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# A Three-Stage Process Model of Self-Initiated Expatriate Career Transitions: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective

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**A THREE-STAGE PROCESS MODEL OF SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATE  
CAREER TRANSITIONS: A SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY PERSPECTIVE**

**Dissertation**

**By**

**Yu-Ping Chen**

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**in Partial Fulfillment of the**

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**in Management Science**

**at**

**The University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee**

**August 2012**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **A THREE-STAGE PROCESS MODEL OF SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATE CAREER TRANSITIONS: A SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY PERSPECTIVE**

by

Yu-Ping Chen

The University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, 2012

Under the Supervision of Dr. Margaret Shaffer

With more than 31 percent of employers worldwide having difficulty filling positions due to the lack of suitable talent available in their home markets (Manpower, 2010), talent shortage has become a global problem. Thus, many employers are seeking and recruiting skilled employees worldwide. Echoing this trend is the emergence of self-initiated expatriates (SIEs), a growing breed of expatriates that is responding to global talent shortages. Unlike corporate expatriates who are sponsored by organizations to take an international assignment, SIEs independently choose to expatriate and their expatriation experiences are riskier and more unpredictable. Thus, SIEs' motivations pertaining to their decisions to expatriate may play a critical role in sustaining their self-directed transition. Therefore, the purpose of this dissertation is to develop and test a theoretically driven model of SIEs' career transitions and the nested motivational processes.

In this dissertation, I first develop an abstract theoretical model of SIEs' career transition processes through the lens of self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2002). The proposed model identifies the influences of relational factors, personal factors, and contextual factors on SIEs' psychological need satisfaction, their autonomous motivation, and their well-being at each stage (exploration, establishment, and embeddedness) of their career transitions. The linking mechanism between each career transition stage is also discussed.

In this dissertation, I also empirically examine SIEs' career transition experience at the establishment stage using a sample of 245 SIE academics originally from 37 nations/regions and now working and living in 9 different countries. I use structural equation modeling to analyze the data. Results indicate that relational support (e.g., perceived organizational support), personal resources (e.g., proactive personality, prior international work experience, universal language spoken fluency), and supportive contextual factor (host country diversity climate) positively influence SIE academics' expatriate adjustment through the satisfaction of psychological competency need and the increase of autonomous motivation.

Overall, this dissertation contributes to SIE, career transition, and SDT scholarship by investigating the nexus of these three literatures. Specifically, this dissertation contributes to the SIE literature by applying SDT to explain SIEs' career transition processes which moves beyond mainstream studies that only explain "what" but not "how" and "why" SIEs are motivated. My dissertation also theoretically advances existing SIE research by considering different stages of SIE career transition and the interplay between stages. Empirical examination of SIE academics' career transition

experience at the establishment stage generally supports the proposed motivational processes underlying SIEs' career transition.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved wife, Yu-Shan, for her selfless support, guidance, and encouragement, not only through my master's and doctoral programs but throughout our life together. I also dedicate this dissertation to our expected baby girl. You have enriched your dad's and mom's lives to a point that words do not adequately describe before you arrive in this beautiful world.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

International careers were once the province of corporate expatriates, who are “sent overseas on a temporary basis to complete a time-based task or accomplish an organizational goal” (Harrison, Shaffer, & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004: 203). Nowadays, as the boundaries between global markets become flexible and permeable (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) and as employment relationships become less organizationally-directed and more individually-directed (Sullivan, 1999; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009), the world has become one large employment pool for job seekers, who increasingly start up their own expatriation to take advantage of lucrative career opportunities created by a shortage of skilled professionals (Manpower, 2010). These individuals are called *self-initiated expatriates (SIEs)*; they instigate and usually finance their own expatriation and are not transferred by organizations; instead they relocate to a country of their choice to pursue cultural, personal, and career development opportunities (Harrison et al., 2004; Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008; Myers & Pringle, 2005), often with no definite time frame in mind (Harrison et al., 2004; Suutari & Brewster, 2000; Tharenou, 2010).

Unlike that of traditional corporate expatriates, SIEs’ expatriation is not pre-arranged by multinational organizations (Richardson & Mallon, 2005) so they generally do not receive any organized training, preparation as well as associated benefits and compensation packages both before and upon arrival of their expatriation (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010). SIEs are also known to face more structural barriers and career constraints than corporate expatriates such as the difficulties to obtain visas and work permits in the host country (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). Further, SIEs' employment in host country organizations and institutions often does not reflect SIEs’ previous education and professional qualification in their home countries, leading to an

underutilization of SIEs' skills (Carr, Inkson, & Thron, 2005; Lee, 2005). In short, SIEs' expatriation experiences are risky and unpredictable, with their moves typically involving both significant career and life transitions (Myers & Pringle, 2005; Richardson & Mallon, 2005). Given these challenges that require SIEs to devote substantial effort to adapt and perform effectively in the host country, SIEs' motivation pertaining to their decisions to expatriate may play an important role in directing, energizing, and sustaining the intensity and persistence of their self-directed transitions (Kanfer, 1990; Latham & Pinder, 2005).

