



The Influence of Family on the Expatriation Process

Author: Inge Koreman

Anr: 478041

Supervisor: Niki Philip

Second reader: Marinus Verhagen

Human Resource Studies, Tilburg University

Bachelor thesis, a literature review

June 2018

Abstract

In this literature review, the influence of family on the expatriation process is discussed. Existing literature about expatriation and family showed that most frequently found topics were family adjustment, spousal adjustment, the influence of children and the differences between men and women. In this paper, these topics and the topic organizational support are discussed. Articles were gathered from the database ABI/Inform Global and were selected based on several criteria (e.g. peer reviewed, English language). Results of the studies showed that family plays an important role in the expatriation process. Family adjustment can positively or negatively influence the success or failure of the assignment abroad. Factors such as good communication and connection with other expat families can influence family adjustment. Furthermore, spousal adjustment can influence the expat's success or failure of the international assignment as well. Adventurousness and education level are examples of factors influencing spousal adjustment positively. However, the career of the spouse in the host- and home-country influences spousal adjustment negatively. Additionally, children provide unique problems and play an important role in the family's willingness to relocate. In particular, the school of the children is an important consideration. All these considerations and influences differ for men and women. Moreover, organizations often offer assistance programs which not match the desired assistance of the family. Mostly organizations offer cash allowances, while families appreciate practical assistance more. Finally, theoretical and practical implications and recommendations for future research are presented.

Keywords: expatriation, family, children, spouse, gender, organizational support.

Introduction

The increasing globalization and the increasing amount of multinationals have led to more organizations deciding to send employees to work abroad (Richardson, 2006). The pattern of expatriation is changing, which has caused not only multinationals, but all types of organizations to employ expats (Siljanen & Lämsä, 2009). The Brookfield Global Relocation Services (2013) found that 80% of the expats bring their spouse abroad with them. The International Assignment Policies and Practices Survey (2012) even found that 64% of the expats bring their whole family with them abroad. Furthermore, family is found to be the number one reason to refuse international assignments (Tharenou, 2008). Therefore, family plays an important role in the concept of expatriation.

Research makes a distinction between assigned expats and self-initiated expats. Assigned expats are employees who are sent by the firm's international operations to transfer from home to another location for their work (Lodefalk, 2016). However, more and more employees focus on a global career, which leads to employees going abroad for work on their own initiative. These employees are called the self-initiated expats (Siljanen & Lämsä, 2009). With both types of employees, family plays an important role. Another key concept in this research is family. There are many different definitions of the concept family (Weigel, 2008). In this paper, when talking about the term family, it means the spouses and/or children of an expat (Murdock, 1949).

The spouse and the children of an employee have a big influence on the willingness to accept the international assignment (Chew & Zhu, 2002). Examples of reasons to not accept the international assignment are the partner's career and the school of the children (Tharenou, 2008). For partners of the expat, it can be difficult to find a new job in the host-country. They often perceive obstacles with work visas, language skills or certifications (Tharenou, 2008). Another obstacle can be the effect of another culture on the education of the children (Tharenou, 2008).

“The spouse and the children are not our employees, therefore we do not have to take responsibility for them”. This is what an HR-professional said (Howe-Walsh & Torca, 2017). However, support from the organization to the family is really important, as the international assignments have an impact on the whole family (Howe-Walsh & Torca, 2017). For example, work-life conflicts in expat families can be reduced by organizational support for employees and their family (Hein & Cassirer, 2010).

Based on the information above, the research question that will be examined, is the following:

What is the influence of family on the expatriation process and what can organizations do to support the expat family?

The aim of this study is to provide an overview of existing research on the topic of family influence on expatriation. A lot of research has been done on the influence of spouses on expats. However, the rest of the family is often excluded (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer & Luk, 2005). Additionally, research is more focused on spousal support than on family support (Puchmüller & Fischlmayr, 2017). The scientific relevance of this research is to give a clear reproduction of the existing literature about both spouse and children influences on expats.

The practical relevance is to make organizations more aware of the big influence family has on expat's considerations. Family is an important reason for employees to refuse expatriation assignments (Tharenou, 2008). Furthermore, it is plausible that they will leave early because of a work-family conflict (Yaping & Juan, 2011). Organizations should avoid refusal or early departure, as this can have big consequences for the organization. The valued costs of expatriation failure are 2.5 billion dollar per company per year (Kotabe & Helsen, 2001). Other consequences could be decreased performance or loss of reputation (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015). Therefore, if organizations want to send their employees abroad, it is important for them to recognise the importance of family for the expat. This research will help to create a clear overview for organizations about the influence of spouses and children on expatriation.

Methodology

When searching for articles to answer the research question, various databases were used, namely ABI/Inform Global, PsycINFO and WorldCat local TiU.

The key concepts related to this literature review are expatriation, family and organizational support. Related words of the concepts are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Synonyms of different concepts*

Expatriation	Family	Organizational support
Expat	Family support	Family support
Expatriate employees	Family issues	Spousal support
Repatriation	Dual-career family	Assistance
Assigned expats	Children	Spouse assistance
Self-initiated expats		Assistance program
International assignment		

When searching for articles related to the research question, the three databases gave thousands of results. Therefore, it is decided to only use ABI/Inform Global, as this database is most related to the human resources field. Different combinations of the words shown in Table 1 were tried, in combination with “AND”, as “OR” resulted in insufficient hits. By using the words expatriate employees and family, the best results appeared.

Entering “expatriate employees” in ABI/Inform Global gave 4,596 results. However, most of these results were not about expatriation in combination to family. When adding “family” in the database, the amount of results was immediately limited. This led to 1,579 results. However, in many of these articles, expatriate employees and family were not the key topics. Therefore, the option su((“expatriate employees”) AND (“family”)) was chosen. The option “su” means that the concepts have to be key concepts in the articles. This addition produced 76 results. After adding the concept “organizational support” no results appeared. Therefore, this concept was removed. Only peer-reviewed articles are used in this literature review, as these articles are evaluated on their quality by experts before the article is rated appropriate for publication (Jay, 2018). This filter option resulted in 30 hits. Due to the fact that the aim of this study is to give a recent review of the topic, only recent articles were used. Therefore, the database was limited to the years 2000 to 2018. This search filter reduced the number of hits to 22 articles. Finally, only English articles were chosen, as the other articles

were not useful because of the language barrier. Finally, ABI/Inform Global gave 18 articles about expatriate employees and family. Figure 1 gives a clear overview of the filter process.

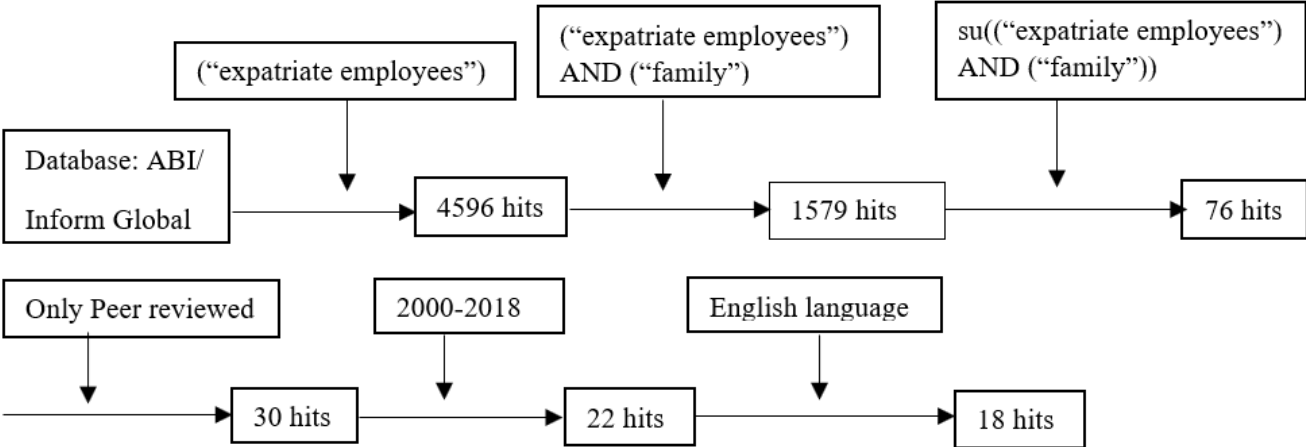


Figure 1. Filter process in ABI/Inform Global

The 18 articles were re-checked on the following criteria: relevance to the topic, age of material, peer-reviewed and the English language. One article (Ledman, 2001), did not meet the criteria and was removed from the selection. The article of Kundu, Phogat, Datta, and Gahlawat (2016) was also removed, for it only focused on workplace characteristics in terms of work-family conflict. Furthermore, the article of Shaffer, Harrison, Gilley and Luck (2001) was removed, for it only focused on organizational support for expats. The remaining 15 articles met all the criteria.

