The relationship between perceived organisational support and job satisfaction: The mediating role of expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment

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Abstract

Job satisfaction is an important aspect for expatriates, because it diminishes the chance of leaving the job early. It is therefore important to know what factors drive expatriates job satisfaction. Employees who perceive organisational support are more likely to be satisfied with their job. Based on the organisational support theory, it is expected that there is a positive direct relationship between perceived organisational support and job satisfaction among expatriates. Next, it is expected that perceived organisational support can influence job satisfaction via cross-cultural adjustment. This is examined using the conservation of resources theory and the job demands-resources model.

The aim of this study was thus to examine the relationship between perceived organisational support, cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction. Data was gathered among expatriates from different nationalities. 159 respondents participated in the study. The results show a positive direct relationship between perceived financial support and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the results show that perceived financial support influences job satisfaction via cross-cultural adjustment. Perceived career support and perceived adjustment support are not significantly related to job satisfaction and cross-cultural adjustment. The theoretical and practical implications of the results as well as the limitations and strengths of this study and suggestions for future research are discussed in the discussion section.

Key words: perceived organisational support, cross-cultural adjustment, job satisfaction, organisational support theory, conservation of resources theory, job demands – resources model
1. Introduction

Every year, an increasing number of organisations adopts a multinational strategy to remain successful (Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003). Business becomes more globally and interconnected, therefore it is important for organisations to learn internationally used skills (Shen & Hall, 2009). An often-used technique is the expatriate assignment, where employees are send abroad to work there on a project or on a temporary base (Hall, Zu, & Yan, 2001). It is extremely important for organisations to manage an expatriate transfer with care, because international assignments are very costly (Hechanova et al., 2003). Especially when an expatriate decides to terminate the assignment early, the costs may become extremely high. Shannonhouse (1996) calculated that an early termination can cost an organisation nearly 1 million dollars per expatriate. To minimize the risk of an early termination, it is important that expatriates experience job satisfaction as it has been found that satisfied workers are less likely to leave their jobs (Birdseye & Hill, 1995).

The aim of this study is therefore to identify determinants of expatriates’ job satisfaction. Previous research has suggested that perceived organisational support (POS) is an important predictor of expatriates’ job satisfaction (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS is the perception of an employee whether he or she feels supported by their organisation (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, in Rhoades Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). The organisational support theory, which is an application of the social-exchange theory, will be used to explain how POS can influence an expatriates’ job satisfaction. This study aims to re-confirm the relationship between POS and job satisfaction, however it will be tested among expatriates rather than employees.

Since previous studies examined the relationship between POS and job satisfaction among employees and not among expatriates, it could be expected that there is an additional factor which contributes to expatriates’ job satisfaction. Cross-cultural adjustment might be this link between POS and job satisfaction. It reflects the extent to which an employee can adjust him or herself in a foreign country (Black & Stephens, 1989). For expatriates, a transfer to a new country can be very challenging, because an expatriate must adjust to his new working environment and in some cases this also holds for their family. Expatriates face a new culture, a new environment and sometimes a language barrier (Hechanova et al., 2003). Cross-cultural adjustment is therefore an important factor, because it has the potential to influence organisational outcomes (e.g. job satisfaction) (Hechanova et al., 2003). Furthermore, POS is
an important predictor of cross-cultural adjustment, because the extent to which expatriates feel supported by their organisation might help them to adjust better abroad. The mediating effect can be explained with the conservation of resources (COR) theory and the job demands-resources (JD-R) model (Hobfoll, 2001; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001).

To extend the current literature, this study combines individual relationships that have been supported before but which were not combined into one model before (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Kraimer & Wayne, 2004; Hechanova et al., 2003). Moreover, this is the first study which examines expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment as a mediator between POS and job satisfaction. Additionally, most research on expatriates has been done more than a decade ago. Kraimer, Wayne, and Jaworski (2001) with their study on POS and cross-cultural adjustment and Shaffer and Harrison (1998) with their study on cross-cultural adjustment and satisfaction are examples of studies which are conducted more than a decade ago. Since there have been many changes the last ten years, for example technological improvements in organisations and in the daily lives of workers, this study on expatriates will fill a gap in the literature.

The outcomes of this study can be of critical importance. From both organisational and expatriate perspective, it is important to know whether organisational support practices help expatriates to adjust better abroad and whether it has an impact on expatriates’ job satisfaction (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). As aforementioned, the costs of an early termination can be extremely high (Shannonhouse, 1996). Birdseye and Hill (1995) have found that employees with a high job satisfaction are less likely to leave the organisation. Additionally, an increased job satisfaction is important for both employees and organisations as a higher job satisfaction decreases strain (O’Driscoll & Beehr, 1994) and increases organisational effectiveness (Ostroff, 1992).

The aim of this study is to invest whether POS has a direct effect on job satisfaction and in addition whether it has an indirect effect on job satisfaction via cross-cultural adjustment. This leads to the following research question:

To what extent is POS directly related to job satisfaction and to what extent is this relationship mediated by expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment?

Before this research question can be answered, a theoretical background will be given. By doing so, a good understanding of the conceptual model will be created. Furthermore, methods and results will be described. These results will be discussed in the discussion section.
and accordingly the theoretical and practical implications, limitations, strengths and suggestions for future research will be discussed. Finally, a short conclusion will be provided.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Perceived organisational support and job satisfaction
Central in this section is the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been defined as “the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values” (Locke, 1969, p. 316). That is how people feel about their jobs as a whole, when they take everything into consideration (Dolbier, Webster, McCalister, Mallon, & Steinhardt, 2005).

Previous research has showed POS to be a predictor of job satisfaction (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS has been defined as people’s “global beliefs about the extent to which the organisation cares about their well-being and values their contributions” (Eisenberger et al., as cited in Fuller, Barnett, Hester, & Relyea, 2003, p. 789). Previous research has suggested that POS is a multidimensional construct, it can be subdivided in adjustment POS, career POS and financial POS (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). To create a complete understanding of POS, the sub-con structs will be explained. First, adjustment POS describes how much the organisation values the adjustment of their employee (and family) abroad. (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). In the case of expatriates, this means that the organisation provides the employees with support that helps them to adjust better in a foreign country. Second, career POS describes how much the organisation values their employee’s career needs (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). For an expatriate, this means that the organisation provides them with career opportunities whilst they are abroad. At last, financial POS describes how much the organisation values the employee’s financial needs. In addition, financial POS describes how the organisation rewards the employee’s contributions in terms of compensation and benefits. (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). For an expatriate, this means that the organisation provides them with sufficient financial rewards for their assignment abroad. The combination of the three sub-constructs determines the level of POS of an expatriate.

