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Repatriation Adjustment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions as a Function of Core Self-Evaluations and Role Clarity

by

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A Thesis

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Abstract

A growing corpus of employee relocation literature proposes the construct of repatriation work adjustment as not only a desired outcome on behalf of returning employees and their organizations, but also a persistent challenge. Contemporary research consistently traces repatriation work adjustment to a wide range of individual, occupational, and cultural antecedents, while also hypothesizing it as a contributor to desired outcomes. However, there exists a dearth of literature examining the intermediary role of job factors in the relationship between individual differences and repatriation work adjustment. By examining the main and indirect effects of core self-evaluations and role clarity, the present study proposes several hypotheses to determine whether core self-evaluations affect repatriation work adjustment through role clarity, and whether repatriation work adjustment affects job satisfaction and intentions to turnover. To test these mediated models, this study used an online, survey-based design to obtain self-report data from a sample of repatriated employees.

Acknowledgements

Dedicated to Diana and Duke, ... it's wherever I'm with you.

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

At its zenith, employee repatriation can bring with it the benefits that the prospect of expatriation initially might suggest. For the repatriating employee, this means career advancement, personal growth, and adventure. For the organization, it implies successful international acquisition and management, breaking into international markets, a pipeline filled with employees who drive strategic international goals, and the mounting organizational knowledge that sustains them (Herman & Tetrick, 2009). It is unfortunate that repatriation often results in distress for the employee and the organization, such as dysfunctional turnover. At its worst, "[repatriation] can be a subsidy to rival firms: they end up with the best people placed to bury your company, trained at your expense" ("Not-so-happy returns", 2015). In addition, employee repatriation represents "a weak link in returning the investment of global employee development through international assignments" (Herman & Tetrick, 2009, p. 71). The current study aims to identify the nature of this weak link so that the process of repatriation can help to advance the goals that the international assignment was intended to achieve.

Over the last three decades, researchers (e.g., Adler, 1981; Arman, 2009) have shed substantial light on the challenges associated with employee repatriation, many of which culminate into comparatively greater hardships than does the initial experience of international relocation. Repatriates, or according to Black and Mendenhall (1991), *employees who return after an international assignment lasting at least nine months*, often experience a great deal of disillusionment, as expectations of the job, their interactions, and home culture, fall short of their expectations (Stroh, Gregersen, & Black, 1998). Families who have

expatriated and repatriated with the returning sojourner can also experience a great deal of distress from the transition. Previous research (Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1992) found that one significant organizational concern regarding the repatriation process is repatriate attrition, which has been shown to increase from 15% to 50% within 3 years following reentry. With a few exceptions and for reasons not well-established, organizations, to the individual's and firm's disadvantage, tend to overlook the need to facilitate a smooth transition from the international assignment through reentry (Kraimer, Bolino, & Mead, 2016).

To the extent business is becoming increasingly global, repatriation will continue to be a growing challenge that warrants continued investigation. Because the present study is established in the context of this concern, a central research goal is to investigate the factors that could predict and mediate important repatriation outcomes. Specifically, this study examines core self-evaluations and its impact on repatriation adjustment through the construct of role clarity. Likewise, repatriation adjustment is examined for its potential mediating effects on the individual influences of both core self-evaluations and role clarity on job satisfaction and turnover intentions. A contemporary model of newcomer socialization is used as an explanatory framework by which these variables are conceptually linked.

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Relocation Adjustment

Although the vocational relocation literature over the last several decades has converged on *adjustment* as the hallmark of the relocating employee's psychological experience, a comparative volume of agreement of what adjustment means does not exist (Harrison, Shaffer, & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004). In their comprehensive review on the expatriate experience, Harrison and colleagues begin by contrasting adjustment with acculturation and adaptation: the former, a relatively expansive two-way process in which individuals, through contact with host country nationals, alter their "emotions, cognitions, and behaviors" (p. 214). Adaptation, a functional one-way mechanism subsumed within the acculturation process, describes the way in which individuals develop behavioral congruence with novel environmental features of the host environment.

Drawing upon Dawis and Lofquist (1984), Harrison et al. (2004) submitted a more narrowly defined conceptualization of adjustment as a psychological state that is inferred through affective and behavioral markers, which takes place in the context of changes within an environment. Earlier work by Dawis (1980) postulated that work adjustment, from the individual's perspective, is a function of the *correspondence* (or match) between the organization's reinforcers (i.e., pull factors) and the employee's needs (i.e., *satisfaction*). Thus, adjustment to work is characterized by the magnitude of perceived congruence between the two factors.

A variety of unidimensional definitions of *expatriate* adjustment overlap with Dawis' (1980) state conceptualization of adjustment. Campbell (1981) argues adjustment is a function

of subjective well-being. Similarly, Munton and West (1995) conceptualize *expatriate* adjustment as a perceived state of satisfaction and happiness with respect to the expatriate's environment. Therefore, expatriate work adjustment, or cross-cultural adjustment, is conceived of as a state of incremental awareness, contentment, and skill in adapting to a foreign culture's world-view and inherent expectations (Torbiörn, 1982). Drawing on this literature, expatriate work adjustment is identified as an extension of work adjustment to an international context.

Expatriate adjustment as a state. To date, preponderance of international relocation researchers have converged on the definition of expatriate adjustment found in Black et al. (1991) model of expatriate adjustment (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005). Black (1988) argued early on that there appears to exist a subjective definition of adjustment that includes *degree of comfort or felt adjustment* with the new role and its requirements. This perspective holds "two facets of adjustment: work adjustment and general adjustment" are central to expatriate adjustment (p. 279). This is due to the saliency of the unfamiliar host country factors throughout the expatriate's phenomenological field. Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991), in their synthesis of the domestic and international adjustment literature, extend the above definition on the premises that a) not only are international relocations different in magnitude, but they are also different in kind, and b) factor analyses and mean-level differences within-subjects regarding these possible facets suggest international adjustment is multifaceted.

Accordingly, the distinction between work and non-work variables eventually culminated into three distinct factors of expatriate adjustment: work, interaction, and general

adjustments (Black et al., 1991). Adjustment to the job and organizational culture in the foreign context represents work adjustment. Interaction adjustment refers to the degree of comfort or adjustment with host country nationals in and outside of the job. General adjustment, which has also been called cultural adjustment, encompasses the expatriate's degree of adjustment to non-work cultural factors. Because the interactional and cultural differences the expatriate encounters are prone to greater variance than are the experiences throughout domestic relocation, this three-facet perspective provides a more meaningful representation of the expatriate's overseas experience than work adjustment alone, which has been the focus of the domestic relocation literature (Black et al., 1992).

The three-facet perspective of expatriate adjustment is typically operationalized using subjective self-report measures due to the constraints of gathering direct measures of performance related to international assignments (Black, 1988). In a study of expatriates working in Japan, Black (1988) used an 11-item scale, six of which were adapted from Torbiön's (1982) Adjustment to Everyday Life Scale. The remaining five items measured adjustment to work in the Japanese context, as well as interacting with Japanese nationals in and outside of work. Items on the 7-point Likert scale asks participants to indicate the degree of their perceived adjustment to various dimensions of their job responsibilities, interacting with home nationals, and living situation. Black and Stephens (1989) later adapted and expanded on the Expatriate Adjustment Scale to include a total of 14 items for a fuller representation of the three facets of expatriate adjustment.

Repatriation Adjustment

In their seminal article, Black et al. (1992) distinguished between the transitions of domestic relocation, expatriation, and repatriation. In their reasoning, expatriation and repatriation are similar insofar as both experiences include relocating between countries, thus the latter can also be viewed in terms of cross-cultural adjustment; not only has a great deal likely changed within the repatriate's home country, but he or she is likely to have formed inaccurate expectations of the home country, which further differentiates the experience from domestic relocation and places it further akin to expatriation.

Because of the similarities between the expatriation and repatriation experience, the Expatriation Adjustment Scale (Black & Stephens, 1989) was adapted to construct the *Repatriation* Adjustment Scale (Black & Gregersen, 1991). Since then, it appears the 14-item repatriation adjustment measure has been the most frequently adopted scale by repatriation scholars (e.g., Larson, 2006). The decision to adopt the measure for the present study is based on these factors and further establishes the decision to measure the repatriation experience as a first-person tripartite state of adjustment—a decision that finds significant precedence throughout the repatriation adjustment literature (e.g., Sánchez Vidal, Sanz Valle, & Barba Aragón, 2010).

The process of repatriation adjustment. Given the definition and operationalization of repatriation adjustment, it is useful to examine a cogent explanation for the underlying mechanism of how adjustment does or does not develop. In parallel with control theory (e.g., Bell & Staw, 1989), domestic and international relocation researchers have identified the need to reduce uncertainty as a central driving force in the adjustment process (Black et al., 1992).

This is because one's drive to establish psychological equanimity necessitates some degree of the perception of control over one's environment. The process for how expatriates and repatriates alike garner adjustment through uncertainty reduction and control is defined below:

- Individuals establish behavioral routines based on their perceptions of expectations, reward and punishment contingencies, and preferences for certain outcomes.
- 2) Once confronted with new and unfamiliar situations, established routines are broken, and the individual's sense of control is reduced.
- 3) Individuals attempt to reestablish a sense of control by reducing the uncertainty in the new situation through predictive and/or behavioral control.
- 4) Therefore, those factors that influence uncertainty and loss of control would be expected to be the most relevant in the adjustment process. In general, those factors that reduce uncertainty would facilitate adjustment, while those that increase uncertainty would inhibit adjustment. (Black et al., 1992, p. 743)

As such, the factors that affect uncertainty throughout the repatriation process have been of interest to repatriation researchers, and therefore are central to the current study.