However, based on my extensive literature review, current studies of SIEs mainly focus on what motivates SIEs to go abroad before they leave their home countries. In other words, our knowledge about what motivates SIEs upon their arrival in the host country is scant. Given that SIEs often decide to go abroad not just to travel and entertain but to strive for career development as well as permanent residency opportunities (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010) and SIEs tend to face more challenges after they leave their home country, a more rigorous, theoretically grounded research that considers different stages of SIEs' expatriation, career transition and the nested motivational process is sorely needed.

To address this research void and contribute to SIE, careers, and motivation literatures, the ultimate goal of this dissertation is to develop and empirically examine a model that clarifies the process by which SIEs are motivated within and between different stages of their career transitions. To achieve this goal, the first objective is to identify stages that best represent critical career decision making points SIEs encounter both before and during their expatriation. Applying and extending previous academic works on career development (e.g., Super, 1957; 1990; 1992), the process model I

propose delineates three stages (exploration, establishment, embeddedness) that illustrate the evolution and span of SIEs' career transition processes. Specifically, the goal for SIEs at the exploration stage is to *explore global work opportunities*; the goal for SIEs at the establishment stage is to *establish global work experience*; and the goal for SIEs at the embeddedness stage is to *maintain global work experience*.

The second objective of this dissertation is to provide a theoretically driven framework that can strengthen our understanding about how SIEs are motivated in different stages of their career transition. Specifically, I draw upon self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002), which supports the idea that motivated behavior is related to the dialectic between people and their social contexts (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006), to explore how and why various relational factors, personal factors, and contextual factors affect SIEs' motivation pertaining to their entire expatriation processes. By focusing on how and why SIEs are motivated rather than what, this dissertation addresses a theoretical question that is relatively neglected in this area (Whetten, 1989).

Finally, the third objective of my dissertation is to elucidate the mechanism linking each stage of SIE career transitions. Even though there is a fair amount of research (e.g., Cerdin & Le Pargneux, 2009; Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009) investigating corporate expatriates' career transition experience and its influence in their subsequent career or life stage (e.g., repatriation), existing research on SIEs mainly focuses on their experience in a specific expatriation stage either before or after their entry into host countries (see Tharenou, 2008; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010 for exceptions). In other words, an integrative framework that delineates SIEs' long-term

expatriation experiences is still lacking. Based on SDT framework, yet extending the existing theoretical assumptions, I highlight the critical pivotal role of psychological well-being (i.e., vitality and expatriate adjustment) in facilitating the transition process throughout different stages of SIEs' career transitions.

The following sections of my dissertation are organized as follows: Chapter 2 is a literature review of self-initiated expatriates; Chapter 3 presents the theoretical model that delineate the three-stage process of SIEs' career transitions and the underlying motivational processes; Chapter 4 specifically presents the hypotheses at the establishment stage as well as the results of the empirical analysis. Chapter 5 discusses the proposed model in Chapter 3 as well as results from the empirical examination of the second (establishment) stage of SIEs' career transitions. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed as well as limitations and suggestions for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND REVIEW**

## **SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES: AN OFTEN NEGLECTED FORM OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN CAPITAL**

### **Who are self-initiated expatriates?**

Nowadays, talent shortage has become a prevalent problem worldwide and more than 31 percent of employers worldwide are having difficulty filling positions due to the lack of suitable talent available in their markets (Manpower, 2010). Because there are not enough sufficiently skilled people in the right places at the right times, it is not surprising that many employers are seeking and recruiting skilled employees around the world. Echoing this trend is the emergence of many professionals, who increasingly initiate and finance their own expatriation to take advantage of appearing work opportunities created by a shortage of professionals worldwide (Manpower, 2006). Indeed, many multinational corporations (MNCs) now rely on these professionals who self-initiate their expatriation to redress their shortage of skilled labor and international managers (Banai & Harry, 2004; Suutari & Brewster, 2000; West & Bogumil, 2000). Several researchers (e.g., Hu & Xia, 2010; Jokinen et al., 2008) have also stated that SIEs may become a more prominent recruitment option for international HR managers given their greater willingness to move to other countries throughout their careers and their considerable knowledge and skills.