The relationship between POS and job satisfaction can be explained by the organisational support theory (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997). The organisational support theory assumes that “employees form general beliefs concerning how
much the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being” (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001, p.42). According to the organisational support theory, POS could fulfil the socio-emotional needs of the employees and in exchange workers trade effort and dedication to the organisation, which may lead to increased feelings of job satisfaction (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Eisenberger et al., in Baran, Rhoades Shanock, & Miller, 2012). Expatriates may have high socio-emotional needs when they decide to accept the organisations assignment abroad, because the decision might have a major impact on their- and their family’s life’s. Organisations can react to these socio-emotional needs by providing organisational support for the expatriates, because the perception of organisational support is related to the fulfilment of the socio-emotional needs (Eisenberger et al., in Baran et al., 2012). This may lead to increased feelings of job satisfaction, because the workers may become more dedicated to their organisation. In addition, POS may give employees the feeling that the organisation is committed to them (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998). Accordingly, through a higher level of POS the employees will feel more supported in their choice to take the assignment abroad and this will increase their job satisfaction.

A literature review by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) provides support for the positive relationship between POS and job satisfaction. They found several studies in which POS led to job satisfaction (Aquino & Griffeth, 1999; Armstrong-Stassen, 1998; Flett, Hewit, & Hallett, 1995). Moreover, in other studies POS has been found positively related to job satisfaction as well (Gooler, 1996; Stamper & Johlke, 2003).

Based on the organisational support theory and previous studies, it can be argued that if expatriates perceive organisational support, their socio-emotional needs will be fulfilled by the organisation and they will feel that the organisation cares about their well-being. Consequently, expatriates will be more satisfied with their job. This leads to the first hypothesis:

H1: Perceived organisational support will be positively related to job satisfaction.

2.2. Expatriate cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction

Central in this section is the relationship between expatriate cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction. Expatriate cross-cultural adjustment can be defined as “the degree to which expatriates are psychologically comfortable and familiar with different aspects of a foreign culture” (Black, as cited in Peltokorpi, 2008, p. 1589). Previous research has found three underlying facets of cross-cultural adjustment, namely work adjustment, general adjustment
and interaction adjustment (Black & Stephens, 1989). Work adjustment describes how comfortable expatriates are with respect to the job tasks of the assignment (Kraimer et al., 2001). General adjustment refers to the living conditions and culture abroad (Kraimer et al., 2001). And interaction adjustment is about the interaction between the expatriate and the host-country nationals (Kraimer et al., 2001). The combination of the three underlying facets determines the level of cross-cultural adjustment of an expatriate.

The relationship between expatriate cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction can be explained with the JD-R model (Demerouti, et al., 2001). The JD-R model is an overarching model which can be applied in various job-related settings, regardless of the working conditions involved (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The model proposes that all working conditions can be categorized into two categories, namely job demands and job resources (Demerouti et al., 2001). Job demands require effort from the employee and can lead to stress and burnout. Job resources on the other hand stimulate personal growth, learning and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The JD-R model proposes that job resources have a motivational potential and may lead to several organisational outcomes such as decreased turnover, work engagement and job satisfaction (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Nielsen, Mearns, Matthiesen, & Eid, 2011).

Recently also personal resources are added to the model (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007). Personal resources are defined as “aspects of the self that are generally linked to resiliency and refer to individuals’ sense of their ability to control and impact upon their environment successfully” (Xanthopoulou, 2007, pp. 123-124). Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) argue that personal resources have the ability to start the motivational process, which may lead to employees feeling important to the organisation and optimistic about their future. These feelings are important for employees to be satisfied with their jobs. Cross-cultural adjustment is a personal resource, because it refers to the degree to which an employee feels comfortable within a new culture or environment (Black & Gregersen, 1991). This falls within the scope of personal resources, which refer to an individual’s ability to control their environment successfully (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Cross-cultural adjustment, as a personal resource, can start the motivational process and lead to work outcomes such as job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be argued that expatriates who adjust well cross-culturally will experience a higher job satisfaction than those expatriates who cannot adjust well cross-culturally.

Previous research has found support for the relationship between cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction. Takeuchi, Yun, & Tesluk (2002) proposed and found evidence
for the relationship between expatriate general adjustment and general job satisfaction. Furthermore, there is evidence for a direct effect of work-adjustment on job satisfaction (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998; Takeuchi et al., 2002). Additionally, Hechanova et al. (2003) found evidence for a positive relationship between expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction in their meta-analytic review.

Based on the JD-R model of Bakker & Demerouti (2007) and on previous studies, it can be argued that expatriates who can adjust themselves well abroad will experience more job satisfaction. This leads to the third hypothesis:

**H2: Expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment is positively related to job satisfaction.**

### 2.3. Perceived organisational support and expatriate cross-cultural adjustment

Central in this section is the relationship between POS and expatriate cross-cultural adjustment. The relationship can be explained by the COR theory, which states that “individuals strive to obtain, retain, protect and foster those things that they value”, for example material, social, personal, or energetic resources (Hobfoll, 2001, p. 341). The value of resources is different for individuals and it depends on personal experiences and situations (Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl & Westman, 2014). Examples of resources are: support from co-workers, understanding from the employer or adequate income (Hobfoll, 2001). The COR theory assumes that resources may generate other resources, which is named creating resource caravans (Hobfoll, 2002). Since POS and cross-cultural adjustment are both resources to the expatriate, this theory can provide some relevant insights.

POS practices are job resources that are provided by the organisation. Among these practices, there might be practices which are helpful for expatriates to adjust abroad. For example, financial benefits or career opportunities. It is important for expatriates that they perceive organisational support practices, because they are working and living abroad on behalf of their employer. As explained in the previous section, expatriate cross-cultural adjustment is a personal resource. If the assumption of the COR theory is combined with the motivational process of the JD-R model, it can be expected that the job resources (POS) lead to an accumulation of personal resources (expatriate cross-cultural adjustment). So, when expatriates perceive organisational support it leads to a higher level of cross-cultural adjustment.

