host countries through the findings of this research study, the reduction of the risks associated with international assignment failure and the corresponding increase in productivity will further the MNCs' internationalisation process.

7.4 Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

As mentioned above, this study, through a quantitative and qualitative research based upon survey and in-depth interviews with both expatriates and their locally hired colleagues, aimed at understanding how Taiwanese expatriates variously experience their overseas adjustment in the UK. However, this study presents some limitations which give rise to recommendations for improvement to be considered in future studies on expatriate adjustment. Basically, these are to be found in three dimensions: 1) the conceptualisation of expatriate adjustment experiences, 2) the research methodology and 3) the researchers and research institutions, as follows:

1). In terms of the conceptualisation of the expatriate adjustment of Taiwanese expatriates in the UK, this study generalises the conceptual framework of MNC staffing orientations, expatriation and expatriate adjustment to be applied to Asian contexts and emerging economies operating in Western contexts and advanced host countries. This research study examined Taiwanese MNC ethnocentric and polycentric staffing orientations – to the exclusion of geocentric and regiocentric ones – to define a conceptual framework and provide new insights into the expatriate adjustment research field by systemically examining MNCs with similar economic and cultural situations. Hence, geocentric and regiocentric staffing orientations could be considered in future studies of different sets of MNCs with similar economic and cultural situations.

In addition, several previous studies (e.g. Cole, 2011; Gupta et al., 2012) examined the family-related factor in expatriate adjustment. However, they mainly focused upon the relationship between expatriates (adjustment), accompanied or not by their spouses, and their spousal adjustment. This study shows that many expatriates (especially *visitors*) cannot be accompanied by their families either due to their companies active discouragement and/or to their spouses' careers in their home country. At the same time, the expatriates (*explorers*) accompanied by their families in this research indicated that the good quality of life found in the developed (English speaking) host country encourages them to bring their children over for the benefit of their development and to acquire an English education. It has been noticed that one participant (a *visitor*) was only accompanied by his child to the UK due to his wife's home country career; she was unable to quit her job and move to the UK. However, both the expatriate and his spouse considered that this opportunity would be beneficial for their children's education and development and agreed that only the child would accompany the expatriate for the assignment. This participant has to perform not only as an expatriate but also as a single parent in the UK. It can be assumed that he has to face the burden of being a single parent in a new and cross-cultural environment without the support/help of his spouse. Nowadays, there are more and more dual income couples and single parents; however, due to a lack of relevant participants, this study suggests that further researches should consider the family concept in a detailed and rigorous manner and pay attention to such scenarios while studying family-related factors in expatriate adjustment.

Furthermore, due to the time constraints, it is impossible for the participants conduct research diary in this research for a long term study which could provide a clear picture of

the process of expatriate adjustment including re-assignation back to the home country. However, although it would be highly productive to follow the participants and examine their adjustment process beyond the time frame of their assignment, this would be unlikely to be applicable to the group of expatriates subject to open-ended international assignment durations. Also, most participants did not start or complete their assignment during the period in which this study was conducted. Hence, this also creates difficulties for a long term study and explains the limitations of a study on expatriate adjustment based on a timeframe. Hence, as a viable, albeit imperfect, alternative, this research study considered both open-ended and fixed international assignments to explore the different adjustment experiences associated with them through the different patterns of adjustment they generate. In any case, further research is recommended to address this issue in the expatriate adjustment field.

2). In terms of the research methodology and taking into account the abovementioned difficulties associated with conducting a long term or time frame based study, it can be hard for expatriates' to accurately recall at a later date how they adjusted to a cross-cultural environment. Hence, in the design of the interview guide for the expatriates, I started with a set of questions aimed at guiding and helping the interviewees to recall the situation in which they were assigned abroad and how they felt, then moving forward step by step to their current situation. Furthermore, several scholars (e.g. Harrison et al., 2004) pointed out that gaining access to an expatriate sample is to be considered very difficult; thus, the limitations in data access and in sample sizes should also be considered by researchers who intend to conduct studies in the expatriate adjustment field. Having identified my research target (Taiwanese expatriates in the UK), I collected data from a population of 42 expatriates and 18 of their locally hired colleagues over a period of 12 months to document the former's overseas adjustment experiences. As mentioned above with regard to the polycentric strategy adopted by Taiwanese MNCs towards the UK, these tend to assign limited numbers of expatriates to their UK subsidiaries. At the same time, most of these expatriates are assigned for periods ranging from 3 to 4 years; hence, during the data collection period, it was hard to find expatriates from different generations in the same local subsidiary. All the above resulted in limited data access, a small sample size and a limited pool of international assignment condition patterns. Hence, in order to partly overcome these issues by enriching the data for Taiwanese expatriate adjustment in the UK, the perspective of their locally hired colleagues was also collected and considered in this study. It is recommended that further research on the overseas adjustment of specific expatriate populations take these issues into

account.