Repatriate adjustment researchers (e.g., Black et al., 1992) incorporate Bell and Staw's (1989) and other's (Greenberger & Strasser, 1986) distinction of control as taking two forms, predictive and behavioral. The former is described as "the ability to predict how one is expected to behave" as well as "understand and predict rewards and punishments associated with specific behaviors" (Black et al., 1992, p. 742). Behavioral control, on the other hand, surfaces as "the ability to control one's own behaviors that have an important impact on the current environment" (p. 742), which is contingent upon a broad milieu of antecedent variables (Figure 1). For instance, the factor of *post-arrival training* may help the repatriate in gathering relevant information, thereby enhancing a sense of predictive and eventually behavioral control, which reduces uncertainty, and results in greater adjustment (Zhu,

Wanberg, Harrison, Diehn, 2016). Ashforth (2012) cogently summarizes this dynamic: adjustment is the outcome of uncertainty reduction, which is a function of learning relevant information.

The antecedents of repatriation adjustment. Within the theoretical framework described by Black et al. (1992), the factors that are identified as antecedents to adjustment fall into four categories: individual, job, organizational, and non-work (Black & Gregersen, 1991). As illustrated in Figure 1, self-efficacy and time overseas exemplify individual variables, while job variables include task interdependence (i.e., operational dependency between host and home organization) as well as role variables (Black et al., 1992). Post-arrival training and cultural distance between home and host country partially constitute organizational and non-work factors, respectively. Each dimension of adjustment should find its strongest correlate with a specific category of antecedent variables, such that for instance, job variables should be more predictive of work adjustment than non-work variables.

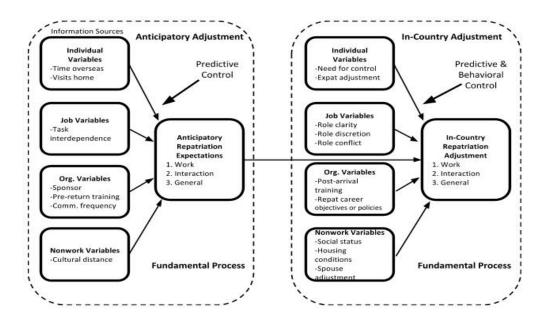


Figure 1. Basic framework of repatriation adjustment (Black et al., 1992).

The four categories of antecedent variables that shape the relocating employee's sense of control are further specified across two temporal dimensions: before and after reentry, such that for example, the variables of cultural distance and spousal readjustment are respectively categorized as relating to anticipatory adjustment (i.e., *adjustment while abroad*) and incountry adjustment (i.e., *adjustment after reentry*) (Black et al., 1992). This introduces the significance of adjusting one's cognitions about what reentry will be like, as well as highlights the importance of the fidelity between expectations and the actual return experience. Black et al. (1992) incorporate this into their model according to adjustment theorists' (e.g., Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Louis, 1980) supposition that an inverse relationship exists between inaccurate expectations and adjustment.

The constellation of variables enumerated in Black et al.'s (1992) model of repatriation adjustment implies an interactionist dynamic that accounts for both individual and environmental differences. This shared space of individual agency and situational influence provides an opportunity to postulate the potential effects of personality traits and job characteristics on repatriation adjustment. The hypothesized model to be tested in the current study (illustrated ahead) draws upon the above repatriation model by considering both core self-evaluations (a personality factor) and role clarity (a job factor) and their effect on repatriation adjustment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. The forthcoming section of this report submits a broad theoretical lens through which the factors apropos of this study (i.e., self-concept, role variables, and job outcomes) are linked in conjunction with a premise that warrants the effort to measure the proposed relationships.

Socialization: A Theoretical Framework

Although the current study does not seek to test hypotheses central to socialization, it nonetheless, draws upon it through Saks and Ashforth's (1997) multi-level process model of organizational socialization to further make sense of repatriation adjustment, its predictors, and outcomes. Toh, DeNisi, and Leonardelli (2012) among others (e.g., Black, 1992) maintain that socialization is an inextricable component to the expatriate process of adaptation during the international assignment, and that it can be conceptualized as an antecedent, information-based process that, much like newcomer socialization, facilitates expatriate adjustment (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007). Because repatriation is similar to expatriation insofar as both processes often entail a great deal of engagement with cultural novelty (Black et al., 1992), it follows that socialization is also a core process through which repatriation adjustment is achieved. Finally, the confluence of both the newcomer socialization and repatriation adjustment literature in the current study is a rational extension of Black et al.'s (1991) earlier effort to make use of organizational socialization to help explain international adjustment.

Saks and Ashforth's (1997) multi-level model of organizational socialization (Figure 2) encompasses decades of socialization theory and research (e.g., Van Maanan & Schein, 1979). The model, which is driven by the central importance of sense-making (i.e., information gathering and learning), begins at a chronological apex that includes the contextual factors of organizational, group, and job level variables. Socialization factors, including organizational and group socialization tactics, account for the formal and informal

institutional efforts to socialize the newcomer. This section of the model also entails individual differences, such as personality, as a component to socialization.

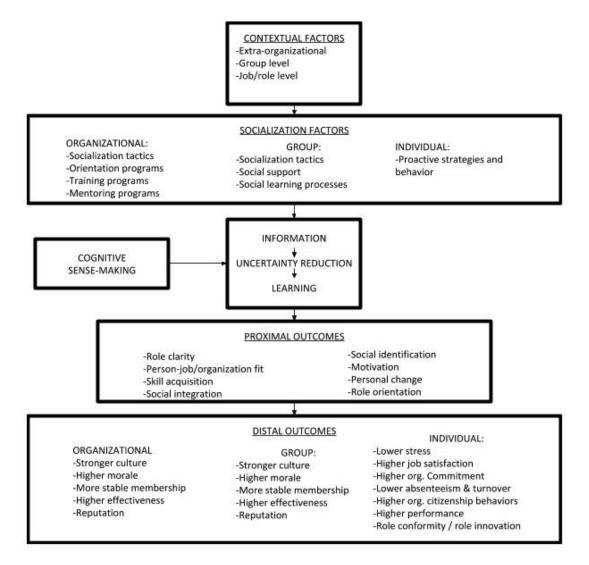


Figure 2. Saks and Ashforth's multi-level process model of organizational socialization (Saks & Ashforth, 1997, p. 239).

A process of cognitive sense-making, which is comprised of information acquisition, followed by uncertainty reduction and learning, functions to mitigate the negative experiences associated with onboarding, such as anxiety (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). As contextual and socialization factors augment the sense-making process, the newcomer experiences an

increase in desired proximal and distal outcomes (e.g., social integration and increased organizational commitment, respectively). Drawing on Black (1992), this study locates expatriation and repatriation adjustment within the array of potential outcomes of newcomer socialization. Through its component of cognitive sense-making, this multi-level model parsimoniously accommodates Black et al.'s (1992) assertion that repatriation adjustment is achieved through the predictive and behavioral control that follows from encounters with relevant information sources (e.g., mentors and communications home). Due to the congruence between the repatriation and socialization literature, the multi-level model provides a broad theoretical framework that underlies the measured variables and hypotheses that are central to the current study.

Repatriation adjustment and newcomer socialization. Insofar as repatriation adjustment is viewed as an outcome of several individual, organizational, and cultural factors (Gregersen & Stroh, 1997), the construct may also be identified within the model's category of *proximal outcomes*. Indeed, these authors contend personal change, person-job fit, and person-organization fit belong to this category. I submit that the definitions within this portion of the model account for repatriation adjustment because adjustment necessarily entails change, making it a fitting concept for inclusion; therefore, the rubric of proximal outcomes subsumes repatriation adjustment.

Further securing repatriation adjustment within this conceptual model are research findings that indicate the significant influence of socialization factors on important expatriate outcomes. Feldman, Folks, and Turnley (1998) found moderate correlations between sequential task training with task mastery and group initiation (r = .28 and .31, respectively)

in a sample of expatriates. In the same study, learning was significantly linked to task identity (r=.23). Subsequent research by Palthe (2004) found that in addition to organizational socialization strategies, self-efficacy also predicted expatriates' work and interaction adjustment (r=.32 and r=.16, respectively). Role clarity was also found to be moderately to highly correlated to all three facets of expatriate adjustment (r=.24 to .50). Not only do these findings lend credence to conceptualizing repatriation adjustment as an element of socialization, but they also help to establish repatriation adjustment as a function of the socialization factors that augment the subsequent sense-making process outlined in this model. This study further draws upon this socialization model as a schematic that accounts for additional individual and job socialization factors that shape repatriation adjustment.

Core Self-Evaluations

In the same year Saks and Ashforth (1997) published their socialization model, a separate strand of research by Erez (1997) introduced the personality construct of *self-concept*, or *core self-evaluations*. According to Judge (2009), core self-evaluations is a broad, latent trait, which can be indirectly measured through self-esteem, locus of control, self-efficacy, and neuroticism. In general, individuals with high core self-evaluations believe they are worthy of respect, capable of problem-solving, in control, and relatively doubt-free, leading them to experience greater motivation toward increased performance and career success. Confirmatory factor analysis has repeatedly demonstrated moderate to high loadings (r = .55 to r = .85) of these traits onto a common factor with an average correlation among the four core self-evaluations facets of r = .59 (Judge, 2009). Although evidence shows that core self-evaluations may be an aggregate rather than a superordinate construct (Chang, Ferris,

Johnson, Rosen, & Tan, 2012), this study adopts Judge's (2009) view that, primarily due to common factor loadings, core self-evaluations represents one underlying factor, which parenthetically, warrants the direct measure of the construct discussed in this study.

The four personality traits that correspond to the higher-order latent construct of core self-evaluations (in addition to the construct *writ large*) have shown to be significantly related to a broad scope of individual and work-related outcomes. Examining the four core self-evaluations traits, Judge and Bono (2001) found, for instance, an estimated true score correlation of .26 to job performance in a synthesis of 105 primary studies, which consisted of an overall sample size of 14,683 individuals. The focus of the forthcoming section is to examine each of the four subcomponents vis-à-vis the variables of interest in the present study (role clarity, adjustment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions).