Caligiuri, Joshi, and Lazarova (1999) have found support for the relationship between POS and cross-cultural adjustment. In addition, many studies examined the effect of underlying aspects of POS on one or more of the underlying aspects of cross-cultural adjustment. Kraimer
et al. (2001) have found that POS from the parent company is positively related to general adjustment and that POS from the host company is positively related to work- and interaction adjustment. Next to this, Kraimer and Wayne (2004) found that adjustment POS is positively related to expatriate cross-cultural adjustment. Additionally, Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) have found that social support from co-workers has a positive relationship with expatriate work adjustment and logistical support has a positive relationship with both expatriate cultural and interaction adjustment. To summarize, there has been found a positive relationship between different aspects of POS and cross-cultural adjustment.

Based on these results and on the COR theory, it can be argued that if expatriates perceive high levels of organisational support, they will be more cross-culturally adjusted abroad. This leads to the third hypothesis:

**H3:** Perceived organisational support will be positively related to expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment.

### 2.4. The mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment in the relation between POS and job satisfaction

Taken this all together, the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment in the relation between POS and job satisfaction can be explained. According to the COR theory and the creation of resource caravans, expatriates who perceive high levels of organisational support will be better adjusted to their new environment than expatriates who perceive low levels of organisational support (Hobfoll, 2001, 2002; Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). They will be better adjusted, because POS practices from the organisation help them to optimize their adjustment in the foreign country. The JD-R model explains that cross-cultural adjustment is a personal resource and can start a motivational process, which leads to positive work outcomes such as job satisfaction. So, expatriates who are better adjusted in their new environment, might experience feelings of job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). To conclude, more POS yields more cross-cultural adjustment which in turn will lead to more job satisfaction. Moreover, via the organisational support theory a direct positive relationship between POS and job satisfaction is expected (Eisenberger et al., 1997). Therefore, a partial mediation is expected. This leads to the fourth hypothesis:

**H4:** Expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment will partly mediate the relationship between POS and job satisfaction.

The conceptual model is presented in figure 1.
3. Method

3.1. Design

This study has used a cross-sectional research design, this means that the data has been gathered at one point in time (Mann, 2003). To collect data, a questionnaire has been used. This questionnaire included several scales, as it was part of a bigger research project. The research project was a collaboration between Tilburg University and Boxx global expat solutions, which is a specialized organisation in global mobility and who support expatriates during their exchange. This study has only focused on the scales for POS, expatriate cross-cultural adjustment and assignment satisfaction (Appendix 1).

3.2. Sample

This study focused on expatriates. These participants were selected by convenience sampling, which means that the selection of participants is based on the accessibility of the participants to the researcher (Marshall, 1996). To take part in the study, participants had to meet certain requirements. First, the participants were a) relocating within three months, b) currently working in a foreign country, or c) have repatriated last year (2016). Furthermore, the assignment abroad must have been at least three consecutive months.

A total of 184 questionnaires were filled out (N= 184). All respondents who had missing values on one or more of the items used in this study were removed from the data before analysis. This made the final number of participants 159, which were used in all analyses. 15.1% of the participants was female and the average age of the participants was 41.6 years (SD=9.7). Of the 159 participants, 25.8% had family in the home country during the assignment. Further, no participants were relocating within three months, 93.1% of the participants was currently working abroad and 6.9% of the participants has repatriated last year.
3.3. Procedure
The data was gathered by Boxx global expat solutions. They have approached several of their clients by e-mail to participate in this study, these clients had several expats employed which filled in the questionnaire (Appendix 2a-c). Furthermore, employees of Boxx global expat solutions have used their personal social networks to gain participants for this study. At last, a call on the LinkedIn page of Boxx global expat solutions has delivered some individual responses. When Boxx global expat solutions’ clients and external relations agreed to participate, Boxx global expat solutions or their contact in the participating company send out a standardized e-mail to the expatriates with an invitation to participate, instructions to participate and a link to the questionnaire. At least one reminder was send to all organisations, in case there was insufficient response Boxx global expat solutions has send two reminders. Participants have filled out the questionnaire anonymously. Furthermore, participants are guaranteed that the data will be used confidential.

3.4. Measures
The questionnaire was constructed with several scales, which were developed and tested in previous studies. To test construct validity, a factor analysis was performed for each scale. Based on Pallant (2010), the following criteria were used: Eigenvalue > 1, and KMO > 0.6. Additionally, the scree plot must support the structure. To ensure scale reliability, Cronbach’s α was calculated. The criteria which were used for evaluation are: α >.9 = excellent, .7 ≤ α ≤ .9 = good, .6 ≤ α ≤ .7 = acceptable, .5 ≤ α ≤ .6 = poor, α ≤ .5 = unacceptable (George & Mallery in Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

POS was measured with a twelve-item scale which was developed by Kraimer and Wayne (2004). The items were answered on a Likert scale, with categories ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To determine the underlying structure, Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) was used. The PAF produced three factors, with eigenvalues above one, explaining 81.02% of the variance (Appendix 3). The scree plot supported this structure. The first factor was financial POS, which had four items. An example item of financial POS was: ‘This company has taken care of me financially’. The Cronbach’s alpha for financial POS was .93, thus the reliability of the scale was excellent. The second factor was career POS, which had four items. An example item of career POS was: ‘The company takes an interest in my career’. The Cronbach’s alpha for career POS was .91, thus excellent. The third factor was adjustment
POS, which had four items. An example item of adjustment POS was: ‘The company shows an interest in my family’s well-being’. The Cronbach’s alpha for adjustment POS was .91 and thus excellent.