The 15 remaining articles contain a lot of information about the influence of family on expatriation. Nevertheless, limited information was given about the organizational support to the family. Adding the concept “organizational support” in the database, however, did not yield the intended results, as no items remained. Therefore, the snowballing technique was used, which consists of finding a relevant article and retrieve useful additional references from the reference list of that article (Sayers, 2007). From the reference list of McNulty (2012), the article of Cole (2011) was found.

Furthermore, in the literature review of Goede and Berg (2018) a lot of useful information for this research was found. Some of the articles they referred to were worth adding to this article list, as a lot of additional information was received by these articles. Via snowball sampling on the reference list of Goede and Berg (2018) the four articles shown in Figure 2 appeared. By using the snowball technique in the article of Puchmüller and Fischlmayr (2017), the article of Fischlmayr and Puchmüller (2016) was found.

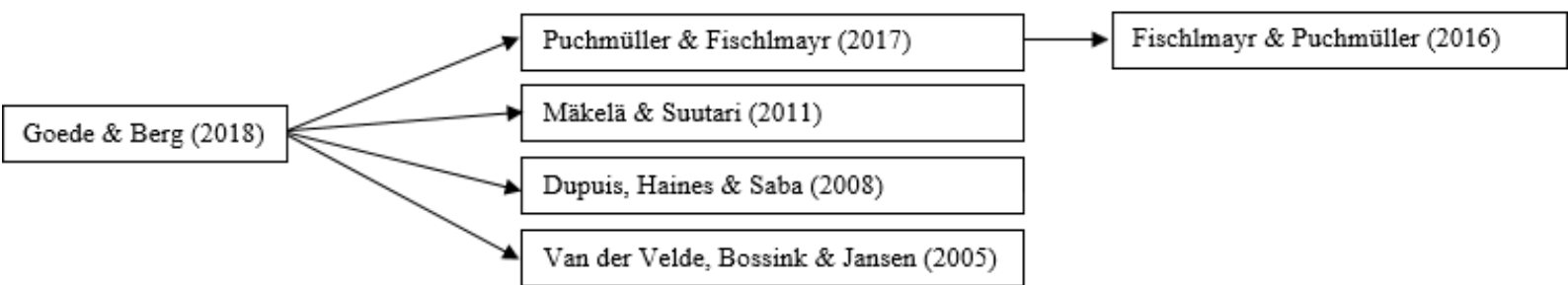


Figure 2. Snowball sampling on Goede and Berg (2018)

This resulted in 5 additional articles about organizational support and family. All the 20 remaining articles are shown in Appendix 1.

Results

In this section the selected articles are discussed to explore what the influence of family is on the expatriation process. While comparing the articles, multiple aspects of family in combination with expats came up. To clearly make a distinction between the different aspects, the research question answered in this section is divided into the following subheads: family adjustment, spousal adjustment, the influence of children, differences between men and women and organizational support.

Family adjustment

The positive influence of family adjustment

An important reason for the failure of an international assignment is the lack of adjustment of the family (Hung-Wen, 2007; Larson, 2006; Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). Adjustment in terms of expatriation can be defined as “the degree of comfort and absence of stress associated with expatriation” (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005, p. 257). In his qualitative study Hung-Wen (2007) tried to examine what factors influence expatriate failure. He interviewed 45 people from Taiwan and made a top-six of main reasons for expatriate failure. The lack of family adjustment and acceptance turned out to be the number two reason for expatriate failure. Lazarova, Westman and Shaffer (2010) also emphasize the impact of the positive influence of family adjustment. They conceptualize the influence of cognitive, affective and conative aspects on work- and family role performance on expats, and the influence of family on the behaviour of the expat as employee or as partner. They noticed that partner adjustment would lead to family adjustment, which in turn would lead to assignment success. The Family Systems Theory described in the research of Chiotis-Leskowich (2009) can explain this outcome. This theory illustrates that a family goes through a big change when experiencing an overseas assignment, which requires the family to adapt and develop to the new circumstances. If the adaptation is successful, the family members will experience cross-cultural adjustment and psychological growth (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). Not all studies about family adjustment focus on the adjustment process during the international assignment. Larson (2006) for instance, focuses more on the influence of adjustment on the family’s willingness to relocate. Namely, on the fact that expats would choose for an international assignment when the family is able to adjust. He explains that adjustment has two dimensions; general culture adjustment (e.g. adjustment to food, transport, shops, housing) and inhabitants of the host-country adjustment (e.g. different language, different cultural background). He

tested the effect of adjustment from the family on the willingness to relocate from the spouse, by collecting 200 surveys from employees in the US who had already been on an international assignment. He examined both dimensions of spouse and family adjustment having a positive effect on the willingness to relocate internationally. Based on his analysis, this was confirmed.

All the articles mentioned above agree with the fact that family adjustment has a positive influence on the expatriation process, which can be explained by the Family Systems Theory.

Factors influencing family adjustment

Various studies focused on factors influencing family adjustment (Goede & Berg, 2018; Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). The literature review of Goede and Berg (2018) made a distinction between the environmental-, organizational-, and family level influencing the expatriation process. In turn, within the family level, a distinction was made between individual characteristics, family characteristics and family attitudes and well-being influencing the family outcomes. On the individual characteristic level, motivation, self-esteem, emotional stability, open-mindedness and adventurousness were key factors that influenced family adjustment. On the family characteristic level, family's adjustment is easier when they connect with other expat families through sport clubs, social clubs or expat networks. On the family attitudes and well-being level, satisfying family relationships and good communication were factors influencing family adjustment positively (Goede & Berg, 2018). Chiotis-Leskowich (2009) confirms the positive influence of good communication between family members. Families need supportive communication, which consists of four concepts: empathy, respect, concern and confidence (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). Supportive communication is necessary, especially in events such as culture change, to overcome family's adaption failure, which will turn into expat failure. However, supportive communication is often not applied by families (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009).

Concluding, Goede and Berg (2018) found several factors influencing family adjustment, such as motivation, self-esteem and satisfying family relationships. In accordance with Goede and Berg (2018), Chiotis-Leskowich (2009) underlines good communication as an influencing factor. In the table below the factors influencing family adjustment are represented.

Table 2. *Factors influencing family adjustment*

Article	Level	Factors
Goede & Berg (2018)	Individual characteristic level	Motivation, self-esteem, emotional stability, open-mindedness and adventurousness
Goede & Berg (2018)	Family characteristic level	Connection with other expat families (e.g. sport clubs, social clubs or expat networks)
Goede & Berg (2018)	Family attitudes and well-being level	Satisfying family relationships and good communication
Chiotis-Leskowich (2009)		Supportive communication (empathy, respect, concern and confidence)

Spousal adjustment

In comparison to family adjustment, spousal adjustment does not include the children. Spouses can be divided in three different groups (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). First, the female spouse, who does not expect to get a job in the host-country. Second, the female spouse who expects to get a job in the host-country. Third, the male spouse, who generally believes to get a job in the host-country. Nothing is said about a fourth group with male spouses who do not expect to get a job in the host-country (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). The three mentioned groups will differ in their response to expatriation.

Factors influencing spousal adjustment

The positive effect of family adjustment on expatriation is consistent with the positive effect of spousal adjustment on expatriation. Various studies indicate different reasons why the spouse could adjust to the expatriation process (Konopaske, Robie & Ivancevich, 2005; Takeuchi, Lepak, Marinova & Yun, 2007; Shaffer, Harrison, Luk, & Gilley, 2000). Konopaske et al. (2005) examined the influence of spouse attitudes on the spouse's willingness to relocate and in that to adjust. Questionnaires were distributed to 167 spouses and 427 managers of an US university. Their prediction that spouse's adventurousness would have a positive influence on the spouse's willingness to relocate, was confirmed. When the spouse enjoys trying new foods, beginning new activities and exploring new places, he or she will be more likely to adjust to the international demands. Additionally, education level and language proficiency have a positive influence on spousal adjustment (Takeuchi et al., 2007).