3) Besides being an academic studying Taiwanese expatriates in the UK, I am a Taiwanese living in the UK myself. To a certain extent, this proved to be an asset, as being Taiwanese made it easier for me to understand and collect the feelings and experiences shared by Taiwanese expatriates, especially as we speak the same language. Conversely, my subjective interpretation of the phenomena placed me in the tricky position of being slightly biased, especially as I interviewed Taiwanese expatriates in Chinese and analysed the data to be presented in English, although I asked both English and Chinese native speakers to double-check the interview contexts from both viewpoints. Moreover, while interviewing the Taiwanese expatriates' locally hired colleagues, being Taiwanese also put me in the awkward position of sharing their expatriate colleagues' cultural and value background while trying to get their opinions on them. Although I made my professional academic research role very clear and emphasised that the research would be completely confidential, I have to acknowledge that the locally hired colleagues remained nevertheless slightly concerned during the in-depth interviews. It is recommended to wisely address these limitations linked to the researcher's role.

7.5 Summary

This final discussion and conclusion chapter has provided a systemic and cohesive overview of this study. It started by drawing a summary of the entire thesis and presenting its key findings and then went on to spell out the contributions made by this study to the theoretical implications of the existing literature and related theories and to individuals and institutions. This was followed by a presentation of this study's limitations and of its recommendations for the conceptualisation of expatriate adjustment, research methodology and research related to individuals and institutions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample of expatriate survey questionnaire (in Mandarin and English)

本研究的進行需要了解您的個人背景提供接下來面談資訊。填寫的結果僅供學術參考，**請選擇與填寫最符合您情況的答案，謝謝。**

This survey is aimed at understanding your background information and will be followed by a personal interview. All personal information disclosed by you will be used strictly for academic purposes and will be kept confidential. Please select the appropriate answer.

I. **個人背景資料 (Personal Background)**

1. 請選擇你的性別

   (Please select your gender)

   A. 男性 (Male)

   B. 女性 (Female)

2. 請選擇你的年齡層

   (Please select your age range)

   A. 30 歲或以下 (30 and under)

   B. 31-35 歲 (31-35)

   C. 36-40 歲 (36-40)

   D. 41-45 歲 (41-45)

   E. 46 歲或以上 (46 and above)

3. 請選擇你的教育程度

   (Please select your education level)

   A. 學士程度 (Bachelor)

   B. 碩士程度 (Master or Mphil)

   C. 博士或以上程度 (PhD and above)

   D. 其他(請註明)_____

   (Others, please specify)

4. 請選擇你的婚姻狀況

   (Please select your marital status)

   A. 單身 (Single)

   B. 已婚 (Married)

   C. 其他 (請註明)_____

   (Others, please specify)

5. 請問你的家人有隨行到英國嗎?

   (Did your family relocate to the UK with you?)

   A. 有 (Yes)

   B. 沒有。請往問題 7.

      (No, please go to question 7)

6. 請問你的哪位家人隨行到英國?

   (Family member(s) who accompanied you in the UK)

   A. 配偶 (Spouse)

   B. 子女 (Children)

   C. 配偶與子女 (Spouse and children)

   E. 其他 (請註明)_____

      (Others, please specify)

7. 請問你覺得自己的英文整體程度如何？

   (How do you grade your overall English language proficiency?)

   A. 母語程度 (Native)

   B. 流利程度 (Fluent)

   C. 中等程度 (Intermediate)

   D. 基本程度 (Basic)

8. 請問你的工作機構是屬於哪一類型的行業?

   (To which industry category does your organization belong?)