*Job Satisfaction* was measured with a four-item scale which was developed by Bonache (2005). This scale assessed the level of satisfaction with the assignment. This immediately implied their job satisfaction, as for an expatriate the assignment was their job. An example item is: ‘I am satisfied with this assignment’. Each item was answered on a Likert scale, with categories ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To verify that job satisfaction was only one component, PAF was used. The PAF produced one factor, with an eigenvalue above one, explaining 74.94% of the variance. The scree plot supported this structure. The reliability of this scale was good, as Cronbach’s alpha was .88 (George & Mallery in Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

*Expatriate cross-cultural adjustment* was measured with sixteen items. A fourteen-item scale from Black and Stephens (1989) was used. Based on experience, Boxx global expat solutions has added two items to extent the measurement of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment. An example item is: ‘How well adjusted (how comfortable) are you to each of the following aspects of living abroad? – living conditions in general?’ All items were answered on a Likert scale, with categories ranging from 1 (very unadjusted) to 5 (very adjusted). To determine the underlying structure of the scale, PAF was conducted. The results showed a five-factor solution, with eigenvalues above one, explaining 73.27% of the variance. Therefore, a second order factor analysis was conducted. These results showed that the scale can be reduced to one factor, explaining 51.12% of the variance. The reliability analysis showed that one question had to be deleted to increase Cronbach’s alpha with .004 The reliability of the scale was good, as Cronbach’s alpha is .88 (George & Mallery in Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

*Control variables* were included in the statistical analysis to control for competing causal explanations (Warner, 2013). Gender (0 = male - 1 = female) was included because Caligiuri and Tung (1999) have found that women are less cross-culturally adjusted than men when they were send to a country with a low female workforce participation. Age was included because previous research has found age to be significantly related to job satisfaction, this holds for both men and women (Glenn, Taylor, & Weaver, 1977). Furthermore, family in the home country
was included in the analysis (0 = yes, 1 = no) because Caligiuri, Hyland, Bross, and Joshi (1998) have found that the level of adjustment of the family in the host country influenced the expatriates’ adjustment. At last, the current work situation was included in the analysis (1 = relocating within three months, 2 = currently working in a foreign country and 3 = repatriated last year). Expatriates who were currently working in a foreign country might have certain expectations regarding their relocation while expatriates who have repatriated last year had concrete experiences with their relocation. To conclude, gender, age, family in the home country and current work situation were included as control variables in the analyses.

3.5. Data analysis
First, the data was checked for missing values, outliers and errors. An answer was seen as an error when it laid outside the answering scale. These answers were coded as missing (99). Since 25 respondents did not fill in all the items for the scales of either/or POS, cross-cultural adjustment or job satisfaction, it was decided to remove all respondents with missing values resulting in 159 participants. Additionally, a dummy was created for the scale of current work situation. The scale had three answer alternatives, 1 = relocating within three months, 2 = currently working abroad and 3 = repatriated last year. Since there were no respondents who are relocating within three months, two answer alternatives were created (0 = currently working abroad – 1 = repatriated last year). By doing so, the variable can be included in a regression analysis. To test the model assumptions, scatterplots were calculated in SPSS. The scatterplots were used to check for linear relationships between POS and job satisfaction, between cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction and between POS and expatriate cross-cultural adjustment. The scatterplots showed that the requirement of linearity was met.

The factor analysis showed that POS can be subdivided into three components. Therefore, the empirical model was more extensive than the conceptual model and can be found in figure 2.
The empirical model was tested in SPSS with the Hayes (2009) method for mediation analysis. The dependent variable was job satisfaction and the independent variables were financial POS, career POS, adjustment POS and cross-cultural adjustment. The control variables ‘gender’, ‘age’, ‘family in the home country’ and ‘current work situation’ were also added to the analyses.

To determine the significance of the indirect effect between a sub-construct of POS and job satisfaction via cross-cultural adjustment, the confidence interval must not include zero. Furthermore, to find support for a partial mediation effect there must be a significant direct effect between the different aspects of POS and job satisfaction.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive statistics

Table 1 gives an overview of the means, standard deviations and the correlations between the control variables, the predictor variables and the dependent variable. All main variables in the empirical model are positively correlated, except for career POS and cross-cultural adjustment ($r = .14, p = .075$). Some control variables are significantly correlated to the predictor and dependent variables. The age of the participant correlates positively to the participants’ job satisfaction ($r = .22, p = .005$) and gender is negatively correlated to participants’ job satisfaction ($r = -.18, p = .027$). Although not all control variables are significantly correlated to the predictor variables and dependent variable, they will be included in the regression analysis. By including them in the regression analysis, all relevant effects will be corrected for the control variables.
Table 1: means, standard deviations and correlations (N=159)

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<td>1. Financial POS</td>
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<td>3. Adjustment POS</td>
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<td>4. Cross-cultural adjustment POS</td>
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<td>5. Job satisfaction</td>
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<td>.06</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Current work situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05; ** p < .01

a Gender was coded 0 (male) and 1 (female)
b Family members remaining in home country was coded 0 (yes) and 1 (no)
c Current work situation was coded 0 (currently working abroad) and 1 (repatriated last year)
4.2. Regression analysis

Table 2 gives an overview of the results of the hierarchical regression analysis. It shows that financial POS, career POS, adjustment POS and cross-cultural adjustment explain 30.61% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = .31, p = .000$).

Table 2: Hierarchical regression analysis for job satisfaction (N=159)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial POS</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career POS</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment POS</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-cultural adjustment</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-1.71</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family remaining in the home country</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current work situation</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 .31^{***}$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross-cultural adjustment</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial POS</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career POS</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment POS</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family remaining in the home country</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.50</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current work situation</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 .13^{**}$

Indirect effect of financial POS on job satisfaction (through cross-cultural adjustment) $\text{CI} = .01, .12$

Indirect effect of career POS on job satisfaction (through cross-cultural adjustment) $\text{CI} = -.05, 0.7$

Indirect effect of adjustment POS on job satisfaction (through cross-cultural adjustment) $\text{CI} = -.02, .12$

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$
Hypothesis 1 expects that POS is positively related to job satisfaction. Table 2 shows that financial POS is positively related to job satisfaction ($B = .18, p = .008$). This means that expatriates’ who have a high perception of organisational financial support will experience a higher level of job satisfaction. Career POS ($B = .12, p = .086$) and adjustment POS ($B = -.01, p = .856$) are not significantly related to job satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is partly supported.

Hypothesis 2 expects that expatriate cross-cultural adjustment is positively related to job satisfaction. Results from the analysis showed that cross-cultural adjustment is indeed positively related to job satisfaction ($B = .41, p = .000$). This means that expatriates’ who are adjusted well cross-culturally will experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is supported.