Self-esteem, or the self-assessment of one's self-worth (Harter, 1990), "is the most fundamental core self-evaluation (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998, pp. 18-19), and has been shown to be related to a wide variety of work-related outcomes. Hallsten, Voss, Stark, Josephson, and Vingård (2011) found a moderate (r = .23) relationship between performance-based self-esteem and exhaustion in a sample of 4,109 participants. Another study (Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2011) found organization-based self-esteem to be negatively related to turnover intentions (r = -.26) and positively related to role clarity (r = .49). A meta-analysis by Judge and Bono (2001) found an average corrected correlation between self-esteem and job satisfaction of .26 over 56 separate studies (n = 20, 819).

The personality construct of self-efficacy, according to Judge, Bono, Erez, and Locke (2005), entails the conviction that one has the ability to manage one's own life challenges. In

an examination of 12 published studies (n = 12,903), Judge and Bono (2001) found an average corrected correlation of .45 between this trait and job satisfaction. A more recent study (Raghuram, Wiesenfeld, & Garud, 2003) found a significant correlation (r = .30) between self-efficacy and work adjustment in a sample of 723 telecommuters. Role clarity has also demonstrated a strong relationship with self-esteem (r = .52) (Shoemaker, 1999).

The belief that one has control over one's own environment encompasses the personality construct of locus of control (Rotter, 1966). It is useful to note the distinction between self-efficacy and locus of control, which, according to Judge et al. (1998), is a distinction between one's perceived control regarding one's own behaviors and the *outcomes* of those behaviors, respectively. Examining locus of control in a sample of 256 participants, Allen, Weeks, and Moffitt (2005) found significant correlations between the construct and both organizational commitment (r = .48) and turnover intentions (r = -.54). A separate study (Kaupilla, 2014) revealed a significant relationship between internal work locus of control and role clarity (r = .22). In Judge and Bono's (2001) synthesis of 80 independent studies totaling 18, 491 participants, an average corrected correlation of .32 was found between locus of control and job satisfaction.

Finally, constituting the polar opposite of self-esteem is neuroticism, or low emotional stability (Judge, Locke et al., 1998), which often presents in individuals as anxiety, self-consciousness, and vulnerability (Costa & McCrae, 1988). Jones, Smith, and Johnston (2005) showed a negative relationship between neuroticism and role clarity (r = -.36), while a separate study (Ghorpade, Lackritz, & Singh, 2011) also found a negative relationship between the trait and emotional exhaustion (r = -.34). Judge and Bono (2001) showed an

average corrected correlation between emotional stability and job satisfaction of .24 across 21 primary studies.

As illustrated above, research over the last few decades has consistently found strong relationships between the four primary manifestations of core self-evaluations (self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, and neuroticism) and important workplace outcomes. Mounting empirical evidence (e.g., Judge, 2009) supports the conclusion that the four traits suggest the presence of the higher-order latent construct of core self-evaluations; these insights, by extension, also reinforces the premise for the current study to investigate the relationships among these four subcomponents; the decision to use a direct measure of core self-evaluations; and the inclusion of the other variables central to this study (i.e., role clarity, work adjustment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions) within a sample of repatriates.

Core self-evaluations and international assignments. Moving the focus of these variables to the context of international work relocation, core self-evaluations' influence in the realm of repatriation adjustment is foreshadowed by previous research that examined the effects of individual core self-evaluation traits on expatriate adjustment (e.g., Black, 1990). Meta-analytic evidence revealed corrected correlations between self-efficacy and all three facets of expatriate adjustment ranging from .27 to .41 across multiple samples of expatriates (Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003). A more recent meta-analysis found significant corrected correlations for self-efficacy between interaction and work adjustment (.21 and .30), but not for cultural adjustment (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005).

The introduction of core self-evaluations to the expatriate adjustment literature is exemplified by Johnson, Kristof Brown, and Klein (2003), who found significant

relationships to all three facets of international (i.e., expatriate) adjustment and core self-evaluations. Likewise, Zhu et al. (2016) found correlations between core self-evaluations and expatriate work adjustment ranging over time from .19 to .22. This review of literature uncovered only one study from a widely published journal that examined the relationship between repatriation adjustment and core self-evaluations: Wu, Zhuang, and Hung (2014) revealed atypically high correlations between all three facets of repatriation adjustment and a direct measure of core self-evaluations, ranging from .67 to .72. The dearth of literature examining the link between core self-evaluations and adjustment in repatriate samples, along with the robust influence of core self-evaluations in a wide range of other contexts contributes to the impetus for including the construct in this investigation.

Core self-evaluations as a repatriation socialization factor. Ashforth et al. (2007) maintain that a growing body of evidence for self-efficacy and locus of control supports the conclusion that "core self-evaluation may have a strong and holistic influence on newcomer adjustment" (p. 44). Saks and Ashforth (1997) argue self-efficacy is positively related to proactive socialization behavior, insofar as it supports the cognitive sense-making efforts during organizational entry fueled by goal-directed behavior. Their model illustrates how proactive socialization, an individual socialization factor, influences information-seeking, uncertainty reduction, and learning. The culmination of this dynamic is argued to result in newcomers' reduced turnover intentions and anxiety in addition to increased job satisfaction and performance. Similarly, findings from Palthe (2004) revealed significant correlations between self-efficacy and both work and interaction adjustment (r = .32 and r = .16, respectively) in a sample of 1,084 expatriated American executives. Accordingly, it is

reasonable to conceptualize core self-evaluations as an individual socialization factor that antecedes proactive socialization behavior in the context of relocation for two reasons: a) the construct is closely related to self-efficacy, and b) adjustment to both novel international environments and readjustment to home country environments share many similarities (Black et al., 1992). Socialization then occurs through subsequent learning and later culminates in repatriation adjustment.

The underlying mechanism that plausibly links core self-evaluations to active socialization behaviors and learning provides an intriguing opportunity to investigate the nature of their interplay. Other research encountered in this literature review (e.g., Judge et al., 2005) maintains that individuals who are high in core self-evaluations are more likely to engage and sustain self-concordant (i.e., intrinsically motivated) goal-setting and goal pursuit behaviors, which are more likely to result in goal-attainment. Moreover, Chang et al. (2012) argue that an approach/avoidance orientation within individuals may function as a theoretical bulwark, through which individuals with high core self-evaluations should opt for stronger goal concordance. That is, higher levels of core self-evaluations may function as a fundamental precursor that shapes either an approach or avoidant disposition—the sine qua none for intrinsically motivated behavior. Although it is outside of the scope of this study to measure goal-directed behavior and learning, it may be useful to imagine an additional subsystem to the newcomer model of socialization:

- 1. A newcomer (e.g., repatriate) enters an organization with some degree of core selfevaluations.
- 2. This results in either an approach or avoidant orientation to the work environment.

- 3. This orientation influences the degree to which goal-directed behavior (e.g., self-concordant or introjected goals) is enacted and sustained.
- 4. Information is gathered, uncertainty is reduced, and learning occurs inasmuch as the newcomer has engaged in adaptive goal-directed behavior.
- 5. Proximal and distal socialization outcomes, such as role clarity and repatriation adjustment, result from this learning.

The purpose of this section has been to explicate a framework that links self-concept to workplace outcomes via newcomer socialization and related processes, thereby supporting the premise for measuring the relationship between repatriates' core-self evaluations, role-clarity, and repatriation work adjustment.

Hypothesis 1: Core-self evaluations will have a positive relationship with repatriation work adjustment.

Role Clarity and Repatriation Adjustment

Role clarity, one of several variables central to role theory (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970), has been a central focus to adjustment as a job factor that affects in-country repatriation success (e.g., Sánchez Vidal et al., 2010). Role clarity can be defined with respect to its antithesis, role *ambiguity*, which is characterized by "a lack of the necessary information available to a given organizational position", such that an individual lacks sufficient knowledge of task or position responsibilities (Rizzo, et al., 1970, p. 151). Nelson and Quick (2000) define role ambiguity as being unclear of job expectations, processes, and consequences. A proximal result of role ambiguity includes an employee's lack of direction, knowledge of his or her authority, and knowledge of evaluation standards. Thus, the

employee is prone to greater error and inefficiency. Finally, the employee's anxiety and dissatisfaction increase, while performance ultimately drops. A meta-analysis by Fisher and Gitelson (1983) found corroborating evidence for the effect of role ambiguity by examining 43 primary studies, which resulted in significant negative population estimates with respect to commitment (-.34), co-worker satisfaction (-.22), and job involvement (-.26). In a more recent meta-analysis, Tubre and Collins (2000) found a significant negative true score correlation between role ambiguity and job performance (ρ = -.21), using 74 correlations and a total sample size of 11,698.

The multi-level process model of organizational socialization also provides a useful explanatory matrix for the development and outcomes of role-clarity. In this model, role-clarity is depicted as one of several proximal outcome variables that result from the cognitive sense-making stage. Fittingly, it is conceptualized as a result of learning—a natural occurrence, as clarity in one's job is difficult to imagine *without* the acquisition of knowledge and subsequent learning. By extension, Black et al. (1992) argue role clarity should provide repatriates with a sense of predictive and behavioral control, which in turn, should bolster repatriation adjustment.

Hypothesis 2: Role clarity will have a positive relationship with repatriation work adjustment.