   A. 製造電子業 (Manufacturing and IT industry)

   B. 服務業 （Service industry）

   C. 銀行金融企業 (Banking industry)

   D. 其他 (請註明)_____

      (Others, please specify)

9. 請問你在貴公司服務多久?_____年

   (How long have you been working for this organisation? _____ year(s))

10. 請問你在此派駐之前，在台灣工作了多久?_____年

    (How many years had you been working in Taiwan before coming to the UK? _____ year(s))

11. 請問你在英國被派駐地為?_____

    (To which UK location have you been assigned to work? _____)

12. 請問你被派駐在英國多久了?_____月 (從_____年____月)

    (How long have you been assigned to the

UK? _____ month(s), since year/ month_____)

13. 請問你預計在英國被派駐的時間多久?

    (What is the expected duration of your stay for this international assignment?)

    A. 一年 (one year)

    B. 兩年 (two years)

    C. 三年 (three years)

    D. 不清楚 (Do not know)

    E. 其他 (請註明)_____ (年)

    (others, please specify)

14. 請問在此派駐前,有任何海外經驗嗎?

    (Did you have any international experience before this assignment?)

A. 有 (Yes)

B. 沒有。請往問題 16.

   (No, please go question 16)

15. 請問是哪方面的海外經驗?為期多久? 請註明。例如:英國留學兩年,或是美國外派三年等等。) (What kind of international experience did you have? For how long? – please specify: e.g. overseas education in the UK for 2 years, international assignment to the US for 3 years, etc.)

    _____
    _____

16. 請問目前英國分公司有幾位台灣派來的外派人員?

    (How many Taiwanese expatriates are therein your current subsidiary?)

    _____
    _____

Appendix 2: Expatriate Interview Guide

<u>Section A:</u> The interview should start with some warm up and recap questions regarding the general adjustment experienced from the beginning to the present/from the pre-departure to the post-arrival period, such as:

1. What is the main purpose for your headquarters assigning you to their UK subsidiary? How long do you expect to be assigned to the UK?

2. In what situation were you assigned to the UK subsidiary? How did you feel about it?

3. How excited or nervous were you about finding yourself in this new environment (country, workplace) when you arrived here?

4. How different are your day to day activities (work role) in the UK compared to those you were familiar with in Taiwan?

5. Since arriving here, have you had any experiences which have made you aware of the (cultural) differences, especially at work? (with the following leading questions)

    ➢ How did you feel about it initially?

    ➢ How did you cope with it? After how long?

    ➢ If applicable, how did you change your behaviour to as a response to your experience(s)?

    ➢ Have you learned anything new from this experience(s)?

    ➢ If applicable, did the changes in your behaviour or attitude help you face your situation in a positive way?

6. Do you feel that you are dealing with your work task efficiently or are you still trying to cope with it and learning to fit in?

7. With regard to this new environment, how was your experience in terms of the interaction and communication with different groups of people in your

workplace?

8. Describe your social life.

<u>Section B</u>: After the basic opening questions, more detailed question can be asked; for instance, on any issues raised from the content analysis, regarding how specific personal conditions/capabilities influence their adjustment experience.

1. Marital status

   ➢ As a single/married individual, do you have any concerns regarding the influence of this international assignment on your personal (family) plans?

   ➢ <u>Family accompaniment:</u> How is your family adjusting to your present situation? (e.g. your spouse quitting a job to be here and your children's education being disrupted.)

2. Language

   ➢ Does your level of fluency in English professionally and socially affect your interactions or communication with people?

   ➢ If so, how?

<u>Section C</u>: the interview should then lead to investigate their work relationship with regard to their adjustment experience as expatriates:

1. As an expatriate, have you set specific role expectations and work ethics for yourself? (e.g. performing better to prove your capabilities to your co-workers)

2. Who do you work with? (The ratio of expatriation in your local subsidiary and your locally hired colleagues' ethnical background.)

3. As an expatriate assigned from Taiwan to a Western workplace, how do you see your work relationships and interactions with people in the workplace from the perspective of a different nationality?

<u>Section D</u>: The interview should end with a concluding question:

1. Feedback on Taiwanese expatriate adjustment experiences in the UK

    ➢ Can you think of anything else I should have asked you or do you have any suggestions for me?

Appendix 3: Locally hired colleague survey questionnaire

We are conducting a survey among locally hired staff members regarding their work relationships with expatriates in a multi-cultural workplace. As you are in a unique position to help us with our research, would you mind completing this questionnaire? All information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Thank you.