Hypothesis 3 expects that POS is positively related to cross-cultural adjustment. The total variance explained by this model is 13.45% ($p = .002$). Table 2 shows that financial POS is positively related to cross-cultural adjustment ($B = .12, p = .032$). This means that expatriates’ who perceive high levels of organisational financial support will experience higher levels of cross-cultural adjustment. Career POS ($B = .01, p = .830$) and adjustment POS ($B = .08, p = .196$) are not significantly related to cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is partly supported.

Hypothesis 4 expects that expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment partly mediates the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. Mediation analyses in SPSS (Hays, 2009) showed that the relationship between financial POS and job satisfaction was mediated by cross-cultural adjustment (.05, 95% CI .01, .12). Since the direct relationship between financial POS and job satisfaction is also significant ($B = .18, p = .008$), there is a partial mediating effect. The indirect effect via cross-cultural adjustment between career POS and job satisfaction (.01, 95% CI -.05, .07) and between adjustment POS and job satisfaction (.03, 95% CI -.02, .12) has not been supported. Therefore, hypothesis 4 is partially supported.

5. Discussion
The goal of this research was to understand to what extent POS is related to job satisfaction among expatriates and to what extent this relationship is mediated by expatriates’ cross-cultural
adjustment. This study has used a cross-sectional research design and used questionnaires to collect the data among expatriates.

A confirmation was found for the positive relationship between financial POS and job satisfaction. Furthermore, financial POS is positively related to expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment. And cross-cultural adjustment is positively related to job satisfaction. Moreover, there is evidence for the mediating effect of cross-cultural adjustment between financial POS and job satisfaction. Career POS and adjustment POS are not significantly related to cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction. The findings will be explained in more detail in the next section.

5.1. Interpretation of the results
Hypothesis 1 expected that POS was positively related to job satisfaction. Results confirmed hypothesis 1 partially, because there was only a significant positive effect between financial POS and job satisfaction. This result is in line with our expectations based on the organisational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1997), which proposed that POS practices made employees feel more supported when they took the assignment abroad. The POS practices fulfilled the socio-emotional needs of expatriates which led to an increased job satisfaction. This result is partly in line with previous research (Aquino & Griffeth, 1999; Armstrong-Stassen, 1998; Flett et al., 1995; Gooler, 1996). While these studies have found evidence for the overall measurement of POS, this study has only found support for financial POS in relation to job satisfaction. Career POS and adjustment POS were not significantly related to job satisfaction, which is contradictory to our expectations based on the organisational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1997). An explanation for these findings might be that previous studies have focused on the influence of POS on job satisfaction among employees rather than expatriates (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Although expatriates are employees, there might be some differences as expatriates must cope with many changes in their life’s. Expatriates might have higher socio-emotional needs than employees as their decision to move abroad can have a major impact on their life. To satisfy these socio-emotional needs, expatriates may need a higher level of POS or different POS practices than employees. Consequently, POS might have a different effect on job satisfaction for expatriates than for employees. Therefore, the results may be different in this study.

Hypothesis 2 expected that cross-cultural adjustment was positively related to job satisfaction. Results confirmed hypothesis 2, meaning that expatriates who adjust well cross-
culturally experience a higher job satisfaction than expatriates who are not well adjusted abroad. This is in line with our expectations based on the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), which proposed that personal resources (cross-cultural adjustment) have a motivational potential and may lead to several organisational outcomes such as work engagement or job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Furthermore, this result is in line with previous studies (Hechanova et al., 2003; Shaffer & Harrison, 1998; Takeuchi, 2002).

Hypothesis 3 was partly confirmed; only financial POS is positively related to cross-cultural adjustment. This result is in line with our expectations based on the COR theory, which predicted that POS has the potential to generate other resources, such as cross-cultural adjustment (Hobfoll, 2001; Xanthopoulou, 2007). Moreover, it is partly in line with the study of Caligiuri et al. (1999) who have found support for the relationship between the overall measurement of POS and cross-cultural adjustment. Career POS and adjustment POS were not significantly related to cross-cultural adjustment, which is contradictory to our expectations based on the COR theory (Hobfoll, 2001) and the results of Kraimer and Wayne (2004) who have found that adjustment POS is positively related to cross-cultural adjustment. These results can be explained by the separation of the overall measurement of POS into three sub-constructs. Previous studies have found an effect of POS on cross-cultural adjustment, while this study has only found an effect of financial POS on cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri et al., 1999; Kraimer et al., 2001). It is possible that the sub-constructs of POS strengthen each other and when POS is examined as an overall construct, it might have a stronger effect on expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment than when career POS and adjustment POS are examined as separate constructs in relation to cross-cultural adjustment.

Hypothesis 4 examined the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment. The results show that cross-cultural adjustment functions as a mediator between financial POS and job satisfaction. As financial POS is also directly related to job satisfaction, there is a significant partial mediation effect. This is in line with our expectations based on the organisational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1997), the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and the COR theory (Hobfoll, 2001). Cross-cultural adjustment does not partly mediate the relation between career POS and job satisfaction and between adjustment POS and job satisfaction, because career- and adjustment POS are not significantly related to cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction.
5.2. Limitations, strengths and implications for future research

This study has strengths, but also some limitations that need to be mentioned. First, this study has used a cross-sectional research design, meaning that the data has been gathered at one point in time (Mann, 2003). Cross-sectional data makes it impossible to determine the causality of a relationship. A suggestion for future research would be to conduct a longitudinal study to gain a better insight in the causality of the relationships.

Second, the data has been gathered using convenience sampling, meaning that the selection of participants is based on the accessibility of the participants to the researcher (Marshall, 1996). This means that the results of this study are limited generalizable to the whole population of expatriates. In addition, the sample size is very limited (N=184), which also hinders the generalizability. However, Boxx global expat solutions has used several approaches to gain participants for this study to make the sample, within the limitations of non-random sampling, as diverse as possible. This has resulted in a mixed population with 110 Dutch expatriates and 74 expatriates with other nationalities. This contributes to the generalizability and is therefore also a strength of the study. Though, a suggestion for future research would be to use a random sampling technique and a larger sample among expatriates to ensure a better generalization to the population of expatriates.