*Self-initiated expatriates (SIEs)* instigate and finance their own expatriation and are not transferred by organizations; instead they relocate to a host country of their choice to pursue cultural, personal, and career development opportunities (Harrison et al., 2004; Jokinen et al., 2008; Myers & Pringle, 2005), often with no definite timeframe in mind (Harrison et al., 2004; Suutari & Brewster, 2000; Tharenou, 2010). SIEs most often expatriate by withdrawing from their current job and moving abroad, finding a job once

there; somewhat less often, they find jobs before they go abroad (Bozionelos, 2009; Napier & Taylor, 2002; Suutari & Brewster, 2000; Thang, MacLachlan, & Goda, 2002). There are also some SIEs who choose a different route by entering a host country to pursue an academic degree in the first place and decide to remain abroad after their studies are complete (Baruch, Budhwar, & Khatri, 2007).

Indeed, more and more professionals initiate their own expatriation than are those assigned abroad by their companies as shown for professionals from Western countries (65% SIEs versus 35% company assigned expatriates [Doherty, Dickmann, & Mills, 2011]) and women from several countries (42% SIEs versus 20% company assigned expatriates [Napier & Taylor, 2002]). The prevalence of professionals' self-initiated expatriation is also shown by the number of skilled immigration in many western countries. At least 1.5 million skilled people immigrated to an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) country in 2006 (Bozionelos, 2009).

## **THEORETICAL BASIS OF SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES RESEARCH**

In this section, I offer a brief overview of the theoretical and methodological approaches adopted by SIE researchers. Although SIE researchers have adopted various theoretical approaches to explain different phenomena, a common theme is that most of them have relied on the protean career concept (Hall, 2002; 2004) and the boundaryless career paradigm (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) to explain SIEs' experiences. However, many extant studies of SIEs are descriptive and exploratory rather than theoretically driven. This is a common feature of nascent streams of research. The protean career concept focuses on individuals and the role they play in transforming their own careers (Hall & Moss, 1998). Indeed, Vance (2005: 374) proposed that "individuals

should not depend upon organizations but should be active agents in their own career development and assert themselves in developing and utilizing their global competencies." Vance's (2005) assertion denotes a fundamental nature of SIEs in that they shift from organizational-based careers to careers that are managed and controlled more by themselves. On the other hand, the boundaryless career concept refers to "sequences of job opportunities that go beyond the boundaries of single employment settings" (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996: 116).

The boundaryless career has recently been clarified and conceptualized along two dimensions – namely, physical mobility (i.e., making actual physical transitions across boundaries) and psychological mobility (i.e., individual's perception of the capacity to make transitions ) mobility (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Peiperl and Jonsen (2007) adapted these two dimensions to describe the boundaryless nature of global careers in terms of the degree to which the job requires one to physically travel to foreign markets and to interact with culturally different people. Based on this taxonomy, SIEs should score high on both physical and psychological mobility because SIEs need to make physical transitions across national boundaries and adjust their thought patterns and scripts to successfully adapt and live in a host country. Specifically, researchers (e.g., Fitzgerald & Howe-Walsh, 2008) have also argued that SIEs' physical mobility would not only be accompanied by, but also initiated by, their changing internal focus on transforming their own careers (psychological mobility). Building on these perspectives, Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, and Bolino (2012), in their recent review article, proposed that there were three dimensions of global work experiences: physical mobility, cognitive

flexibility, and nonwork disruption. These scholars identified SIEs as individuals who experience high physical mobility, high cognitive flexibility, but low nonwork disruption.

## **EMPIRICAL FINDINGS OF SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES RESEARCH**

In this section, I review and summarize current SIE studies in terms of choices they make, challenges they face, and career consequences they encounter as SIEs.

Methodologically, of the 42 SIE articles I have reviewed, about 48% adopted a qualitative approach and 52% adopted a quantitative approach, almost all of which were cross-sectional designs (see Tharenou, 2008; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010 for exceptions).

### **Making choices**

Unlike corporate expatriates, organizations generally are not involved with SIEs' decision to go abroad; instead, personal agency has a dominant influence (Richardson & Mallon, 2005; Tharenou, 2008). Researchers have focused on the boundaryless career concept to explore SIEs' choices for self-initiated expatriation and found that their motivations to pursue career development opportunities and the experiences of adventure, cultures, and life changes are important drivers. For example, in a large scale study of SIEs, Thorn (2009) identified six relatively important motives for SIEs' international self-initiated mobility. Specifically, cultural and travel opportunities and career motives were highlighted as the most important motives, followed by relationship, economic, quality of life, and political motives. Similarly, Richardson and Mallon (2005) found that individuals' desires for adventure, life change, and their perceived value of international experience are important factors for self-initiated expatriation.