Takeuchi et al. (2007) did a data-analysis based on 170 surveys filled in by Japanese employees. Based on their analysis, both education level and language proficiency have a significant effect on the spouse's adjustment. Shaffer et al. (2000) also emphasize the importance of language fluency. They collected data from 278 spouses. Based on their analysis, four main categories of antecedents influencing spousal adjustment were found. First, individual factors, such as language fluency. Second, interpersonal factors, such as work-family conflict. Third, organizational factors, such as spousal's organizational identity. Fourth, environmental factors, such as experiencing a new culture. Only work-family conflict was a negative predictor of expat adjustment, while all these other examples were significant positive predictors.

In conclusion, the factors in the following table were found to influence spousal adjustment.

Table 3. *Factors influencing spousal adjustment*

Article	Factors
Konopaske, Robie, and Ivancevich (2005)	Adventurousness (e.g. trying new foods, beginning new activities, exploring new places)
Takeuchi, Lepak, Marinova, and Yun (2007)	Education level and language proficiency
Shaffer, Harrison, Luk, and Gilley (2000)	Language fluency, experiencing new cultures, work-family conflict and spousal's organizational identity

Influence of the spouse's career on spousal adjustment

The career of the spouse in the host- and home-country also influences spousal adjustment (Konopaske et al., 2005; Mäkelä & Suutari, 2011; McNulty, 2012; Mutter, 2017). Konopaske et al. (2005) focus on the influence of the home-country career of the spouse. As mentioned before, they examined the influence of spouse attitudes on their willingness to relocate. They predicted that the spouse's job engagement in the home-country would negatively affect their willingness to relocate. This, however, was only supported in expatriation periods less than one year. When the spouse had a high job engagement in the home-country, he or she would be less willing to relocate internationally for less than one year. They would not want to cancel their home-job for a relatively short period of time abroad (Konopaske et al., 2005). For expatriation periods longer than one year, it was found

not significant. Spouses would have a higher tendency to relocate, as they see careers abroad on the long-term as an opportunity (Konopaske et al., 2005).

Mäkelä and Suutari (2011) and McNulty (2012) examined the influence of the host-country career of the spouse. Mäkelä and Suutari (2011) focused on coping strategies related to work-family conflicts in global career families. Spouses are often unable to find a job during the expatriation period. This gives the expat the opportunity to pursue a global career, as the spouse has time to take care of the children and the household, which gives the expat the opportunity to travel or make long working-hours. Due to this, spouses often have to accept traditional roles (e.g. take care of the children, cooking, cleaning). This outcome was based on interviews with 20 Finnish managers with a long-term global career (Mäkelä & Suutari, 2011). McNulty (2012) achieved similar results, based on questionnaires from 264 respondents from all different countries. Only 36% of the spouses are able to continue a host-country career, as spouses often experience difficulties with work permits and visas (McNulty, 2012). Moreover, Mutter (2017) emphasizes that if spouses find a job, it is often below their level of education. However, her research was based on interviews with 21 female spouses of sailors. The aim of her study was finding factors influencing spouses in the decisions to accompany their spouse internationally within the sailing sector. Several spouses found a job contributing to the job of the sailor. Yet, this was often experienced as a restriction in their independent career and below their level of education (Mutter, 2017).

In conclusion, Mäkelä and Suutari (2011) and McNulty (2012) agreed on the fact that the spouse often does not find a job in the host-country. However, they both give another explanation for this phenomenon. Konopaske et al. (2005) was the only one focussing on the home-country career and found that spouse's high job-engagement in the home-country led to less willingness to relocate internationally. Mutter (2017) examined spouses having a job in the host-country, and found that spouses often find a job below their level of education (Mutter, 2017).

Children and expatriation

Influence of children on willingness to expatriate

Chiotis-Leskowich (2009) emphasizes the situation is different whether expats have children or not, as children create a lot of unique problems. However, Richardson (2006) states that the barrier is not necessarily having children, but the barrier is how having children is interpreted. She collected data by interviewing 30 teachers from England working in universities in New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Singapore and Turkey. The

aim of her study was finding the relationship between the family situation and the willingness to expatriate. Numerous respondents experienced children as a barrier in their decision to accept an international assignment. However, the respondents that saw children as a barrier did not have children. Therefore, interpretations of what having children is like, has a greater impact than actually having children (Richardson, 2006). More research is done about the influence of children, however, the results differed. For example, Dupuis, Haines and Saba (2008) found expats refusing expatriation if they had children. They examined the effect of family factors on the employees' willingness to go on expatriation, based on 227 questionnaires filled in by Canadian respondents. They predicted that having children negatively influences employees' willingness to go on expatriation. Having children would lead to work-family conflict, as raising children takes a lot of effort, time and energy, which otherwise would have been invested in work. Furthermore, the requirements of a parent do not match the requirements of an expat, which in turn will lead to work-family conflict. Therefore, the prediction was confirmed. However, Van der Velde, Bossink and Jansen (2005), who researched employees working in a Dutch company on departments that send expats abroad, found a different result, based on 395 questionnaires. The purpose of their study was finding factors influencing employees' willingness to expatriate. In one of their hypotheses, they expected that a parent role would have a negative influence on the employees' willingness to expatriate, as parents will see more negative effects of international assignments when children are involved. However, the hypothesis gave no significant result.

In conclusion, Chiotis-Leskowich (2009) and Dupuis et al. (2008) both found children having a negative impact on employee's willingness to expatriate. However, Richardson (2006) and Van der Velde et al. (2005) found other results. Richardson (2006) found that the barrier is not having children, but how having children is interpreted. Van der Velde et al. (2005) did not find a significant relationship between having children and employees willingness to expatriate.

Positive effect of expatriation on children

It is found to be positive for children to join the expatriation (Richardson, 2006; Haslberger & Brewster, 2008; Mutter, 2017). Based on Richardson's interviews with 30 British teachers, she found expatriation influencing the development of the child positively, in terms of education, language and social networks. It can be an enrichment for their cultural and life experience. The children will create global social networks, experience global education and learn different languages, which all will positively influence their development. Haslberger and Brewster (2008) also examined family elements influencing the international

assignment in their literature review. Children can even help their parents with the adjustment process. Every individual family member will create experiences in the host-country that will influence the whole family. Especially older children play an important role, as learning a new culture and a new language usually is easier for them. Therefore, they can help their parents by learning the new culture and language, which will help them in the adjustment process. Mutter (2017) agrees with the positive influence of expatriation on children. Her research was focused on interviews with sailors. The children of sailors often have to deal with relocations, therefore they get in contact with numerous cultures in their life. Experiencing all these cultures will have a positive effect on their acceptance towards new cultures. Nonetheless, Mutter (2017) also found a negative influence of these international relocations. When the children return back to their home-country, it can be more difficult for them to adjust to their domestic peers. This, in turn, can influence the relocation decisions of the expats and their spouses (Mutter, 2017).

In general, the literature discussed above agreed with the fact that expatriation would have a positive effect on children. Richardson (2006) found that expatriation is positive for the development of the children. Haslberger and Brewster (2008) found that the children can help their parents in the adjustment process. Mutter (2017) found that it is positive for their acceptance towards new cultures. Only Mutter (2017) also found a negative effect for children, which was the difficult adjustment process when they returned back home.

Influence of the school of the children

The school of the children was found to have an important influence on the consideration of accepting an international assignment (Schoepp & Forstenlechner, 2010; Mutter, 2017; Haslberger & Brewster 2008; Tharenou, 2008). Haslberger and Brewster (2008) found that children experience a lot of stressors when joining a new school in the host-country. There is a big difference between local schools and international schools. Children often are send to schools that have a different structure than the schools in their home-country. For example, the local school's reward system and design of the curriculum can be different (Haslberger & Brewster, 2008).

Mutter's research (2017), based on 21 interviews with sailor spouses, also looked at the school of the children influencing expatriation. Especially couples with high-school aged children (in comparison to pre-school aged children) are unlikely to choose for expatriation, as high-school aged children will more consciously experience the changes. However, the reason for a decision differs per family. Some couples care about offering their children's global education, while others care about a stable schooling that is not interrupted.