Third, this study has used questionnaires which is a form of a self-report measurement. It is possible that people answered in a socially acceptable way or that participants skipped the questions that they felt uncomfortable answering. Evidence for this are the many structural missing values that have occurred in the data. At least 25 participants failed to fill in the items for POS, cross-cultural adjustment and/or job satisfaction. Participants may have felt uncomfortable answering these questions or they do not have an opinion yet about for example cross-cultural adjustment or job satisfaction. However, self-report is a good way to measure someone’s POS because it immediately reflects on a persons’ perception. A suggestion for future research would be to use a qualitative research method or a combination of interviews with a questionnaire to gain better insights in expatriates’ feelings and perceptions.

Fourth, this study did not test cross-cultural adjustment with separate constructs in the relation between POS and job satisfaction as the factor analysis did not support a three-factor solution. A suggestion for future research would be to use the original scale for cross-cultural adjustment as developed by Kraimer and Wayne (2004). In this way, the research model might be further extended by dividing expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment into general-, interaction- and work adjustment. By doing so, there will be more information about the specific relations between POS and cross-cultural adjustment.
A last suggestion for future research might be to test different predictors of job satisfaction (e.g. mindfulness or actual support practices) as the overall importance of this study is to increase job satisfaction.

5.3. Theoretical implications
This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, previous studies have not focused yet on the sub-constructs of POS in relation to job satisfaction among expatriates. This study did focus on the sub-constructs of POS and found that financial POS is directly related to job satisfaction whereas career- and adjustment POS are not significantly related to job satisfaction. Second, this study examined the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment in the relation between POS and job satisfaction whereas previous studies have not focused yet on this mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment. This study found that cross-cultural adjustment partly mediates the relationship between financial POS and job satisfaction. However, this study did not find support for the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment between career- and adjustment POS and job satisfaction. This is contradictory to the expectations based on the COR theory (Hobfoll, 2001) and the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and it reveals that adjustment- and career POS might not be important predictors of cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction among expatriates. At last, this study contributed to the literature because it revealed new insights into the expatriate literature anno 2017. Expatriates tend to value financial support over career- and adjustment support when it comes to the relation with job satisfaction and cross-cultural adjustment.

5.4. Practical implications
Birdseye and Hill (1995) have emphasized the importance of job satisfaction, because satisfied workers are less likely to leave their jobs. It is crucial for organisations to manage this thoroughly, because the costs of an early termination may become extremely high (Birdseye & Hill, 1995). This study has found that perceived financial support plays an important role in expatriates’ job satisfaction and cross-cultural adjustment.

To advice managers and organisations regarding POS, cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction among expatriates, two interviews were held with HR professionals specialized in expatriate assignments (appendices 4 & 5). The first interview was held with an HR business partner from Vodafone/Ziggo and the second interview was held with an HR consultant from Boxx global expat solutions. Based on these interviews, practical implications will be provided.
First, from the interview with Vodafone/Ziggo it became clear that it is important for organisations to give a complete and accurate overview of all financial benefits that the expatriate can expect. An agreement must be made about the cost-of-living allowance, since this allowance cannot be standardized and must be personally matched to the expatriate. In the interview with Boxx global expat solutions, the suggestion was raised to calculate and verify the cost-of-living allowance based on regularly updated data bases.

Second, the interview with Vodafone/Ziggo emphasized the importance of the fluctuations of currencies. As a best practice approach, the organisation could offer the expatriate the option to receive their financial benefits in the currency that is in their interest (Boxx global expat solutions). However, this might not be offered by all organisations to their expatriates. For them, it is important to make clear agreements with the expatriates beforehand to eliminate friction (Boxx global expat solutions).

At last, from the interview with Boxx global expat solutions it became clear that adjustment POS was expected to be related to cross-cultural adjustment and job satisfaction. In practice, expatriates tend to value all support related to practical problems (e.g. tax support). While these findings are not supported by this study, it is important for organisations to offer adjustment support to the expatriates.

To conclude, organisations and expatriates must make clear agreements about financial compensations before the expatriate leaves for their assignment. In addition, organisations must offer adjustment support to the expatriates.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, this study examined to what extent POS is directly related to job satisfaction and to what extent this relationship is mediated by expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment. The study showed the importance of financial POS in relation to expatriates’ job satisfaction and cross-cultural adjustment. Furthermore, cross-cultural adjustment is positively related to job satisfaction. The mediating effect of cross-cultural adjustment between financial POS and job satisfaction has been supported in this study. These results provide fruitful insights for organisations regarding their expatriates’ policy. Namely, financial compensation might help expatriates to increase job satisfaction and cross-cultural adjustment. Furthermore, as suggested by Boxx global expat solutions, organisations must invest in adjustment POS to ensure positive outcomes for both the organisation and the expatriate.
7. References


Appendix 1

**Perceived organisational support** (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004), five-point scale with 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 = ‘strongly agree’.

- This company has taken care of me financially.
- The financial incentives and allowances provided to me by this company are good.
- I have received generous financial support from this company.
- I cannot complain about the financial benefits associated with my international assignment.
- This company takes an interest in my career.
- This company considers my goals when making decisions about my career.
- This company keeps me informed about career opportunities available within the company.
- I feel that this company cares about my career development.
- This company has shown interest in my family’s well-being.
- This company has provided my family with enough assistance to help them adjust to the foreign country.
- This company has provided me with many opportunities to ease the transition to the foreign country.
- Help is available within this company whenever I have questions or concerns about living in the foreign country.

**Assignment satisfaction** (Bonache, 2005), five-point scale with 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 = ‘strongly agree’.

- I am satisfied with this assignment.
- I would take the same assignment again.
- I would recommend this assignment to a friend.
- This assignment measures up to my expectations.

**Cross-cultural adjustment** (Black & Stephens, 1989) and (two items added by Boxx global expat solutions), five-point scale with 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 = ‘strongly agree’.