Role Clarity as a Mediator to Work Adjustment

The discussion heretofore has implied a relationship between core self-evaluations and role clarity. In particular, I have speculated as to how core self-evaluations, as an individual socialization factor that sustains goal-striving and newcomer proactivity, may result in

learning, leading to enhanced role clarity. Mounting empirical evidence supports the conclusion that core self-evaluations underpins role clarity in expatriate samples. Fenner and Selmer (2008) revealed a correlation of .30 between self-efficacy and role clarity. A later study (Sánchez Vidal et al., 2010) used a repatriated sample of 124 participants and found a correlation between self-efficacy and role clarity of .39. The current study extends these investigations by examining the influence of core self-evaluations on role-clarity.

Hypothesis 3: Core self-evaluations will be positively related to role clarity.

Because repatriates with high core self-evaluations are more likely to engage in proactive socialization for reasons already suggested, their heightened sense-making efforts, hence learning, should produce greater role clarity, resulting in higher repatriation work adjustment.

Hypothesis 4: Role clarity will partially mediate the effect of core self-evaluations on repatriation work adjustment.

Repatriation Work Adjustment and Job Satisfaction

William James might have asked, What then is the cash value of repatriation work adjustment? This is not an easy question to answer since, to the researcher's knowledge, the preponderance of repatriation adjustment research appears to have focused on adjustment as a terminal criterion. In this context, job satisfaction is a relevant construct to examine given its demonstrable impact on a wide variety of individual and organizational outcomes and its pervasiveness in the industrial-organizational psychology literature.

Job satisfaction, a distal outcome within the socialization model, has been defined as consisting of either individual or some combination of factors central to employees' work-

related evaluations, affect, and beliefs (Weiss, 2002), and is therefore an outcome variable of interest to the present study. Although the nomological network reveals that the three components overlap, research consistently shows they are not one in the same. In line with a great deal of attitudes research (e.g., Eagly & Chaiken, 1993), the current study incorporates an *attitudes* perspective of overall job satisfaction, which introduces judgments and evaluations of the work situation as the primary mechanism through which satisfaction presents (Weiss, 2002). As such, this study adopts Weiss' definition of job satisfaction as "a positive (or negative) evaluative judgment one makes about one's job or job situation" (p. 175). This perspective does not exclude emotions, mood, and beliefs from the discussion of job satisfaction per se, but it does distinguish them as important antecedents or outcomes of job satisfaction as an attitude. Support for this reification has been found through recent theoretical and empirical research (e.g., Weiss, Nicholas, & Daus, 1999). The attitudes perspective of job satisfaction further guides the selection of the job satisfaction scale used in this study.

It is surprising that job satisfaction as a variable of study within the repatriation adjustment literature is relatively scant, given its frequent linkage to a wide variety of antecedent variables (e.g., Brown & Peterson, 1993). The expatriate literature as compared to the repatriation literature appears to encompass a greater volume of research linking relocation and job satisfaction. One meta-analysis (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005) revealed positive correlations between both work and interaction adjustment on job satisfaction (.38 and .24, respectively). Using regression analyses, Stevens, Oddou, Furuya, Bird, and Mendenhall (2006) found a positive effect of overall repatriation adjustment on job

satisfaction (β = .42). Lee and Liu (2007) similarly found high positive correlations between their operationalization of repatriation adjustment and job satisfaction (r = .76). These results and the relative paucity of research examining the effect of repatriation work adjustment on job satisfaction forms the basis for their inclusion in this study.

Hypothesis 5a: Repatriation work adjustment will be positively related to job satisfaction.

Repatriation Work Adjustment and Turnover Intentions

Turnover intentions, also identified in the I-O psychology literature as consistently being a proximal outcome to job satisfaction (e.g., Brown & Peterson, 1993), has been studied with respect to repatriation adjustment. Characterized as both the strongest and the last predictor in a sequence leading to actual turnover, turnover intentions is "a conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization" (Tett & Meyer, 1993, p. 262). The newcomer socialization model also conceptualizes TOI as a distal outcome.

The prime motivation behind examining TOI however, is the prevalence of turnover after repatriation. Previous estimates found turnover rates for repatriating managers to be 25% after 1 year, and 50% after 2 years (Black et al., 1992). In the context of these findings, Vidal, Valle, Aragón, & Brewster (2007) found a negative correlation (-.25) between work adjustment and turnover intentions after nine months. Other repatriation adjustment researchers (e.g., Lee & Liu, 2007) have also uncovered negative relationships with intent to leave. The anticipation that adjustment will predict turnover intentions is hypothesized in light of these findings.

Hypothesis 5b: Work adjustment will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

Work Adjustment as a Mediator

If work adjustment leads to greater levels of intentions to stay and job satisfaction, it follows that variables anteceding work adjustment should influence these two outcomes *through* work adjustment. Specifically, if core self-evaluations and role clarity demonstrate a main effect on work adjustment, they may also demonstrate an indirect effect on turnover intentions and job satisfaction *through* work adjustment.

Hypothesis 6a: Work adjustment will mediate the relationship between core selfevaluations and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6b: Work adjustment will mediate the relationship between core selfevaluations and turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 7a: Work adjustment will mediate the relationship between role clarity and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7b: Work adjustment will mediate the relationship between role clarity and turnover intentions.

Figure 3 globally represents each of the hypothesized relationships listed in this section. As shown, the figure is comprised of both simple and mediated models.

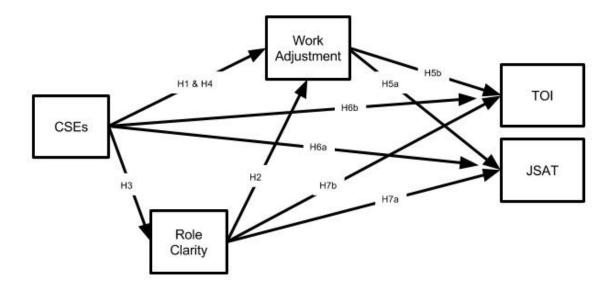


Figure 3. Combination of hypothesized main effect and mediated models.

Chapter 3: METHOD

Participants

Participants in the study were obtained using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online platform through which individual *Workers* elect to participate as survey, or *human intelligence task (HIT)* respondents. Of the 84 participants who comprised the final sample, 17.9% were female. Mean sample age was 32.70 (SD = 7.45).

Workers were compensated with \$0.30 in exchange for their participation in the survey. The survey was posted on January 24th, 2017 at 8:00 AM US Central Standard Time and was closed on March 12, 2017, thereby concluding data gathering efforts. The survey was made available to an international population who a) had worked in an international assignment for 9 months or longer; b) returned from that assignment within the last 3 years; c) were 18 years-old or older; d) maintained an M-Turk approval rating of at least a 95% or greater; and e) had completed at least 100 HITs at the time of the survey. The latter two quality assurance parameters are similar to those adopted by other M-Turk studies (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016).

Manipulation check. A manipulation check is a procedural component that helps to verify the degree of attention participants direct toward accurately completing the survey. Three such survey items were implemented within the survey battery. The first instructional manipulation check (IMC) item used in this study (Appendix A) was adapted from Oppenheimer, Meyvis, and Davidenko (2009) and has been used and supported elsewhere (e.g., Hauser & Schwarz, 2016). Couched in the initial survey instructions, the IMC asks respondents to forego the intuitive response of *indicating their appreciation for various*

sports, for instead, indicating a specified value, which is found at the end of the instructional paragraph. The reasoning is that respondents who are inattentive will fail to pass the IMC, which functions as an indicator by which to infer a baseline degree of accuracy regarding their subsequent survey responses. Accordingly, respondents who failed the IMC were prevented from advancing to the actual survey. A second attention check instructed participants to select Other in lieu of Yes, No, and I prefer not to answer to the statement I am an M-Turk Worker. A final item to filter out inattentive participants included I am currently using a computer or digital device to complete this survey after which an answer other than True resulted in the immediate discontinuation of the survey. IMCs and intermittent attention check items have resulted in M-Turk participants who are equally or more attentive to survey instructions compared to survey studies conducted in a traditional settings with college students (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016).

Participant qualification check. A one-item participant qualification check (Appendix B) was used to verify participants' eligibility to take part in this study. They were asked to select the description that best fits their repatriation status. Only the participants who select the qualifying response (i.e., Less than 3 years ago, I returned from an international work assignment, which lasted MORE THAN 9 months) were allowed to proceed, while the remaining participants who were identified as ineligible were disqualified from the survey.

Procedure

Upon preliminary qualification for survey participation on the Amazon MTurk platform, Workers (hereafter referred to as *participants*) were presented with a link to the Qualtrics survey platform, where they were instructed to ensure the MTurk screen remained

open and then prompted to read the informed consent before agreeing and advancing to the survey items. Then, participants completed the IMC and eligibility verification steps described above, both of which composed the prerequisite tasks required to continue on to the battery of survey items that were central to the study hypotheses. At this point, participants were prompted to complete all survey items. Those who completed the survey in its entirety were provided with an automatically generated code, which they were instructed to type into their MTurk screen in order to receive payment for their participation.

Data Screening

Data screening procedures included considerations for response rate, item reliability, outliers, duplicate participants, and assumption checks. Although data from the Qualtrics online platform indicated 262 attempts were made to complete the survey. Eighty-eight participants remained after omitting those who: provided incomplete responses; attempted to complete the survey more than once; or did not pass the intermittent attention checks.

Outlier analyses involved three criteria: Mahalanobis, Cook's, and Leverage threshold values. The analyses included a series of five multiple regressions—one for each hypothesized mediated regression model. Participants who scored above the threshold outlier cutoff scores for two or more of the criteria resulting from any of the multiple regression analyses were omitted. Thus, for example, a respondent who had no outliers from four out of five regressions would nonetheless be omitted from the analyses if a fifth regression resulted in two or more values that exceeded the threshold criteria. This 2 out of 3 rule resulted in the omission of an additional four participants, leaving a sample of 84 participants in the final analyses. A subsequent visual inspection of graphs depicting normality, homogeneity, and

linearity indicated an overall improvement in these distributions. A post-hoc power analysis resulted in a value of 0.89, given a final sample size of 84, an error probability of 0.05, an effect size of 0.15, and two test predictors (one for each independent variable in the hypothesized mediated models).