Nevertheless, 14 out of 21 interviewees indicated that in both situations the school of the children has a big influence on the decision whether to expatriate or not (Mutter, 2017).

Furthermore, Schoepp and Forstenlechner (2010) found that women care more about the school offered for children than men. This is confirmed in the data-analysis of Tharenou (2008), based on 839 respondents. It was predicted that family barriers would have an important influence on the willingness to expatriate. One of the most important family barriers for women was having high-school aged children. Women are afraid to disturb the children's schooling. This is more a barrier for women than for men, as women are still seen as the children's first caregivers (Tharenou, 2008). More differences between men and women exist. These will be discussed in the next section.

Schoepp and Forstenlechner (2010) found the opposite. They did a data-analysis study based on 364 surveys filled in by self-initiated expats in the UAE. Self-initiated expats are employees who went abroad on their own initiative (Siljanen & Lämsä, 2009). The study focused on the importance of family in the expatriation process of a self-initiated expat. The school of the children was found to be one of the factors influencing the expatriation process positively. 43.1% of the expats saw the school of the children as a reason to stay in the host-country. However, the research was based on expat families staying in the UAE. In this country a lot of private and good quality schools are offered.

In summary, three out of four research discussed above found the school of the children having a negative influence on the expatriation process. Only Schoepp and Forstenlechner (2010) found the opposite. They found that the school of the children was a motivation to stay in the host-country. However, this could be due to the fact that this study is done in the UAE, where private schools and good quality schools are offered.

Differences between men and women

Differences between men and women exist in how they take family into consideration before expatriation (Tharenou, 2008; Schütter & Boerner, 2013; Takeuchi et al., 2007; Schoepp & Forstenlechner, 2010). Tharenou (2008) emphasizes gender influencing an expats' willingness to accept international assignments. She interviewed 401 men and 230 women with a partner and/or children, and 208 singles. She found that male expats with a partner and/or children were more willing to accept an international assignment than women who had a partner and/or children. Men seem to prioritize work over family. She also tested the singles, and found that singles are always more willing to accept an international assignment than men and women with partner and/or children (Tharenou, 2008).

Schoepp and Forstenlechner (2010) examined differences between men and women among the self-initiated expats in the UAE. They found a significant difference between men and women in terms of caring about family adjustment. Women care more about family adjustment than men do. Both men and women will see family as an incentive to stay in the UAE, however, for women family adjustment will be a greater incentive to continue the expatriation than for men. Furthermore, as mentioned before, they hypothesized that women care more about the school offered for children than men. This hypothesis was significantly supported as well (Schoepp & Forstenlechner, 2010).

Various studies blame this finding on the traditional tasks of women and men. Tharenou (2008) speaks about the women's role as a caregiver to the household, which leads to women being less willing to expatriate than men. This phenomenon can be explained by the role theory (Markham & Pleck, 1986). This theory implies that acceptance of relocation for work is different for men than for women. When a man with a family relocates for his work, this will generally be accepted as he is seen as the main provider of income and he is forced to earn money. By contrast, when a woman with a family relocates for work, this often is not accepted. They are more seen as caretakers. It will disturb the traditional roles that women and men have in a family, and a role conflict will be the consequence (Tharenou, 2008).

Similarly, Schütter and Boerner (2013) emphasize the traditional roles of women. Family roles are more filled in by women, and women will be more worried about the question whether they can overcome work-family conflict than men. Takeuchi et al. (2007) found the same results based on their sample of 170 Japanese employees. As mentioned previously, they examined the influence of being a parent and accepting a new culture on expatriation. They found that it is more accepted that women take the role of caring about the children's needs and demands. However, they explain this finding by saying that the research is done in Japan, where the culture is still focused on strong gender roles. Yet, as showed, this phenomenon does not only occur in Japan, but in other cultures as well.

Summarizing, research shows that there are differences between men and women in terms of family considerations when choosing expatriation. Schoepp and Forstenlechner (2010) found that women care more about the school offered for children and about family adjustment than men. Tharenou (2008) found that men with a partner and/or children are more willing to go on expatriation than women with a partner and/or children. Schütter and Boerner (2013), Tharenou (2008) and Takeuchi et al. (2007) explain this difference by saying that

women are traditionally more seen as caregivers and men as the main providers of income. Tharenou (2008) explains this by the role theory.

Organizational support

As seen in the above results, spouses and children play an important role in the expatriation process. However, the question appears what organizations can do to support the expat family.

Puchmüller and Fischlmayer (2017) focused on female expats with children. The purpose of their study was investigating the different sources of support. Data were collected by 51 interviews with female expats. They make a distinction between three different sources of support: emotional, informational and instrumental support. Emotional support consists of showing empathy, informational support consists of giving advice and information, instrumental support consists of providing funds or services. Based on their interviews, organizational support consists of emotional and instrumental support. Emotional support often is received by direct colleagues and instrumental support by flexible work arrangements. These arrangement include, for example, permitting the opportunity to bring a sick child to the office for a few hours or offering the expat's family the opportunity to extend the international assignment with a family holiday (Puchmüller and Fischlmayer, 2017).

Studies indicate different examples of support organizations can offer. Almost all of them are focusing on informational or instrumental support. For example, Cole (2011) examined the relationship between expatriate failure and assistance programs. Assistance programs were found to not influence spousal adjustment, as the provided programs often were not suitable for the spouse. The spouses emphasized that they now mostly receive cash allowances (e.g. fee for childcare, sponsoring social club memberships), while they rather receive practical assistance (e.g. support in finding a job, training in social networking and languages). Spouses recommended the organization to consult experienced expatriate spouses for providing support. Furthermore, the spouses mentioned they would appreciate support for networking about employment opportunities in the host-country and for building a social network in spousal clubs or groups.

Moreover, McNulty (2012) found various forms of assistance that organizations often offer to the spouses, and forms that spouses would like to receive. As mentioned before, her data-collection was based on 264 questionnaires. Organizations often offer assistance such as immigration paperwork, interim accommodation and furniture storage. However, spouses would rather like to receive information about spousal clubs and associations, and e-mail

addresses from other spouses. Furthermore, career assistance, assistance in obtaining a work permission and assistance in finding professional contacts were found to be appreciated as well. In accordance with Cole (2011), McNulty (2012) found that cash allowances are not appreciated as much as practical assistance.

Human Resource (HR) department

McNulty (2012) and Larson (2006) both emphasize the importance of the HR department in terms of organizational support. In her questionnaires, filled in by 264 spouses, McNulty (2012) also included open-ended questions. One of the open-ended questions was ‘describe your opinion about the HR department’. The most common answers were ‘clueless’, ‘stubborn’, ‘mean’ and ‘out of touch’. This shows that a lot of spouses were disappointed in the support of the HR department, as they felt ignored and felt like it was expected that spouses would pick up the relocation responsibilities. They thought the HR department acted in a disrespectful and nonprofessional way towards spouses (McNulty, 2012).

Larson (2006) conducted a data-analysis research based on 200 questionnaires filled in by employees who had already been on an international assignment. The spouse’s acceptance of the international assignment has a big influence on the expat’s adjustment or failure of the international assignment. Therefore, the HR department needs expatriate managers, in order to make the organizational support suitable for the expat and the family, and that failure or rejection can be avoided. Furthermore, mostly support such as logistical support or tax equalizations is offered, while offering cross-cultural training is more appreciated, as it reduces the culture shock and it supports the adjustment process.

In summary, Puchmüller and Fischlmayer (2017) made a distinction between emotional, informational and instrumental support. Organizations often offer family support that is not in line with the desired support. The offered support and desired support mentioned in the above articles can be found in the following table.

Table 4. *Suggestions of support*

Article	Support offered	Desired support
Cole (2011)	Cash allowances	Support for networking, hiring experienced expatriate spouses, building social network
McNulty (2012)	Immigration paperwork, interim accommodation and furniture storage	Support in spousal clubs and associations, e-mail addresses of other spouses, assistance in career, obtaining work permission, and finding professional contacts
Larson (2006)	Logistical support for the move and tax equalizations	Cross-cultural training

Conclusion and discussion

The changing economy and increase of globalization has resulted in more organizations sending employees abroad (Richardson, 2006). As more expats decide to bring their family over on an international assignment (“International Assignment Policies and Practices Survey 2012”, 2012), it is important to explore family factors influencing expatriation. Even though a lot of research is done about the influence of spouses on expats, little is known about the influence of the whole family (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). This study provides an overview of existing literature on family factors influencing expatriation.