*How well adjusted (how comfortable) are you to each of the following aspects of living abroad?*

- Living conditions in general
- Housing conditions
- Food
- Shopping
- Cost of living
- Entertainment / recreation facilities and opportunities
• Healthcare facilities
• Socializing with host nationals
• Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day basis
• Interacting with host nationals outside of work
• Speaking with host nationals
• Specific job responsibilities
• Performance standards and expectations
• Supervisory responsibilities
• Safety
• Schooling (if applicable)
Dear Madam, dear Sir,

To gain scientific-based insights from international employees for policy alignment and optimization of global mobility programs, Tilburg University and Boxx are currently working on a joint research project on international employee experiences.

This project is explicitly based on input from international employees who 1) are relocating within three months, 2) are currently working in the foreign country, or 3) have repatriated last year. Your knowledge and experiences are extremely valuable. As such, [COMPANY] gave us permission to approach it’s international employees in order to kindly ask them to fill in the online questionnaire to support this research:

**Online Questionnaire Research Project Tilburg University & Boxx**

Filling in this questionnaire will forfeit approximately 15 minutes of your precious time. Participation however, will be much appreciated. By participating, you will not only contribute to the reliability and validity of this research project, but you will also add first-hand information about international experiences from an employee perspective. This will help us better understand important factors for international employees, which in turn will provide valuable insights for global mobility specialists on how to optimize global mobility policies and programs.

Please note that confidentiality will be ensured, participation is on a no-name basis and no link can be made to your individual responses. However, participating companies may be provided with a company-specific report. Thereby, you will be asked to fill in the company name (“[short company name]”). It is up to your discretion whether or not to provide this information. Still, such a company-specific report will only be provided with a sufficient, scientifically justifiable number of responses, which will guarantee anonymous treatment of information at all times.

The outcomes of this research project are expected in the first half of 2017 and will be made available via [www.boxx-expat.com](http://www.boxx-expat.com) and/or the Boxx LinkedIn company page.

Please do not hesitate to contact us in case of any questions or feedback.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation!

On behalf of MT Boxx and Tilburg University,
Appendix 2b

Dear [CONTACT PERSON],

To provide global mobility specialists with the latest, scientific-based insights to optimize their global mobility policies and programs, Tilburg University and Boxx are currently working on a joint research project on factors for international assignment success. Please refer to the attached leaflet for more detailed information about this project.

This project is explicitly based on input from assignees, so their knowledge and experiences are extremely valuable. Therefore, on behalf of Tilburg University and Boxx, I would kindly like to ask if [COMPANY NAME] would be willing to participate in this project by allowing us to contact your assignees to fill in an online questionnaire. Please (dis)approve your permission to participate by responding to this e-mail. Additionally, please provide us with the e-mail addresses of your assignees so that we can approach them directly or express your preference to receive a link so that you can further distribute the questionnaire among the assignee population within [COMPANY NAME].

Please note that confidentiality will be ensured, participation is on a no-name basis and that no link can be made to individual responses. For more information about the project, confidentiality and the use of data, please see the attached leaflet.

A general report with the outcomes of this research project is expected in the first half of 2017 and will be made available via www.boxx-expat.com and/or Boxx LinkedIn company page with early access for participating companies. Additionally, as outlined in the leaflet, a company- and/or branch-specific report will be made available upon request.

Please do not hesitate to contact my colleague Charlotte Menting in case of any questions or feedback, or if you prefer to personally discuss further details of this project.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

On behalf of MT Boxx and Tilburg University,
Appendix 2c

Research project Tilburg University & Boxx

Success factors of international assignments

In today’s rapidly changing and highly competitive business environment, sending assignees abroad has become an important factor for improving overall organizational success. Still, many organization’s struggle with how to identify an international assignment/transfer as successful. Is it just about financial return on investment? Or are there other, non-financial elements important as well? And which factors underlie a successful international assignment/transfer? We believe that combining science (TiU) and a practical approach (Boxx) can lead to valuable insights for optimizing global mobility policies and programs by gaining first-hand knowledge about various elements relating to international assignments/transfers from an assignee perspective.

Research expectations

- Elements like assignment satisfaction, completion of the assignment and retention within the company will have a positive effect on overall assignment success;
- Uncertainties like repatriation concerns, career development and cross-cultural adjustment will negatively influence assignment success;
- The individual assignee might have personal capabilities to cope with uncertainties, which will positively influence assignment success;
- Support from the organization, as perceived by the assignee, might compensate for the negative influence of uncertainties on assignment success;
- Differing results per region / nationality / sector / age / gender / etc.

Target group

All assignees (i.e. long-term / short-term / commuter / international hire / international trainee) who structurally work (and live) in a foreign country for a period longer than three (3) consecutive months. These assignees are either a) relocating within three months, b) currently working in a foreign country, or c) have repatriated last year.

Participation

Companies and their assignees will contribute to gaining insights into factors underlying global mobility success, aiming at policy and program optimization. This will be summarized in a general report with early access for participating companies. Additionally, if requested, they receive a company-specific report outlining the situation within their company, offering a unique insight in the specific factors influencing their company’s international assignment success compared to averages.

Confidentiality

In principle, participation is on a no-name basis and assignees fill in the questionnaire anonymously, which will ensure confidentiality. However, in order to provide company-specific reports, all company-specific information has to be identifiable. Thereby, assignees will be asked to fill in the company name. It is up to their discretion whether or not to provide this information. Still, a company-specific report will only be provided with a sufficient,
scientifically justifiable number of responses, which will guarantee anonymous treatment of information at all times. If this is not possible, companies may decide to receive a branch-specific report instead.

Data

The data collected will be treated confidential and will be processed and saved anonymously. The data will only be used for scientific purposes and to set-up general as well as company-specific reports. Individual organizational results will not be made public in any way.

Follow-up

The outcomes of this research are expected in the first half of 2017. In case you wish to receive a company- or branch specific report, please contact us via de details below. We aim to reprise this research frequently in order to collect information over time and identify trends in global mobility.