The potential for multicolinearity was assessed by regressing each dependent variable on the relevant combination of regressors while controlling for demographic variables. These analyses revealed acceptable ranges of variance inflation factor values (.47 to 1.50) and tolerance values (.70 to .96) (Keith, 2014).

Measures

All measures and survey items are listed in the appendices section of this report in the sequence they are presented in this section. The Cronbach's alpha values for each of the continuous measures indicated acceptable levels of internal consistency and are listed in the parenthesis of the Table 1 diagonal.

Demographics. Several demographic questions (Appendix C) were included in the survey. Adapted from Pinto (2008), they include age, gender, home country, most recent host country, tenure, position, company type (e.g., MNC, public), duration of last international assignment, length of time since return from their last international assignment, and the total number of years overseas throughout the career.

Repatriation work adjustment. Repatriation work adjustment was measured using the Repatriation Adjustment Scale (Black, 1994). The three items used from this scale (Appendix D) were intended to measure repatriate's perceived adjustment to their job responsibilities upon return. Participants rated items on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = very

unadjusted and 7 = very adjusted. Items measured adjustment to job duties, performance expectations, and supervisory duties.

Core self-evaluations. Global *core self-evaluations* (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoreson, 2003) was measured using the 12-item Core Self-Evaluations Scale (Appendix E). On a 1 to 5 scale, participants were prompted to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with items such as *I am confident I get the success I deserve in life*; *Sometimes I feel depressed* (r), and; *I am filled with doubts about my competence* (r).

Role ambiguity. The three role resources measures used in the survey battery are listed in Appendix F. Role ambiguity was measured using items originally from Rizzo et al. (1970). The six-item measure, which is anchored on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale includes the statements *I know exactly what is expected of me*; *Clear, planned goals and objectives exist for my job*, and; *I know that I have divided my time properly*.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using the Abridged Job in General Scale (Appendix G). Responding with either *Y*, *N*, or '?', participants indicated the extent to which each of the eight descriptors accurately characterized his or her job. Descriptors included *Good*, *Better than most*, and *Makes me content*.

Intentions to quit. Turnover intentions were measured using five items adapted from Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997) (Appendix H). Items include *I am seriously thinking about quitting my job* and *I am actively looking for a job outside of my company*. Items are anchored with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics were obtained for all variables in this study. For continuous variables, means and standard deviations were calculated. In addition, frequencies were calculated for categorical variables (e.g., home country). Zero-order correlation analyses provided values reflecting the strength of the relationships between all continuous variables central to the hypotheses.

Reliability analysis. A Cronbach's alpha value was calculated for each continuous multi-item scale used in this study. These analyses of reliability functioned to verify the degree to which the items that composed each scale were internally consistent.

Test of hypotheses. Simple regressions were conducting using SPSS (version 23) to test hypothesis 1, 2, 3, 5a, and 5b. Thus, work adjustment was separately regressed on core self-evaluations, then on role clarity, as was role clarity on core self-evaluations. In similar fashion, both job satisfaction and turnover intentions were each separately regressed on work adjustment.

All hypotheses involving mediation were tested through hierarchical regression using the SPSS PROCESS macro (version 2.16.3) by Hayes (2016). In addition to the regression analyses, the macro provided a Sobel test and bootstrapping option to identify whether the total and direct effects were significantly different and whether the point estimates of the mediational effects were significantly different from zero.

Hypothesis 4, that role clarity would partially mediate the effect of core selfevaluations on repatriation work adjustment, was tested by regressing: role clarity on core self-evaluations; repatriation work adjustment on both core self-evaluations and role clarity; and repatriation work adjustment core self-evaluations. Mediation was identified to the extent that the total effect of core self-evaluations was significantly lessened when entered into the model with role clarity. A Sobel test and bootstrapping approach was also used to verify whether the effects under investigation were significant. The tripartite approach (i.e., three regressions, a Sobel test, and a bootstrapping calculation) used to test hypothesis 4 was also used to test hypotheses 6a, 6b, 7a, and 7b.

Hypothesis 6a tested whether repatriation work adjustment would mediate the effect of core self-evaluations on job satisfaction. Likewise, hypothesis 7a tested whether the effect of role clarity on job satisfaction would be mediated by repatriation work adjustment.

Hypothesis 6b and 7b both examine the mediational influence of repatriation work adjustment on turnover intentions. Hypothesis 6b and 7b examined core self-evaluations and role clarity as the primary test predictor, respectively.

Chapter 4: RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The 84 participants in this sample represented 19 different countries and reflected a variety of backgrounds (Appendix I). The majority of participants were from India (44), followed by the U.S. (13) and Venezuela (7). Females constituted 17.9% of the sample, the remainder identifying as male. Appendix I indicates (where applicable) frequencies, means, and standard deviations for education level, tenure, turnover, marital status, time in last international assignment, total time overseas, months since returning, job held (during and after the international assignment and currently), and host country.

Reliability Statistics

Internal consistency analyses showed sufficient degrees of inter-item reliability. Results revealed moderate Cronbach's alpha values for CSE, role clarity, and turnover intentions (TOI) (.87, .80, and .90, respectively). Both repatriation work adjustment (RWA) and job satisfaction had acceptable degrees of internal consistency (α = .73 and α = .76, respectively). Values for the reliabilities are presented in the diagonal of Table 1.

Correlation Statistics

All test predictor variables were significantly correlated between absolute values of .28 to .65. Table 1 depicts all correlations between continuous variables.

Table 1
Study Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Inter-Correlations (n = 84)

Variables	Inter-correlations and alphas											
	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	32.70	7.45	-									
2. Tenure	6.50	4.24	.69**	-								
3. Total Int'l												
Assignments	4.99	11.15	.42**	.38**	-							
Length												
4. Last Int'l												
Assignment	1.71	1.34	.05	.02	.30**	-						
Length												
5. Months Back												
in Home	9.71	7.47	.19	.16	.28**	.28*	-					
Country												
6. Role Clarity	4.04	.60	.12	.18	.05	.21	.14	(.80)				
7. Repatriation												
Work	5.55	.96	.15	.13	.03	.04	01	.56**	(.73)			
Adjustment												
8. Core Self-	3.46	.67	.30**	.40**	.19	.03	.21	.45**	.35**	(.87)		
Evaluations	3.40	.07	.50	.40	.1)	.03	.21	.43	.33	(.07)		
9. Job	2.69	.41	.10	.17	.01	.14	.06	.29**	.37**	.41**	(.76)	
Satisfaction	2.07	.41	.10	.1/	.01	.17	.00	.2)	.31	.41	(.70)	
10. Turnover	2.83	1.12	22*	27*	05	06	18	40**	28**	65**	47**	(.90)
Intentions	2.63	1.12	22	21	03	00	10	40	20	05	4/	(.50)

Note: Values in parentheses are reliability coefficients. *p < .05 (2-tailed). **p < .01 (2-tailed).

Test of Hypotheses

Table 2 shows the unstandardized regression results for hypotheses 1-4. Hypothesis 1 predicted core self-evaluations (CSE) would be positively related to repatriation work adjustment (RWA). CSE was significant and accounted for 15% of the variance in RWA. Hypothesis 2 maintained those who scored high on role-clarity would also score high on RWA. This hypothesis was also supported and showed the overall model accounted for 33%

of the variance in RWA. In support of hypothesis 3, CSE was a significant predictor of role clarity, accounting for 26% of variance in RWA.

Table 2

Regression Results for the Effects of CSE and Role Clarity (Hypotheses 1-4)

Variables		Repat	Role Clarity		
Step 1: G	ender ^a	15	01	01	17
A	ge ^a	.02	.02	.02	.00
Tenure ^a		02	02	01	.01
Last IA Length ^a		.05	03	04	.09
Total IA Length ^a		01	.00	.00	01
Months Back ^a		01	01	01	.00
Step 2:	CSE	.52**	.20		.39***
	Role Clarity		.83***	.92***	
F		1.85	4.92***	5.38***	3.80**
R2		.15	.34	.33	.26

Note: All continuous variables are non-standardized and mean-centered. Gender was coded as 1 = male and 2 = female. $^{\text{a}}\text{Control Variables}$. $^{\text{a}}p < .05$. $^{\text{**}}p < .01$. $^{\text{***}}p < .001$.

All hypotheses involving mediation were tested through hierarchical regression using the SPSS PROCESS macro (version 2.16.3). Table 2 and Figure 4 show the results of hypothesis 4, that role-clarity would partially transmit the effect of CSE on RWA. The total effect of CSE on RWA was significant, as was its influence on role clarity. Role clarity was then found to be a significant predictor of RWA. The hypothesis was supported, as CSE no longer significantly predicted RWA when role-clarity was entered into the model. Moreover, the full model accounted for 34% of variability in RWA, which is an additional 19% above and beyond that of CSE alone. A Sobel test also found mediation to be significant (Z = 3.03 p < .01), as did a bootstrap sample of 5,000 (.32, 95% CI = .15, .61).

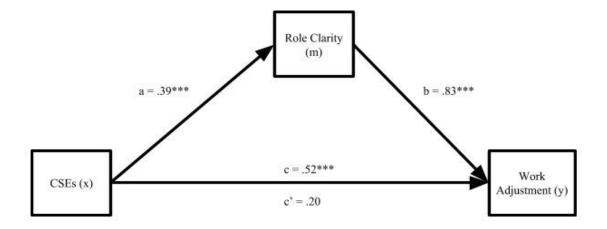


Figure 4. Findings for hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 5a predicted job satisfaction would increase as a function of RWA. The analysis showed (Table 3) a significant positive effect supporting this hypothesis, with the overall model accounting for 21% of the variance in job satisfaction.