First, family adjustment influencing expatriation was discussed. Family adjustment can influence expatriate failure (Hung-Wen, 2007), assignment success (Lazarova et al., 2010) and family’s willingness to relocate (Larson, 2006). The outcome is explained by the Family Systems Theory, which states that the new circumstances forces families to adapt and develop, which leads to cross-cultural adjustment and psychological growth (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). Thus, studies were unanimous about family adjustment influencing expatriation positively.

Furthermore, as family adjustment influences expatriation, factors influencing family adjustment were discussed. Goede and Berg (2018) found that motivation, self-esteem, emotional stability, open-mindedness, adventurousness (individual level), expats having connections with other expat families (family level), satisfying family relationships and good communication (family attitudes and well-being level) influenced family adjustment positively. Chiotis-Leskowich (2009) emphasized supportive communication between family members (including empathy, respect, concern and confidence) is needed in times of culture change to overcome family adaption failure (Chiotis-Leskowich, 2009). Communication is the overlapping factor mentioned in both studies. The research of Goede and Berg is much more extensive than Chiotis-Leskowich’s research, which could be an explanation for the fact that Goede and Berg found more factors than Chiotis-Leskowich. Overall, Chiotis-Leskowich (2009) found only the factor communication influencing family adjustment, while Goede and Berg (2018) found numerous factors influencing family adjustment. This could be due to size differences of the research.

In addition to factors influencing family adjustment, also factors influencing only spousal adjustment were highlighted. The positive influence of spousal adjustment on expatriation was already covered by the positive influence of family adjustment on expatriation. Research found that adventurousness (Konopaske et al., 2005), education level,

language proficiency (Takeuchi et al., 2007), experiencing new cultures, work-family conflict and spousal's organizational identity (Shaffer et al., 2000) were all factors having an influence on the adjustment of the spouse. All articles used a big sample in their data-analysis (resp. N=594 ; N=170 ; N=278). However, the sample of Takeuchi et al. (2007) included only Japanese couples and Konopaske et al. (2005) only included US employees. Therefore, the resulting factors from these studies could be culture-dependent. Nevertheless, Takeuchi et al. (2007) and Shaffer et al. (2000) both mentioned language proficiency as an influencing factor. Overall, factors influencing spousal adjustment are adventurousness, educational level, language proficiency, experiencing new cultures, work-family conflict and spousal's organizational identity.

In addition, several articles mentioned the important influence of the spouse's career during expatriation. Mäkelä and Suutari (2011) and McNulty (2012) both found that spouses often do not find a job in the host-country. According to Mäkelä and Suutari (2011) the expat can start a global career when the spouse does not have a job, as the spouse can take the role as caregiver. However, their sample was only focused on 20 Finnish expatriates, which makes the sample not diverse enough to draw generalized conclusions. McNulty (2012), however, explained the results by difficulties with work permits and visas. By using a sample of 264 spouses, all from different countries, a more generalized conclusion can be drawn from this result. Moreover, Mutter (2017) states that when the spouse finds a job in the host-country, it is often below their level of education. However, Mutter's sample should be taken into consideration, for it only consisted of 21 spouses of professional sailors, which is a very specific branch. The only article focusing on the home-country career of the spouse was the article of Konopaske et al. (2005), who found evidence that job engagement of the spouse in the home-country had a negative influence on their willingness to relocate. Thus, the important influence of spouse's career during expatriation was found. Home-country and host-country careers have an influence on spousal adjustment or willingness to relocate. Engagement in the home-country job leads to less willingness to relocate. Furthermore, host-country jobs are often not found because of difficulties in work permits and visas.

Furthermore, the specific impact of children on expatriate decisions was discussed. First it was found that interpretations of what having children is like, has a greater impact than actually having children (Richardson, 2006). However, this was found in a sample of 30 British teachers, which makes the sample not diverse enough to draw generalized conclusions for all professions. Dupuis et al. (2008) found that having children has a negative impact on family's willingness to relocate (Dupuis et al., 2008). This, however, was not supported by

research of Van der Velde et al. (2005). This difference might be explained by sample characteristics. The sample of Dupuis et al. (2008) only existed of Canadian respondents, while the sample of Van der Velde et al. (2005) only consisted of Dutch respondents. This can be explained by the research of Balestra, Boarini and Tosetto (2017) that found that North-American countries (including Canada) care more about the work-life balance than European countries (including the Netherlands). Therefore, this could be a cultural explanation for the fact that Dupuis et al. (2008) found a negative significant impact of children on family's willingness to relocate, while Van der Velde et al. (2005) did not find this significant impact. Overall, the influence that children have on the expatriation process seems to be culture-driven. In North-American countries it will be more of a stimulant to refuse the international assignment than in European countries.

Additionally, research not only examined children's influences on expatriation, but research also examined the effect of expatriation on children. International relocation as a child, can be positive for the development, education, language, social networks (Richardson, 2006) and acceptance of new cultures (Mutter, 2017) of the child. The child may even help their parents in the adjustment process, since it is easier for them to pick up a new culture or language (Haslberger & Brewster, 2008). One research found a negative impact on children. Mutter (2017) emphasized it could be negative for the adjustment to their home-country friends, when children turn back to their home-country. However again, this research only focused on professional sailors, which might lead to particular results. Thus, international relocation as a child has several positive effects in terms of development, acceptance and helping behavior, nonetheless it might negatively affect the adjustment to domestic peers in the home-country.

Moreover, various literature discussed the school of the children in terms of expatriation. Haslberger and Brewster (2008) emphasized the difference between local- and international schools, which sometimes have a different structure than the schools in the home-country. This might be the reason why several studies found a negative impact of the children's school on the family's willingness to relocate (Mutter, 2017; Haslberger & Brewster 2008; Tharenou, 2008). Interestingly though, Schoepp and Forstenlechner (2010) found the opposite. This unique study was done in the UAE. The contradicting result might be explained by the fact that the UAE offers a lot of high-quality private schools, which is more of a stimulant for expat families with children to stay in the host-country. Furthermore, their study only focused on self-initiated expats, who will be more willing to send their children to new schools, as the expatriation was their own choice (Schoepp & Forstenlechner, 2010).

Overall, the school of the children has an important negative effect on the family's willingness to relocate, unless the quality of schools is higher than in their home-country.

In addition, all these influences on expatriation mentioned above, could differ for men and women. Significant differences were found between men and women in terms of accepting an international assignment (Tharenou, 2008; Schoepp & Forstenlechner, 2010). In the decision making process of expatriation, women take family into higher consideration and care more about family adjustment than men. The decision for taking care of the children is mostly made by women because of their traditional role as caregiver. This is explained by the role theory, which implies that disturbing traditional roles of men and women will lead to role conflicts (Markham & Pleck, 1986). Thus, differences between men and women exist in terms of family considerations in their decision to expatriate. Traditional roles are the cause for this unanimous finding explained by the role theory.

Finally, organizational support in terms of expatriation was discussed. A distinction was made between three different sources of support: emotional, information and instrumental support (Puchmüller and Fischlmayr, 2017). Almost all studies focus on informational and instrumental support. The offered support often does not match the appreciated support. Organizations often offer cash allowance, while practical assistance is more appreciated (Cole, 2011; McNulty, 2012). Furthermore, Cole (2011) did not find support for assistance programs having an effect on spousal adjustment, due a mismatch of programs and spouses. Besides the fact that organizational support has to be offered, HR departments should also focus more on family support. A lot of spouses are disappointed in the support the HR department offers (McNulty, 2012). The HR-department should use specific expatriate managers to ensure a fit between support and the expat family (Larson, 2006). Thus, studies agree unanimous that organizational support to families could be approved. Organizations often offer informational and instrumental support to families. However, this support often does not match the appreciated support. Assistance programs should consist more of practical assistance than cash allowance.