Contact details

In case of any questions or feedback please do not hesitate to contact Charlotte Menting.
### Appendix 3

Principal Axis Factoring POS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career POS – I feel that the company cares about my career development</td>
<td>.962</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career POS – The company takes an interest in my career</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career POS – The company considers my goals when making decisions about my career</td>
<td>.811</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career POS – The company keeps my informed about career opportunities available within the company</td>
<td>.789</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial POS – The financial incentives and allowances provided to me by the company are good</td>
<td>.932</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial POS – I cannot complain about the financial benefits associated to my international assignment</td>
<td>.894</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial POS – I have received generous financial support from the company</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial POS – The company takes care of me financially</td>
<td>.812</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment POS – The company provides my family with enough assistance to help them adjust to the host country</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.987</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment POS - The company provides me with many opportunities to ease the transition to the host country</td>
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<td>-.817</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjustment POS - The company shows an interest in my family’s well-being</td>
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<td>-.766</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjustment POS – Help is available within the company whenever I have questions or concerns about living in the host country</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.718</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \alpha = 0.914 \]
Appendix 4

Interview HR business partner at Vodafone/Ziggo

Description of organisation

Vodafone/Ziggo is an international company who delivers telephone and internet services to organisations and individual buyers in the Netherlands. Vodafone/Ziggo has specific stores for their own services, they have a webshop and shop-in-shops. For example, a Vodafone/Ziggo shop in the Mediamarkt. The HR business partner is responsible for all +/- 1400 employees in these areas of the company.

Role of the HR business partner at Vodafone/Ziggo

The HR business partner is responsible for the alignment of strategy with the human capital within the company. The organisation uses the so-called 3-5-7 strategy, which holds for all employees. Three years is the minimum number that someone can work in one role, five years is the optimal number that someone can work in one role and seven years is the maximum number that someone can work in one role. After this period, someone must grow further in a new role. By doing this, the employees are in constant movement and they are triggered to develop themselves. The HR business partner has had several roles within the HR department. A few years ago, he was responsible for the administrative part of HR including expats and impats.

What was the package that you offered to expats?

- 30% arrangement, meaning that 30% of the expats salary will be free from taxes. Conditions for this arrangement are: 1) the expats must live 150 or more km away from his new working place and 2) this arrangement only holds for expats who are in the Netherlands for the first time.
- The children of expats are allowed to go to an international school on costs of the organisation.
- A housing allowance, meaning that the organisation helps to find a new house for the expat.
- Cost of living allowance, meaning that the organisation compensates the expat for the cost of living in the host country.
- Rental car from the organisation.
- Tax support, meaning that the company helps the expat with their taxes.
- A non-official integration course. For example, an expat from Qatar is learned that woman can be dressed in short clothes. That is completely normal for Dutch employees, but not for employees from different cultures.
- Language course

Discussion of thesis results

In my thesis, I have found a direct effect of perceived financial support to job satisfaction. Furthermore, perceived financial support leads to more cross-cultural adjustment which consequently leads to more job satisfaction.
The HR business partner recognizes these findings. Money seems to be the most important driver of expats, however he believes that the experience of working abroad should be the most important driver. There must be a balance in the price to pay. On the one hand, you have the employee who has a certain cost of moving abroad. This employee asks for a compensation for these costs. On the other hand, you have the employer who also has a certain cost. Namely the employee moving abroad and the financial costs accompanied with this transfer. Both sides must decide when the agreement is in balance. If the employer thinks that he must pay too much for what the employee must return, they have to decide whether they continue with that employee. If the employee thinks that the organisation pays them to little for the investment they make. The employee must consider quitting the job and searching for a challenge in another company.

The HR business partner has some recommendations for expat policies:

- Make sure that there is a clear overview of financial compensations. Expats must know what they expect from their organisation when they are working abroad. (For Vodafone/Ziggo, most expat periods are +/- 3 years).
- The cost of living allowance is often a problem, because it is standardized for all cultures. What does this mean? For example, the groceries. You take the average cost of groceries in the Netherlands and you take the average cost of groceries in another company. In both cases, you base this on the same products. However, an expat from Italy won’t eat the same products as the person in the Netherlands. The cost of living might be higher for that expat, because it uses other more expensive products. This leads in many cases to complaints from the expats. As an organisation, you must look to this problem very seriously to deal with it on forehand.
- Furthermore, during the exchange the currencies change all the time. If an expat gets paid in his own currency, it might occur that there are severe fluctuations in their salary. As an organisation, you must be aware of these changes and you must be clear to the expat about these fluctuations. Or you must react on these changes and adapt the payment to the expat.
Appendix 5

Interview HR consultants Boxx global expat solutions and HR professor Tilburg university

Description of interview setting

Boxx global expat solutions and Tilburg university set up a research project about expats. In the context of that research project a meeting was set up with all stakeholders involved, this included all eight bachelor students who are currently writing their bachelor thesis about expats. The aim of this meeting was a presentation of the research results, which gave rise to further research questions. The two HR consultants of Boxx global expat solutions and the HR professor of Tilburg university provided the students with feedback on their results and gave advice for practical implications.

Description of Boxx global expat solutions

Boxx global expat solutions is an organisation which is specialized in global mobility. They provide support for employees who are send abroad by their company. Decades ago, expats did not get the support they needed. They had to go to many different organisations for little pieces of the global mobility puzzle. Boxx global expat solutions combines the full spectrum of services and brings it to the expat with an eye for the human side.

Discussion of research results

In my thesis, I have found a direct effect of perceived financial support to job satisfaction. Furthermore, cross-cultural adjustment is a mediator between perceived financial support and job satisfaction.

The HR consultants from Boxx global expat solutions recognize that expats value money packages. They think that money becomes more important with age. Older workers have a family of which they need to take care. Younger workers see it more often as a career opportunity that they can work abroad. However, this study has controlled for age so it does not influence the relationships found.

- The HR consultants of Boxx would expect that adjustment POS is more important than financial POS. They experience that expats appreciate their services, which take away many of their concerns. Boxx experience that expats value this more than financial benefits. However, the data does not show this. It shows that financial POS is indeed more important to expatriates job satisfaction and cross-cultural adjustment than career POS and adjustment POS.

Practical implications

- There are data bases, who calculate two times a year what the average cost are per country. E.g. the cost of housing, food etc. Organisations can consult these data bases to calculate the cost-of-allocation for expatriates.
- To pick up on the practical implications of the HR business partner of Vodafone/Ziggo, some expatriates complain about fluctuations in their salary due to currency changes. The HR consultants from Boxx explain that some organisations give the expatriates the option to choose the currency in which they would like to be
paid. Expatriates can choose the option that is in their best interest. Important to note here is that this option is a form of a best practice approach. Not all companies give this opportunity to their expatriates.