Table 3

Regression Results for the Effects of CSE, Role Clarity, and RWA on Job Satisfaction (Hypotheses 5a, 6a, and 7a)

Variables		Job Satisfaction					
Step 1: Gender ^a	19	19	18	19	19		
Age^a	01	.00	.00	.00	01		
Tenure ^a	.02	.01	.01	.02	.02		
Last IA Length ^a	.04	.05	.04	.03	.04		
Total IA Length ^a	.00	01	01	.00	.00		
Months Back ^a	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00		
Step 2: CSE		.24***	.19**				
Role Clarity				.15 ⁺	.02		
RWA	.14**		.10*		.13*		
F	2.85*	3.25**	3.62**	1.80	2.47*		
<i>R</i> 2	0.21	0.23	0.28		0.21		

Note: All continuous variables are non-standardized and mean-centered. Gender was coded as 1 = male and 2 = female. ^aControl Variables. ⁺p = .0573. *p < 0.05. **p < 0.01. ***p < 0.001.

Hypothesis 6a predicted that RWA would partially mediate the influence of CSE on job satisfaction. Analyses of main effects found CSE to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction (Table 3). RWA was also a significant predictor of job satisfaction. Likewise, RWA significantly predicted job satisfaction when controlling for CSE. In addition to a modest decrease in significance, CSE's influence on job satisfaction decreased when entered into the model with RWA, supporting partial mediation (Figure 5). However, the Sobel test found the difference between the total and indirect effects to be non-significant (Z = 1.76, p = .079). The less conservative bootstrapping method of 5,000 samples showed the indirect effect of CSE on job satisfaction was indeed different from zero (.05, 95% CI = .01, .13). These results, taken together, support the hypothesis.

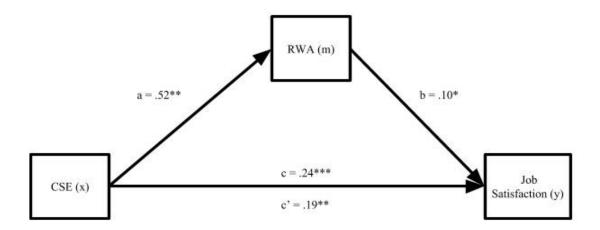


Figure 5. Findings for hypothesis 6a.

The same analysis was conducted to test hypothesis 7a (Table 3), that RWA would partially mediate the effect of role-clarity on job satisfaction. Role clarity's main effect on job satisfaction was not significant (p = .057). Because a lack of significance does not preclude the possibility of mediation (Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010), subsequent analyses were

conducted. Role clarity showed a significant main effect on RWA. Similarly, RWA was also significantly predictive of job satisfaction when added to the model with role clarity. When RWA was entered into the model with role clarity, role clarity dropped further in significance (p = .785). Figure 6 depicts the results of these analyses. The Sobel test demonstrated the difference between the total and direct effect of role clarity was significant (Z = 2.27, p = .023), while the bootstrapping technique using 5,000 samples indicated the effect was significantly different from zero (.12, 95% CI = .03, .24), thereby demonstrating support for the hypothesis.

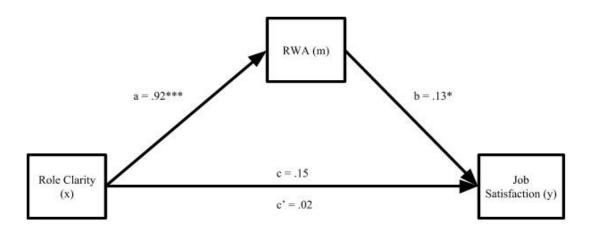


Figure 6. Findings for hypothesis 7a.

The next set of analyses focused on TOI as an outcome of CSE, role clarity, and RWA, the results of which are found in Table 4. Hypothesis 5b was tested using regression analysis and was supported by showing that RWA had a significant effect on TOI, which accounted for 17% of variability in the dependent variable.

Table 4

Regression Results for the Effects of CSE, Role Clarity, and RWA on TOI (Hypotheses 5b, 6b, and 7b)

Variables		Turnover Intentions					
Step 1: Gender ^a	33	38	39	41	42		
Age^a	01	01	01	01	01		
Tenure ^a	06	.00	.00	04	04		
Last IA Length ^a	04	06	06	.02	.01		
Total IA Total ^a	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01		
Months Return ^a	02	.00	.00	01	01		
Step 2: CSE		-1.08***	-1.05***				
Role Clarity				69***	61*		
RWA	29*		07		09		
F	2.22*	9.06***	7.91***	3.30**	2.92**		
R2	.17	.46	.46	.23	.24		

Note: All continuous variables are non-standardized and mean-centered. Gender was coded as 1 = male and 2 = female; aControl Variables; *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

CSE had a significant main effect on TOI in the first step of testing hypothesis 6b. CSE was also found to significantly predict RWA. However, RWA was not found to be a significant predictor of TOI when controlling for CSE, which remained significant in the model (Figure 7). Both the Sobel test (Z = -.57, p = .57) and bootstrapping approach using 5,000 samples (-.03, 95% CI -.19, .07) verified the non-significance of RWA in carrying the effect of CSE on TOI. Therefore, hypothesis 6b was not supported.

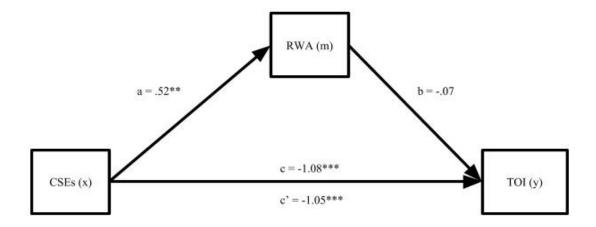


Figure 7. Findings for hypothesis 6b.

Hypothesis 7b was tested to identify whether RWA carried the effect of role clarity on TOI. Role clarity had significant main effects on both TOI and RWA. As illustrated *in* Figure 8, role clarity had a significant main effect on TOI, whereas RWA was non-significant when entered together into the model. The Sobel test and bootstrapping method likewise did not provide support for the hypothesis (Z = -.61, p = .55; -.08, 95% CI -.40, .16).

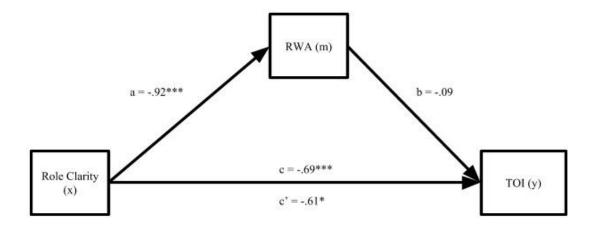


Figure 8. Findings for hypothesis 7b.

In light of this study as well as previous research examining the factors related to job satisfaction (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Crede, Chernyshenko, Stark, Dalal, & Bashshur,

2007), a post-hoc analysis was conducted to test whether job satisfaction would mediate the relationship between RWA and TOI. The total effect of RWA on TOI was significant (b = -.29, t(76) = -2.37, p < .05). Results also showed RWA significantly predicted job satisfaction (b = 0.14, t(76) = 3.21, p < .01), while job satisfaction was also a significant predictor of TOI (b = -1.20, t(75) = -4.10, p < .001). Support was found for job satisfaction as a full mediator of RWA's effect on TOI, as RWA was no longer significant (b = -.12, t(75) = -1.02, p = .31) when job satisfaction was entered as a mediator. The full model accounted for 32% of the variability in TOI (F(8, 75) = 4.45, p < .001, R2 = .32). A Sobel test showed mediation in the model (Z = -2.48, p = .013). A bootstrap estimate of 5,000 samples demonstrated the indirect effect of RWA was significantly different from zero (-.17, 95% CI = -.34, -.06). Thus, a one-point increase in RWA corresponded to a decrease of .17 points in TOI as mediated through job satisfaction.

The results of the hypotheses tests are summarized the Table 5, which depicts a summary view of the supported hypotheses.

Table 5
Summary of Predicted and Supported Relationships among All Hypothesized Variables

Hypothesis	Role Clarity	Work Adjustment	Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intentions
Hypothesis 1: CSE		+*		
Hypothesis 2: Role-		+*		
clarity		+*		
Hypothesis 3: CSE	+*			
Hypothesis 4: Role-		+*		
clarity mediates CSE		+"		
Hypothesis 5a: Work			+*	
adjustment			+ '	
Hypothesis 5b: Work				_*
adjustment				_
Hypothesis 6a: Work				
adjustment mediates			+*	
CSE				
Hypothesis 6b: Work				
adjustment mediates				_
CSE				
Hypothesis 7a: Work				
adjustment mediates			+*	
role-clarity				
Hypothesis 7b: Work				
adjustment mediates				_
role-clarity				
Post-Hoc Analysis:				
Job satisfaction				+*
mediates work				•
adjustment				

Note: "+" and " – " indicate variable relationships are either predicted to be positive or negative, respectively. " * " indicates hypothesis is supported.

Chapter 5: DISCUSSION

Due to the challenges inherent to the often turbulent process of employee repatriation, individuals and organizations alike stand to benefit from an investigation into the factors that are central to this dynamic. Over the last few decades, relocation researchers have recognized the significant value of both job and individual variables in shaping effective repatriation practices. Although job variables, such as role resources, have been frequently examined for their predictive value regarding repatriation adjustment, individual variables, such as selfconcepts have not received nearly as much attention. Thus, to address this absence in the literature, this study examined CSE as a central predictor of RWA, as well as analyzed role clarity as a mediator that carried the effects of CSE on RWA. An additional opportunity to contribute to the literature was addressed by examining RWA for its mediational influence, such as in the relationship between CSE and distal outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction and TOI). The cumulative result of these analyses includes valuable insight by examining individual differences as a primary driver of RWA. Finally, this study extends the typical analyses found in the quantitative repatriation literature beyond the examination of main effects by establishing role clarity and RWA as mediators.