In conclusion, the research question 'what is the influence of family on the expatriation process and what can organizations do to support the expat family?' can be answered. Family plays an important role in the expatriation process. The adjustment process of the family and the spouse can influence the success or failure of the international assignment. Children bring unique problems into the expatriation process, and play an important role in the expat's willingness to go on expatriation. All these influences and consideration factors differ for men and women. Organizations must respond to these

important influences of family on expatriation. They mostly offer assistance programs in order to support the expat's family. However, the desired and the offered assistance programs usually not match. Practical assistance is more appreciated by the expat families than cash allowance.

Limitations

Despite the interesting results of this literature review, a few limitations should be acknowledged. First, only the most widely spoken topics have been discussed. These include family adjustment, spousal adjustment, influence of children, differences between men and women and organizational support. However, some articles, for example, also talked about family acceptance, cultural differences and relationships (e.g. Haslberger and Brewster, 2008; Westman & Etzion, 1995; Hung-Wen, 2007). However, these topics are not part of the scope of this research, while they could also have an influence on the expatriation process. Due to this, no general conclusions can be drawn about all family factors influencing expatriation. It is recommended for future research to include all topics influencing expatriation.

Additionally, some selected articles make no distinction between self-initiated and assigned expats. These two types of expats can differ a lot (Andresen, Bergdolt, Margenfeld & Dickmann, 2014). For example, self-initiated expats spent more time on average in the host-country than assigned expats. Furthermore, self-initiated expats have different expectations in terms of objective career barriers than assigned expats. This can make the family situation really different for both groups (Andresen et al., 2014). Therefore, the lack of a clear distinction in some articles might have an influence on this literature review. Further research should try to avoid mixing up these concepts.

Furthermore, only a limited number of articles focused on both spouse and children. Most articles only focused on the influence of the spouse on expatriation (e.g. Shaffer et al., 2000; McNulty, 2012; Takeuchi et al., 2007; Konopaske, 2005). Therefore, this research shows a gap in the existing literature about expatriation on the influence of the whole family on the expatriation process. Therefore, further research is recommended to focus more on the influence of the whole family on expatriation (including the children).

Moreover, only 20 articles have been included in this paper. These limited amount of articles appeared when adding the filters in the databases. The filters which influenced the decrease the most were 'su(("expatriate employees") AND ("family"))' and 'peer-reviewed',

however, the quality of the articles increased. Future research could use different filters, so that a broader range of literature can be used.

Finally, only articles from the year 2000 onwards were used, due to the fact that the aim was to give a recent review of the topic. Eight articles which included the key words 'expatriate employees' and 'family', which were peer-reviewed and which were written in the English language, were removed, for the reason that they were written before the year 2000. This might cause an information gap about family influencing expatriation before 2000. Further research is recommended to include 'older' research as well.

Theoretical and practical implications

Theoretical and practical implications can be made, as this research contributes to the literature field as well as the organizational field.

This research contributes theoretically to existing literature about the topic of family influence on expatriation, as it delivers an overview of the existing literature from 2000 onwards about this topic. Results, comparisons and theories were given about the concepts family adjustment, spousal adjustment, influence of children, differences between men and women and organizational support in terms of expatriation. A lot of research has already been done on the influence of spouses on expats, while the children are not included. This research gives a clear reproduction of the influence of the whole family on expats, which makes it theoretically relevant. Furthermore, this literature review shows the gap that exists in the literature on the influence of the whole family (spouses and children) on the expatriation process. It is theoretically relevant that scholars are encouraged to fill this gap.

Moreover, in practical terms, organizations can be made more aware of the big influence family has on expatriation considerations. Family influences expatriation in terms of refusal and early departure of the international assignment (Tharenou, 2008; Yaping & Juan, 2011). This failure can be dramatic for organizations. The valued costs of expatriation failure are 2.5 billion dollar per company per year (Kotabe & Helsen, 2001). It can also cause a loss of company reputation and decreased performance (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015). Therefore, expatriation failure should be avoided and organizations must respond to the family to avoid refusal and expatriation failure by offering practical assistance programs rather than cash allowances. The fit between the assistance program and the person is of high importance. For example, organizations could create individual assistance programs. This is useful information for organizations when creating organizational support programs.

Two HR-professionals have been interviewed to link the theory with practice (see Appendix 2). Both interviewees confirmed that the adjustment of the spouse and the children has an important influence on the expat's willingness to accept an international assignment. According to the HR-professional of Hitachi, this is culture-driven, while according the HR-professional of Elho, this is family-driven. Furthermore, both interviewees confirmed that the school of the children is particularly important. However, nowadays almost every country offers international schools, which makes it easier for expat families to find a school for their children. Additionally, both interviewees experienced differences between men and women. Women refuse an international assignment more often, however, this is the family's own choice. Mainly, when one of the partners choses a global career, the other gives up theirs to take care of the children. Finally, both interviewees were asked about the spousal and family support offered. The HR-professional of Hitachi gave a lot of examples from support Hitachi offers to the spouses and the children of the expats. However, the HR-professional of Elho answered that the only support offered to spouses and children is financial support. However, literature found that practical assistance is more appreciated than cash allowances.

Thus, organizations should be more aware of the influence family has on the expatriation process and should inform themselves better about the appreciated support of the family. They should create individual assistance programs and invest more in support such as practical assistance, support for networking and cross-cultural training instead of in cash allowances.

Reference list

- Andresen, M., Bergdolt, F., Margenfeld, J., & Dickmann, M. (2014). Addressing International Mobility Confusion - Developing Definitions and Differentiations for Self-initiated and Assigned Expatriates as well as Migrants. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(16), 2295-2318. doi:10.1080/09585192.2013.877058
- Andresen, M., Margenfeld, J. (2015). International relocation mobility readiness and its antecedents. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 30(3), 234-249. doi:10.1108/JMP-11-2012-0362
- Balestra, C., Boarini, R., Toso, E. (2017). What Matters Most to People? Evidence from the OECD Better Life Index Users' Responses. *Social Indicators Research*, 136(3), 907-930. doi:10.1007/s11205-016-1538-4
- Bhaskar-Shrinivas, P., Harrison, D. A., Shaffer, M. A., & Luk, D. M. (2005). Input-based and time-based models of international adjustment: Meta-analytic evidence and theoretical extensions. *Academy of management Journal*, 48(2), 257-281. doi:10.5465/amj.2005.16928400
- Brookfield Global Relocation Services. (2013). *Global relocation trends 2013 survey report*. Woodridge, IL. Retrieved from <https://www.relocatemagazine.com>
- Chew, I. K., & Zhu, W. (2002). Factors influencing Singapore managers' career aspiration in international assignments. *Career Development International*, 7(2), 96-108. doi:10.1108/13620430210421623
- Chiotis-Leskowich, I. (2009). The family as a developmental issue in expatriate assignments. *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*, 23(6), 4-7. doi:10.1108/14777280910994831
- Cole, N.D. (2011). Managing global talent: Solving the spousal adjustment problem. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(7), 1504-30. doi:10.1080/09585192.2011.561963
- Dupuis M.J., Haines V.Y., Saba T. (2008). Gender, family ties, and international mobility: cultural distance matters. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19(2), 274-295. doi:10.1080/09585190701799846
- International Assignment Policies and Practices Survey 2012, KPMG (2012). Retrieved from https://www.hrtoday.ch/sites/hrtoday.ch/files/article/files/KPMG-Studie_0.pdf

- Fischlmayr, I. C., & Puchmüller, K. M. (2016). Married, mom and manager—how can this be combined with an international career?. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(7), 744-765. doi:10.1080/09585192.2015.1111250
- Goede, J., & Berg, N. (2018). The family in the center of international assignments: a systematic review and future research agenda. *Management Review Quarterly*, 68 (1), 1-26. doi:10.1007/s11301-017-0134-2
- Haslberger, A., & Brewster, C. (2008). The expatriate family: An international perspective. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(3), 324-346. doi:10.1108/02683940810861400
- Hein, C. & Cassirer, N. (2010). *Workplace Solutions for Childcare, International Labor Offices*. Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from http://www.bollettinoadapt.it/old/files/document/5714ILO_2010.pdf
- Howe-Walsh, L., & Torcka, N. (2017). Repatriation and (perceived) organisational support (POS) The role of and interaction between repatriation supporters. *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research*, 5(1), 60-77. doi:10.1108/JGM-09-2016-0040
- Hung-Wen, L. (2007). Factors that influence expatriate failure: An interview study. *International Journal of Management*, 24(3), 403. Retrieved from: <https://search.proquest.com/docview/233230269?accountid=14338>
- Jay, J. (2018). *Evaluating Information Sources: What is a Peer-reviewed article?* Retrieved from: <http://guides.lib.jjay.cuny.edu/evaluatingresources>
- Konopaske, R., Robie, C., & Ivancevich, J. M. (2005). A preliminary model of spouse influence on managerial global assignment willingness. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16(3), 405-426. doi:10.1080/0958519042000339570
- Kotabe, M. & Helsen, K. (2001), *Global Marketing Management*. (2nd ed). New York, NY: Wiley Global Education
- Kundu, S. C., Phogat, R. S., Datta, S. K., & Gahlawat, N. (2016). Impact of workplace characteristics on work-family conflict of dual-career couples. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 24(5), 883-907. doi:10.1108/IJOA-01-2015-0840