I. Please tell us a little about yourself:

1. Male ☐   Female ☐

2. How do you grade your English language fluency (overall)?

    Native ☐   Fluent ☐ntermediate   B☐c   ☐

3. What is your nationality? _____

4. How many years have you been working in the UK? _____ year(s)

5. How many years have you been working in your current company? _____ year(s)

6. Your job position is _____.

II. The following questions refer to your perceived values and interactions with expatriates in a multi-cultural workplace. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

SD = Strongly Disagree **D** = Disagree **N** = Neutral **A** = Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	When I am in contact with expatriates, I am aware of our respective nationalities.					
2.	I feel that I and the expatriates could meet as two people belonging to the same cultural group.					
3.	When I am in contact with expatriates, I am aware of our respective cultures.					
4.	I consider expatriates as 'them' and the other locals in the organisation as 'us'.					
5.	The expatriates present more similarities with other foreign nationals					

	than they do with the locals in the organisation.					
6.	It is easy for the expatriates to talk to me.					
7.	I provide the expatriates with information on the behaviours and attitudes that the organisation values and expects.					
8.	I provide the expatriates with information on how to perform specific aspects of their jobs.					
9.	I provide the expatriates with information on what is expected in their jobs.					
10.	I provide the expatriates with information on how well they are performing in their jobs.					
11.	I provide the expatriates with information on how appropriate their social behaviour at work is.					
12.	Of my own accord, I help to make the expatriates' work life easier.					
13.	Without being asked, I help the expatriates out when things get tough.					
14.	If approached, I listen to the expatriates' personal problems.					
15.	I am aware of the communication difficulties resulting from the language barrier.					
16.	I feel dissatisfied with the level of work information I receive.					
17.	I feel there are stumbling blocks hampering candid conversations with the expatriates.					
18.	I feel I understand the parent company's (Taiwanese headquarter) culture.					
19.	I feel uncomfortable with expatriates not speaking English in the workplace.					
20.	I feel uncomfortable if expatriates do not adhere to local behaviour patterns in the workplace.					

Appendix 4: Locally Hired Colleague Interview Guide

The questions were slightly modified in accordance with the respondents' answers to the survey questionnaire.

<u>The interview started with a general and basic question:</u>

1. Compared with your previous work experiences, how does it feel to work for a Taiwanese MNC/company?

<u>Following the opening question, questions related to cultural differences and local ethnocentrism in the work context were asked:</u>

2. How aware are you of the cultural differences at work? How great are they?

(e.g. overtime work/flexible work attitude/making extra efforts/going beyond what is in the job description?)

- How do you perceive the different work patterns?

- In general, do you feel any differences in mentality between locally hired colleagues and expatriates in terms of culture and work?

<u>Then, the interview leads to the focus of their views of expatriates:</u>

3. How do you feel about the expatriates who were assigned from the Taiwanese headquarter?

(e.g. how do you see them and how do you think they see themselves)?

4. Do you know the main purpose for expatriates being assigned to your department?

<u>And their views on work relationships which relate to expatriate adjustment:</u>

5. In general, how do you see your work relationships with the expatriates?

6. Can you describe the level of interaction with the expatriates on a normal working day?

7. How do you see the expatriates' adjustment from the beginning to the present?

- Did they initially ask for your help? Did you feel they asked for help as managers or co-workers?

Then, detailed insights regarding the work relationships through the level of work role/information offer and social support:

8. In the questionnaire, you stated that you did (not) offer help or support to the expatriates.

- Why?

- (How)?

- Could you please give me some examples of what the situation was like?

Following up on the issues raised from the expatriates' interview content analysis:

9. What kind of communication style do the expatriates tend to adopt?

- Do you feel that the way they communicate has changed from the beginning to the present? Or did you change the way you talk to them?

- How would you communicate with them if you were facing difficult issues or things that you were not happy with?

11. Do you feel that the language barrier or the cultural differences influence work efficiency?

- Do you notice any differences in the level of information sharing between locally hired colleagues and expatriates?

- Do you feel that the expatriates treat you differently from other locally hired colleagues (because you are Taiwanese)?

12. How well do you understand the parent company's culture?

The interview ends with a concluding question:

Can you think about anything else I should have asked you regarding expatriate adjustment and your work relationship with the expatriates?