Theoretical Contributions

Among the important theoretical contributions resulting from this study is the introduction of CSE as a primary test predictor of RWA. Prior to this study, Wu et al.'s (2014) publication appeared to be the sole published research article examining RWA as a function of CSE. In contrast to Wu et al., however, who examined CSE for potential moderating effects between mentorship and facets of repatriation adjustment, this study

measured CSE for its total *and* indirect effects in addition to its influence on RWA, job satisfaction, and TOI. Because four out of five of the hypotheses that include CSE's were supported in this study, CSE may afford repatriation researchers a great deal of opportunities for future investigation.

In addition, role clarity was examined for its potential mediational effects and was found to carry the effects of CSE on RWA. The use of role clarity as a mediator in this relationship was also not found elsewhere in the literature. Likewise, investigations of RWA's potential intervening influence on job satisfaction and TOI were not found in other published literature, making this study perhaps the first to introduce the construct as a mediator of the effects of CSE and role clarity. To summarize, research published prior to this study appears to have focused on the main effects from either the proposed antecedents of repatriation adjustment (e.g., mentorship and social status) or the main effects of repatriation adjustment on proximal and distal outcomes (e.g., role clarity and performance). Thus, testing these mediational hypotheses (rather than solely relying on main effects hypotheses) brings greater nuance to the examination of these relationships.

Finally, post-hoc analyses uncovered further intriguing theoretical implications. As a ubiquitous mediator to a variety of job outcomes (Crede et al., 2007; Yousef, 2000), job satisfaction demonstrated a mediational effect in the relationship between RWA and TOI.

This provides further evidence for the importance of job satisfaction in repatriate samples.

Practical Implications

Implications for organizational practitioners are distributed within two dimensions—selection and development. With CSE being a consistently powerful predictor of RWA and

role clarity, managers and specialists should consider measuring the construct to help inform their expatriation decisions. Prior research (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001) has found a strong link between the individual's level of CSE and performance outcomes. This could be due in part to Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller's (2011) argument that "individuals who have higher levels of CSE will be more likely to proactively manage their careers and apply themselves toward opportunities to demonstrate their positive self-image both to themselves and to the external world" (p. 335). In light of this supposition, expatriation selection decisions could be partially informed by the candidate's degree of CSE as an a priori measure to secure a comparatively high-CSE candidate for expatriation. However, because self-reported data collected in a high-stakes selection environment may be especially vulnerable to a variety of respondent biases (Kulas & Stachowski, 2012), a reasonable precaution would be to complement the expatriation selection decision with a variety of data, including objective and qualitative evidence.

Conversely, a developmental approach includes measuring CSE levels in existing expatriates and repatriates in order to identify at-risk employees who may benefit from additional organizational support resources. Although CSE is viewed as being quite impervious to change (Chang et al., 2012), Gist and Mitchell (1992) for instance, found that for clearly defined responsibilities, feedback increased self-efficacy in employees. Subsequent research (Dweck, 2006) distinguished between fixed-mindset and growth-mindset, which resulted in the insight that organizations can be instrumental in fostering the latter, thereby enhancing motivation and performance in its members. Therefore, practitioners could purposefully leverage effective growth-oriented practices to support lower-CSE individuals,

such as coaching and mentoring; scheduled communication events aimed at bolstering adaptive self-directed attitudes and beliefs; reinforcing adaptive coping strategies; and supporting sustained goal-directed behavior. Thus, a consistent and well-planned communication regimen with at-risk employees may be of significant value.

Reducing the ambiguity surrounding the relocating employee's new work context may also complement efforts to strengthen CSEs in repatriated employee. This study, along with recent meta-analytic evidence (Van Heuveln, Protolipac, Hoepner, & Sandkuhl, 2017) suggests role clarity is predictive RWA, which in turn, is predictive of job satisfaction. Consistent with these findings is the suggestion that practitioners should consider preparing expatriates for new or altered roles by providing them with comprehensive knowledge and learning opportunities concerning their job upon relocation. As discussed earlier in this manuscript, establishing such role clarity prior to and during repatriation should facilitate the sense-making process, thereby reducing uncertainty and increasing perceptions of predictive and behavioral control. Not only should this augment RWA, but also influence job satisfaction and TOI in desirable directions.

It is well documented that confusion and foundering on behalf of the sojourner and the HR department are pervasive reentry anecdotes. An interviewee in a study by Linehan and Scullion (2002) confided, "The expatriation policies in our organization are very strong, but the repatriation policies are not. Before we go, we get a lot of cross-cultural training, but when we are coming back, the company assumes we will slot it again" (p. 260). Because myriad interventions to establish support resources during reentry exist, it may be prudent to focus on general principles. Human resource specialists should consider beginning with the end in

mind. This means taking a proactive stance in planning for a comprehensive international performance management system so that both the employee and his or her HR department are clearly aware of the purpose of the expatriate process (e.g., executive training, reconnaissance, etc.), what the expectations are, how performance will be measured and rewarded, and what succession possibilities upon repatriation will entail. Of these steps, an emphasis should be placed on the latter to enhance role clarity and other relevant factors. RWA will be supported to the extent that possibilities and expectations regarding the job to which expatriates are expected to return are made explicit prior to, during, and after reentry.

Chapter 6: LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Limitations

Although the results of this study offer valuable theoretical and practical insights, conclusions drawn from these insights should be done so in full acknowledgement of its limitations. Multicolinearity, testing biases, and the cross-sectional design are perennial concerns for psychological research that utilizes self-report data. This study is no exception. To address multicolinearity concerns, tolerance values and variance inflation factors were calculated and found to reflect acceptable levels of possible multicolinearity. A second step included heterogeneous response scales, which for instance, entailed the inclusion of reverse-scored items and the presence of differentiated Likert-type response scales (i.e., 1-5 and 1-7) along with uniquely worded scale anchors.

In addition to common-method bias concerns, response bias may have also impeded the accuracy of inferences from survey responses. Items central to CSE, job satisfaction, and TOI may be especially prone to a conscious or unconscious tendency to inflate or deflate scores. To this point, Morgeson et al. (2007) assert self-presentation bias could undermine the efficacy of survey responses as employees compete for career advancement opportunities. Given this possibility, however, Ones, Dilchert, Viswesvaran, and Judge (2007) maintain such bias concerns may be overstated.

Perhaps to some, the most culpable flaw in this design is its online paper-and-pencil design within the MTurk environment, "an online labor market created by Amazon" (Paolacci & Chandler, 2014, p. 184). Indeed, researchers frequently question the quality of survey response data gathered through such online platforms (Chandler, Mueller, & Paolacci, 2013).

To the contrary, Hauser and Schwarz (2016) contend MTurk provides the social science researcher with even stronger precautions by which to secure sample respondents who demonstrate higher quality responses compared to those of typical undergraduate samples in U.S. universities. To this end, MTurk offers researchers the ability to take advantage of a) attention-check items, b) participant qualification items, c) the filtering out of participants who are not in good standing as an MTurk Worker, and d) various features that make salient the consequences for high and low performance.

Further, MTurk's incentive structure enables Requesters to reward or avoid participants who demonstrate high or low quality work, respectively (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016). Requesters maintain the right to either block participants or deny payment in the event of poor quality participation (e.g., inattentiveness). Both the blocking activity and the drop in approval ratings appear on the respective Worker's record, thus increasing the probability the Worker will qualify for fewer human intelligence tasks. It is generally clear to Workers that poor performance will result in a decrease in rewards.

The current study benefitted from these options in several ways. Only Workers with 95% approval ratings and who completed 100 or more HITs were permitted to access the survey. In addition, built into the survey were attention-check items that if wrongly answered, would immediately disqualify the Worker from completing the survey, thus precluding them from receiving payment. The omission of response data that originated from the same IP address also functioned to bolster the quality of the final analyses; the presence of duplicate IP addresses was interpreted as multiple attempts from the same Worker. Finally, data screening measures revealed outliers who were subsequently omitted. Although it is unlikely the totality

of these measures outlined in this section represent a panacea for the challenges to this research design, they function to engender greater confidence in the interpretations of the study results.

Future Research Directions

Potential research opportunities that may help to address the limitations inherent to this study are abundant. As such, researchers are encouraged to a) replicate the design with a greater sample size, b) measure the variables in a sample that is not part of an online employment market place, c) conduct a longitudinal design in which multiple measures are gathered over time, and d) measure CSE levels in noncompetitive contexts so as to be able to compare them to scores gathered in situations that incentivize self-enhancement, thereby shedding light on the presence of response bias.

Extended research opportunities include investigating the mechanism by which CSE engenders role clarity. As alluded earlier, a significant body of research has linked CSE to proactive personality, sustained goal-oriented behavior, and self-identity verification (Elliot, 1999). Thus, research could benefit by testing the effect of CSE on RWA, including both self-concordant goal-setting and role clarity as intermediary variables in a double-mediation model. This could shed light on the dynamic implied earlier in the literature review: do high-CSE individuals benefit from greater RWA because CSE leads them to create and sustain self-concordant goals that help them to achieve greater role-clarity?

Structural equation modeling (SEM) would also bring a richer understanding to the nomological network; SEM has the capacity to identify underlying latent constructs from measured variables, which could result in a richer examination of relevant hypotheses. Also,

SEM analysis would allow for a better comparison between competing models that function to explain the development of RWA and the sequential primacy of antecedent variables in this process.