- Larson, D. A. (2006). Here we go again: How a family's cross-cultural and repatriation adjustment relates to the employee's receptivity to future international assignments. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 71(2), 46. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/231243800?accountid=14338>
- Lazarova, M., Westman, M., & Shaffer, M. A. (2010). Elucidating the positive side of the work-family interface on international assignments: A model of expatriate work and family performance. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(1), 93-117. doi:10.5465/amr.35.1.zok93
- Ledman, R. E. (2001). The family impact of expatriate assignments: an experiential exercise. *Journal of Management Education*, 25(3), 341-351. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/195710835?accountid=14338>
- Lodefalk, M. (2016). Temporary expats for exports: micro-level evidence. *Review of World Economics*, 152(4), 733-772. doi:10.1007/s10290-016-0254-0
- Mäkelä L., Suutari V. (2011). Coping with work-family conflicts in the global career context. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 53(3), 365–375. doi:10.1002/tie.20414
- Markham, W. T., & Pleck, J. H. (1986). Sex and willingness to move for occupational advancement. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 27(1), 121–143. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.1986.tb00253.x
- McNulty, Y. (2012). 'Being dumped in to sink or swim': an empirical study of organizational support for the trailing spouse. *Human Resource Development International*, 15(4), 417-434. doi:10.1080/13678868.2012.721985
- Murdock, G. P. (1949). *Social structure*. Oxford, England: Macmillan. Retrieved from <http://psycnet.apa.org/record/1949-04761-000>
- Mutter, J. (2017). The global mobility decisions of professional sailors' spouses. *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research*, 5(2), 203-219. doi:10.1108/JGM-08-2016-0035
- Puchmüller, K., & Fischlmayr, I. (2017). Support for female international business travellers in dual-career families. *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research*, 5(1), 22-42. doi:10.1108/JGM-05-2016-0023
- Richardson, J. (2006). Self-directed expatriation: family matters. *Personnel Review*, 35(4), 469-486. doi:10.1108/00483480610670616

- Sayers, A. (2008). Tips and tricks in performing a systematic review. *BR J Gen Pract*, 58(547), 136-136. Retrieved from <http://bjgp.org/content/57/542/759.1/tab-pdf>
- Schoepp, K., & Forstenlechner, I. (2010). The role of family considerations in an expatriate majority environment. *Team Performance Management: An International Journal*, 16(5/6), 309-323. doi:10.1108/13527591011071368
- Schütter, H., & Boerner, S. (2013). Illuminating the work-family interface on international assignments: An exploratory approach. *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research*, 1(1), 46-71. doi:10.1108/JGM-09-2012-0012
- Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., Gilley, K. M., & Luk, D. M. (2001). Struggling for balance amid turbulence on international assignments: Work–family conflict, support and commitment. *Journal of Management*, 27(1), 99-121. doi:10.1016/S0149-2063(00)00088-X
- Shaffer, M., Harrison, D., Luk, D. M., & Gilley, M. (2000). Spouse adjustment to international assignments: Direct determinants and the moderating effects of coping strategies. *Management Research Review*, 23(2-4), 29. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/223546954?accountid=14338>
- Siljanen, T., & Lämsä, A. M. (2009). The changing nature of expatriation: Exploring cross-cultural adaptation through narrativity. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20(7), 1468-1486. doi:10.1080/09585190902983298
- Takeuchi, R., Lepak, D. P., Marinova, S. V., & Yun, S. (2007). Nonlinear influences of stressors on general adjustment: the case of Japanese expatriates and their spouses. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 38(6), 928-943. doi:10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8400298
- Tharenou, P. (2008). Disruptive decisions to leave home: Gender and family differences in expatriation choices. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 105(2), 183-200. doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2007.08.004
- Van der Velde, M.E.G., Bossink, C.J.H., Jansen, P.G.W. (2005). Gender differences in the determinants of the willingness to accept an international assignment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 66(1), 81–103. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2003.12.002
- Weigel, D.J., (2008). The Concept of Family. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29(11), 1426-1447. doi:10.1177/0192513X08318488

- Westman, M., & Etzion, D. (1995). Crossover of stress, strain and resources from one spouse to another. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 16(2), 169-181.
doi:10.1002/job.4030160207
- Yaping, X., & Juan, W. (2011). Research on Organizational Support Strategy to International Expatriates' Work-Family Balance. *Information Management, Innovation Management and Industrial Engineering* , 2, 560-563. doi:10.1109/ICIII.2011.279

Appendix 1

Author(s) and year	Key concepts	Journal	Study kind	Main findings	Sample characteristics
Chiotis-Leskowich, I. (2009)	Expatriate assignments, family, expatriate failure, family system theory, supportive communication	Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal	Unknown	Key influences of expatriate failure (e.g. spouse dissatisfaction, family concerns) were found and explained by the family system theory. Furthermore, supportive communication plays a key role in overcoming expatriate failure.	–
Cole, N. (2011)	Expatriate spouses, male spouses, spousal assistance programs	International Journal of Human Resource Management	Qualitative and quantitative study	She found no significant difference between spouses who received assistance and spouses who did not. Only 18% of the spouses received career assistance. The greatest need for support is information networks to assist in the spouse's job search.	Most originally from UK, USA and Australia (N=238)
Dupuis, M.J., Haines, V.Y., Saba, T. (2008)	International expatriation, gender, family, cultural distance, social role theory	The International Journal of Human Resource Management	Data-analysis	They found that factors influencing expat's willingness to accept an international assignment were: spouse willingness to relocate, spouse and couple mobility, relative income and presence of children. Gender differences were found across low and high cultural distance countries.	148 Canadian men, 79 Canadian women (N= 227)
Goede, J., Berg, N. (2018)	Family, expatriation, international assignments, literature review, multi-level framework	Management Review Quarterly	Literature review	The literature about family interface of traditional assigned expats lacks a consistent theoretical argumentation. Family's willingness to relocate, family adjustment and work-family balance are discussed.	–
Haslberger, A., Brewster, C. (2008)	Expatriates, family, cross-cultural studies, sociology of work	Journal of Managerial Psychology	Literature review	They found that family adaption is a complex process. Family adaption can improve the awareness of the organizations as well as of the family.	–

Hung-Wen, L. (2007)	Expatriate failure, premature return, spouse, family, expatriate assignments, organizations	International Journal of Management	Qualitative study	He found that the inability for the family to adjust was the main reason for expatriate failure. If another measure of expatriate failure is used, instead of premature return, the reasons will change.	Respondent collection through snowballing (N=45)
Konopaske, R., Robie, C., Ivancevich, J. M. (2005)	Short-term global assignments, international spouse relocation, expatriate.	The International Journal of Human Resource Management	Data-analysis	They found that individual factors (spouse job involvement, spouse adventurousness), family factors (living near elderly relatives, children at home) and organizational factors (career support) all influenced spouse's willingness to relocate.	Employees from US: 427 global managers, 167 spouses (N=594)
Larson, D. A. (2006)	Expatriation, family's cross-cultural adjustment, family's repatriation adjustment, employee's receptivity	SAM Advanced Management Journal	Data-analysis	The adjustment of the spouse and the children of the expats will be positively related to the expat's willingness to accept an international assignment.	Originally from the US (N=200)
Lazarova, M., Westman, M., Shaffer, M. A. (2010)	Work-family interface, international assignment, expatriate work, family performance	Academy of Management Review	Unknown	They created a model including cognitive, affective, and conative influences on expatriate work role and family role performance. Relationships were creating among the forms of adjustment.	–
Mäkelä, L., Suutari, V. (2011)	Work-family conflicts, global career, coping strategies	Thunderbird International Business Review	Qualitative study	Employees with a global career experience work-family conflicts. Managers use problem-solving strategies to alongside family-level strategies.	Finnish managers (N=20)
McNulty, Y. (2012)	Adjustment, expatriates, family systems theory, international assignments, trailing spouse	Human Resource Development International	Qualitative study	Professional support and social support have the greatest impact on identity re-construction and adjustment of trailing spouses. However, both types of support are lacking.	241 female spouses, 23 male spouses (N=264)