Conclusion

To acknowledge that employee repatriation is a fragile, high-stakes process, is to simultaneously acknowledge that extraordinary efforts to uncover the levers of repatriation adjustment are necessary in order to better ensure that the international assignment will benefit the organizational and the individual. Contrary to the common discourse surrounding repatriation, the process has shown not to be a self-governing phenomenon in which the returnee necessarily ascends a path of career advancement and readjustment to work. Instead, research has uncovered a great deal of avoidable distress and loss due to organizations overlooking important factors in the repatriation process. By building on the contributions from the current study, organizations and employees should find themselves with greater capacity to actualize the individual and organizational goals that the international assignment, at the outset, was intended to achieve.

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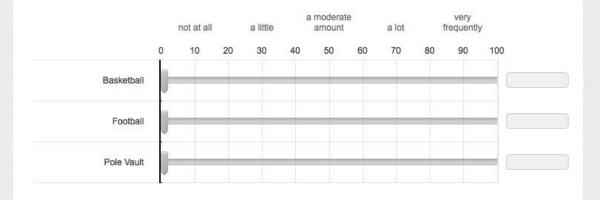
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Appendix A: Instructional Manipulation Check

Most theories of decision making recognize that individual preferences and knowledge, along with situational factors can greatly impact the decision process. In order to facilitate our research, we are interested in whether you actually take the time to read the directions before making your decisions in this survey; if not, then some of our survey questions that rely on changes in the instructions will be ineffective. So, to demonstrate that you have read the instructions, please ignore the bolded instructions below. Instead, simply slide the marker for basketball and football to 5, and slide the marker for pole vault to 95. Finally, click the red forward button to proceed to the next screen. Thank you very much.

Directions: Slide each marker to show how much you enjoy playing each sport below:



>>

Appendix B: Participant Qualification Item

Select the option that most accurately characterizes your international work experience.

- Less than two years ago, I returned from an international work assignment, which lasted MORE THAN 9 months.
- Less than two years ago, I returned from an international work assignment, which lasted LESS THAN 9 months.
- o I have never worked in an international work assignment.
- o More than two years ago, I returned from my most recent international work assignment.

Appendix C: Demographic Measures

This section contains questions regarding your background. Read each question. Select the option from the dropdown menu that most accurately describes you or your experience.

- 1. How old are you?
- 2. What is your gender?
- 3. What is your marital status?
- 4. What is your academic background?
- 5. What is your home country?
- 6. How many years have you worked for your current company?
- 7. Over your whole career, about how many years have you worked in international assignments?
- 8. What is the country of your most recent international assignment?
- 9. In months, how long was your most recent international assignment?
- 10. In months, how long has it been since you returned home from your last international work assignment?
- 11. Are you still working with the company for which you completed your last international assignment?
- 12. Which title best describes your position during your last international work assignment?
- 13. Which title best describes your current position?
- 14. Which title best describes your position after your last international work assignment?

Appendix D: Repatriation Adjustment Measures

This section contains statements regarding your experiences since returning from your most recent international assignment. Read each statement. Click the option that most accurately describes you or your experience.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all adjusted	A little adjusted	Neither adjusted or unadjusted	Moderately adjusted	Totally adjusted

Repatriation Work Adjustment

Since returning from your most recent international work assignment, how adjusted are you to the following aspects of your job?

- 1. Specific job responsibilities
- 2. Performance standards and expectations
- 3. Supervisory responsibilities

Repatriation Interaction Adjustment

- 1. Socializing with other home nationals
- 2. Interaction with other home nationals on a data to day basis
- 3. Interacting with host nationals outside of work
- 4. Speaking with other home nationals

Repatriation General/Cultural Adjustment

- 1. Living conditions in general
- 2. Housing conditions
- 3. Food
- 4. Shopping
- 5. Cost of living
- 6. Health care facilities
- 7. Entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities

Appendix E: Core Self-Evaluations Measure

Below are several statements about you with which you may agree or disagree. Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by clicking the appropriate option next to that item.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

- 1. I am confident I get the success I deserve in life.
- 2. Sometimes I feel depressed. (r)
- 3. When I try, I generally succeed.
- 4. Sometimes when I fail I feel worthless. (r)
- 5. I complete tasks successfully.
- 6. Sometimes, I do not feel in control of my work. (r)
- 7. Overall, I am satisfied with myself.
- 8. I am filled with doubts about my competence. (r)
- 9. I determine what will happen in my life.
- 10. I do not feel in control of my success in my career. (r)
- 11. I am capable of coping with most of my problems.
- 12. There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me. (r)

Appendix F: Role Resources Measures

Role Clarity Measure

Since returning from your international work assignment, what is your opinion on each of the following statements?

- 1. I feel secure about how much authority I have.
- 2. Clear, planned goals and objectives exist for my job.
- 3. I know that I have divided my time properly.
- 4. I know what my responsibilities are.
- 5. I know exactly what is expected of me.
- 6. Explanation is clear of what has to be done.

Role Conflict Measure

Since returning from your international work assignment, what is your opinion on each of the following statements?

- 1. I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.
- 2. I have to buck a rule or policy to carry out an assignment.
- 3. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.
- 4. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.
- 5. I have to do things that should be done differently.
- 6. I work on unnecessary things.
- 7. I receive an assignment without the adequate resources and materials to execute it.
- 8. I receive an assignment without the manpower to complete it.

Role Discretion Measure

Since returning from your international work assignment, what is your opinion on each of the following statements?

- 1. I have discretion as to what work gets done.
- 2. I have discretion as to how work gets done.
- 3. I have authority to decide what tasks to delegate.
- 4. I have freedom to choose what to become an expert in.
- 5. I have discretion as to what tasks subordinates do.
- 6. I have authority to decide what work gets shared.
- 7. I have freedom to decide how much of a generalist or expert to become.
- 8. I have discretion as to what I am responsible for.

Appendix G: Job Satisfaction Measure

Think of your job in general. All in all, what is it like most of the time? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, select:

Y N	for "Yes" if it describes your job for "No" if it does not describe it
?	for "?" if you cannot decide
Good	
Unde	sirable
Bette	r than most
Disag	greeable
Make	es me content
Excel	lent
Enjoy	yable
Poor	

Appendix H: Intentions to Quit Measure

What is your opinion on each of the following statements?

- 1. I am actively looking for a job outside of my company name.
- 2. As soon as I find a better job, I'll leave my company
- 3. I am seriously thinking about quitting my job.
- 4. I often think about quitting my job at my company name.
- 5. I think I'll be working at my company five years from now.

Appendix I: Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Variable	Frequency	% Sample	Mean	STDV
n	84	70 Bumpie	Tyroun	SIBY
Age	84	100	32.7	7.45
Male	69	82.1	32.7	7.13
Female	15	17.9		
Single	30	35.7		
(Re)Married	51	60.7		
Separated/Div.	3	3.6		
HS Grad.	1	1.2		
Some College	4	4.8		
Associates	7	8.3		
Bachelor's	32	38.1		
Master's	33	39.3		
Post-Grad. Deg.	4	4.8		
Doctoral	3	3.6		
Tenure	84	100	6.5	4.24
Turned Over	8	9.5		
Total Years in IAs	84	100	4.99	11.15
Years in Last IA	84	100	1.71	1.34
Months Since Return from Last IA	84	100	9.71	7.47
Position in IA		100	7.,72	,,,,
Clerical/Admin.	2	2.4		
Sales-Related	4	4.8		
General Staff	6	7.1		
Specialty Staff	6	7.1		
Professional/Technical	32	38.1		
Jr. Management	6	7.1		
Mid. Management	21	25		
Sr. Management	5	6		
Top Management	2	2.4		
Position Upon Return				
Clerical/Admin.	3	3.6		
Sales-Related	3	3.6		
General Staff	6	7.1		
Specialty Staff	6	7.1		
Professional/Technical	31	36.9		
Jr. Management	7	8.3		
Mid. Management	18	21.4		
Sr. Management	8	9.5		
Top Management	2	2.4		
Current Position				
Clerical/Admin.	2	2.4		
Sales-Related	4	4.8		
General Staff	6	7.1		
Specialty Staff	5	6		
Professional/Technical	33	39.3		
Jr. Management	5	5		
Mid. Management	21	25		
Sr. Management	6	7.1		
Top Management	2	2.4		

Country	Home Country		Host Country	
Ž	Frequency	% of Sample	Frequency	% of Sample
Afghanistan	1 ,	•	2	2.4
Algeria	1	1.2		
Anguilla	1	1.2		
Argentina			1	1.2
Armenia			1	1.2
Australia			3	3.6
Belgium	1	1.2	1	1.2
Brazil	1	1.2	1	1.2
Brunei			1	1.2
Canada	1	1.2		·
Cayman			1	1.2
China			3	3.6
Croatia	1	1.2	-	
Denmark	1	1.2	1	1.2
Ecuador			1	1.2
Ethiopia			1	1.2
Finland			1	1.2
France			4	4.8
Germany			1	1.2
Granada			1	1.2
Greece	1	1.2	1	1.2
Hong Kong	1	1.2	2	2.4
India	44	52.4	1	1.2
Italy	2	2.4	1	1.2
Japan	2	2.4	1	1.2
Kuwait			1	1.2
Macedonia	2	2.4	1	1.2
Malaysia	1	1.2	1	1.2
Mauritius	1	1.2	1	1.2
Mexico	2	2.4	2	2.4
Nepal	2	2.4	1	1.2
Norway			1	1.2
Oman			2	2.4
Pakistan	1	1.2	2	2.4
Panama	1	1.4	1	1.2
Philippines			2	2.4
Poland			1	1.2
			1	1.2
Qatar Russia	1	1.2	1	1.4
Saudi	1	1.2	1	1.2
Serbia			1	1.2
Seychelles			1	1.2
			3	3.6
Singapore South Africa			1	1.2
			4	4.8
Spain Switzerland			1	1.2
			1	
Taiwan	1	1.2	1	1.2
Turkey	1	1.2	1	4.8
UAE	2	124	4 2	2.4
UK	2	2.4		2.4
USA	13	15.5	22	26.2
Venezuela	7	8.3		