Mutter, J. (2017)	Expatriates, work-family interface, family relatedness of work decisions, global assignments, non-corporate expatriate, spouses/significant others, women's careers	Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research	Qualitative study	Influences of spouse's willingness to relocate are: access to social support, potential impact on children and spouse's career.	Spouses of professional sailors (N=21)
Puchmüller, K., Fischlmayr, I. (2017)	Cross-cultural research, dual-career family, female careers, female frequent flyer, international business traveller, social support theory	Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research	Qualitative study	They found that most support is received from the family. The expectations and the offered support from the organization differ because of cultural differences.	Women from 7 different countries (N=51)
Richardson, J. (2006)	Expatriates, family, career planning, job mobility	Personnel Review	Qualitative study	Spouses and children play a particularly strong role in the decision to expatriate. However, other family remaining in the home-country is implicated as well.	British employees working in Singapore, New Zealand, Turkey and UAE (N=30)
Schoepp, K., Forstenlechner, I. (2010)	Expatriates, family, middle East	Team Performance Management: An International Journal	Data-analytics	The UAE is an environment where family has more a motivation to stay rather than to leave.	Expats in United Arab Emirates (N=364)
Schütter, H., Boerner, S. (2013)	Expatriation, work-family interface, stressors, resources, expert interviews, employment, family life, human resource	Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research	Qualitative study	Work-to-family conflict is time-based and family-to-work conflict is energy-based. Four antecedents of work-family interaction were found: social support, development opportunities, family support, family adjustment.	Originally from Germany or send to Germany (N=15)

	management, expatriates				
Shaffer, M., Harrison, D., Luk, D. M., Gilley, M. (2000)	Spouse adjustment, international assignment, coping strategies	Management Research Review	Data-analytics	They found four main categories influencing spousal adjustment (1) individual factors (language fluency). (2) interpersonal factors (work-family conflict). (3) organizational factors (spousal's organizational identity). (4) environmental factors (experiencing a new culture. Work-family conflict was a negative predictor of expat adjustment, while all these other examples were significant positive predictors.	Originally from 24 different countries (N=278)
Takeuchi, R., Lepak, D. P., Marinova, S. V., Yun, S. (2007)	Cross-cultural adjustment, expatriates, spouses, perceived culture novelty, parental demands, nonlinear effects	Journal of International Business Studies	Data-analysis	Parental demands and cultural novelty were found to affect spouse's general adjustment but not expatriate's general adjustment.	Japanese couples (N=170)
Tharenou, P. (2008)	Willingness to relocate abroad or internationally, international careers, interest in international career, job search abroad, international relocation, global mobility; global talent	Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes	Data-analysis	Expats with less family barriers were found to be more willing to expatriate and more willing to search for an international job. For women, family was more a barrier for their willingness to expatriate than for man.	Australian employees: 230 females, 401 males, 208 singles (N=839)
Van der Velde, M.E.G., Bossink, C.J.H., Jansen, P.G.W. (2005)	Dual career, international assignment, gender	Journal of Vocational Behavior	Data analysis	They found differences between men and women. Men are more willing to accept an international assignment and more willing to follow the spouse than women. Furthermore, men's willingness to expatriate were best	178 Dutch men, 122 Dutch female (N=300)

				explained by rational choice and power theories, while women's willingness to expatriate were best explained by psychological contract theories.	
--	--	--	--	--	--

Appendix 2

Interview HR-professional Hitachi (May 3, 2018)

The interviewee works as an HR-professional in Hitachi since 2000. His function includes HR-practices, corporate governments control, risk management and IT and facility management. Hitachi is a company that is responsible for the manufacturing and the sales for machines used for construction. It manufactures its products in the Middle-East, Africa and Europe. At this moment, there are 22 expats working in the Netherlands for Hitachi. Most of them are from Japan, however some are from Germany or Italy. Furthermore, the company sends people abroad for international assignments, for example to Italy or Japan.

On the question whether family (partners and children) adjustment will influence the expats willingness to go on expatriation, he answered that he thinks that it is culture-driven. The expats from Japan almost always accept the international assignment, and mostly they do not bring their children and/or spouses abroad. In contrast, the expats from Europe almost always bring their family with them to the host-country. He emphasizes that not being able to bring the family to the host-country, will never be a reason for an expat from Japan to reject the international assignment. In Japan, the culture is more accepting the international assignment and just doing what the company asks you to do. While in Europe, it is more common that people will negotiate when an international assignment is offered. Another reason is that the headquarter of Hitachi is placed in Japan. Therefore, expats who are send from Japan to Europe, more often have the opportunity to visit their home-country again, as the headquarter is placed in Japan.

On the question whether there is a difference between expats with only a partner or expats with a partner and children, he answered that it is more easy for expats without children to bring the spouse to the host-country. For Japanese expats, it is also easy to bring the spouse and the family to, for example, the Netherlands, as there is a really good infrastructure. For example, the Netherlands offers Japanese schools (offered by the Japanese government), so that the children can adjust to their school in Japan easily when going back. However, in Japan they only offer international schools, which have the same structure worldwide.

The question whether he experiences a difference between men with a family and women with a family was also asked. He answered that he thinks it is more a choice of the couple themselves. Mostly, one of the partners will be the one who can make an (international) career, and the other one will be the one who has to take more care of the children. Indeed, he

experiences that the choice to take care of the children is more made by women than by men. However, he emphasizes that this is not the choice of the company, but the couple's own choice.

Then, the support that Hitachi offers to the partner and the children of the expat, was discussed. The HR-professional mentioned the following support:

- Housing arrangement in the host-country
- Paying children education
- Language trainings are offered for the whole family (children/partner) and paid by the company
- Once a year, a visit to the home country for the whole family is paid by the company.
- Expat insurance (e.g. when the political situation in the host-country becomes unstable, there will be taken care of the expats).

Interview HR-professional Elho (May 22, 2018)

The interviewee is working as a HR-professional in Elho. She is especially focused on the (international) commercial part of the organization. Elho designs pots of recycled material. Before, she worked at the expats department at a German international concern, and as a HR-professional at an American international company, AFB international. Elho is going to start with an assignment where expats are necessary. The company is now focusing on creating the expat regulation. The HR-professional mainly had to deal with expats from Germany, America and Italy. Furthermore, the companies sent people abroad for international assignments, for example to South-America and Germany.

On the question whether partner/children adjustment will influence the expats willingness to go on expatriation, she answered their influences are enormous. It differs per family, however, in general the partner will play a big role in the expats willingness to go on expatriation. Furthermore, a frequently asked question to the HR-department was what an international assignment means for the children. The expats will consider to bring their children to the relocation abroad, or leave the partner and children in the host-country.

On the question whether there is a difference between expats with only a partner or expats with a partner and children, she answered that expats with a partner and children often do not

accept the international assignment, due to the fact that they do not want to bring their child to an unknown world.

The question whether she experiences a difference between men and women with a family was also asked. She answered that women more often decide to not accept an international assignment than men. She emphasizes that the cause is cultural-driven, as some cultures still focus on the traditional roles women have. Sometimes women are going on expatriation as well, however, in that case the man and children are joining the relocation abroad, and the man takes over the role as a caregiver. She also emphasizes that the spouse (man or woman) mainly gives up their career when someone decides to start an international career.

Then, the support that Elho offers to the partner and the children of the expat, was discussed. She emphasizes that almost no support is offered to the spouse. The only offered support are financial and housing support. Elho wants the family of their employees to take initiative themselves when they appreciate support. For example, when the spouse would like to follow a language training, and asks the organization for support, the organizational will support this training financially. Therefore, it differs per situation what kind of support is offered. In general, only financial support is offered, for example paying the extra costs for an international school.