On the other hand, researchers also have found that SIEs' decisions to go abroad do not solely hinge on these individually-desired outcomes. For example, SIEs'

motivation to explore global work opportunities varies in terms of personal characteristics. Selmer and Luring (2010) found that younger SIEs are more motivated by adventure, career, and financial incentives, and they tend to be less risk averse than older SIEs when making their expatriation decisions. These researchers also found that male SIEs are more motivated by money and opportunities to change their lives than female SIEs. From a gender perspective, Tharenou (2010) found that female professionals self-initiate their own expatriation more often than their male counterparts, which may reflect the disadvantage females face in managerial career development. Similar to traditional corporate expatriates, personal and familial relationships are also important concerns for SIEs, and those who have stronger familial ties and responsibilities are less likely to self-initiate an expatriation (Richardson, 2006; Richardson & Mallon, 2005; Tharenou, 2003). In a recent study, Doherty and her colleagues (2011) also compared corporate expatriates and SIEs' motivation to go abroad and found that location concerns and host country reputation were more important to SIEs while company expatriates placed significantly more emphasis on career development motives. In short, the major themes associated with SIEs' choices include external influences (personal agency and country and family consideration) and internal influences (intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and personal characteristics).

### **Facing challenges**

SIEs face plenty of challenges when they are abroad. Similar to traditional corporate expatriates, SIEs also face cross-cultural adjustment difficulties. However, the responsibility to overcome these difficulties is mostly on their own because they do not have a “parent” corporation supporting them. Even though SIEs often face tougher

conditions than traditional corporate expatriates, SIEs are found to have higher levels of general and interaction adjustment (Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009). This finding is in line with Selmer's (1999) argument that the personal intentions behind expatriation facilitate socio-cultural adjustment. SIEs who are more motivated to live abroad are more likely to immerse themselves in the host country culture and to interact with host country nationals, and this enhances their general and interaction adjustment.

Compared to traditional corporate expatriates, SIEs face more structural barriers such as obtaining visas and work permits, and this often leads to greater career constraints (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). Indeed, Inkson and Myers (2003) found that when SIEs were not able to obtain appropriate visas and work permits, they tended to end up working in jobs that did not match their professional qualifications. This corresponds with Fang, Zikic, and Novicevic's (2009) finding that SIEs have lower salaries, fewer promotions, and less career satisfaction when compared to host country nationals (HCNs). Even worse, host country organizations and institutions often discredit SIEs' previous education and professional experiences in their home countries, leading to an underutilization of SIEs' skills (Carr et al., 2005). Based on these findings, it is not surprising that a common challenge faced by SIEs is perceived underemployment. For instance, Lee (2005) found that lack of job autonomy, job suitability, job variety, and fit to the psychological contract are related to SIE underemployment which then leads to negative work attitudes such as job dissatisfaction, career dissatisfaction, and work alienation. Begley, Collings, and Scullion (2008) also found that SIEs perceived that their international experience was not valued in the host country, and they felt underemployed.

### **Career consequences**

Even though perceived career growth and career advancement opportunities have been found to be associated with SIEs' motivation to go abroad and explore global work opportunities, researchers have only recently begun to explore how SIEs' international experiences may affect their careers, and very few studies exist. Jokinen et al. (2008) found that international experience increased all three types of career capital (knowing how, knowing why, and knowing whom) of SIEs. Richardson and Mallon (2005) also reported that international experience increases SIEs' employability in the job market as well as the promotion opportunities in their employing organizations after expatriation. Similarly, Myers and Pringle (2005) also found that self-initiated foreign experiences provide career development opportunities (e.g., acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities, and career capital) for both male and female SIEs. In general, SIEs believe that their international experiences are beneficial to their future career and personal development. In a recent study by Tharenou and Caulfield (2010), career and community embeddedness of SIEs were positively related to host country satisfaction and negatively related to repatriation intention. Relative to traditional corporate expatriate literatures, research on SIEs' career experiences is still scarce and deserves further research attention.

### **SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES - THE ROAD AHEAD**

Similar to many nascent streams of research, there are many possibilities for researchers to investigate with regard to the topic of SIEs. On the flip side, there are also many challenges waiting them. The first issue has to do with the career experiences of SIEs. Given that career experiences are often described as "the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time" (Arthur, Hall, Lawrence, 1989: 8) and given that

self-initiated foreign experiences are often described as "long-term individually initiated exploration to other countries to pursue cultural, personal, and career development experience (Myers & Pringle, 2005: 421)", there is a need to investigate SIEs' career experience from a longitudinal perspective. Thus, I propose that SIEs' career experiences may start fairly early when SIEs still live in their home countries but already plan and evaluate the possibility of going abroad to explore global work opportunities. SIEs' career experiences continue as they actually move to and are employed in a host country and the duration of their career experiences is contingent on SIEs' intention of returning to their home countries at some time, or permanently relocating, resulting in a migration to the host country (Tharenou, 2008). Existing research on SIEs tends to investigate SIEs' career experience in a specific expatriation stage either before or after their entry into their host countries (see Tharenou, 2008; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010 for exceptions). Therefore, to better capture SIEs' career experiences and the transition process involved, a longitudinal design that tracks SIEs at different stages of their expatriation experiences is needed.

The second issue has to do with SIEs' country of origin. A great deal of SIE research focuses on the careers of SIEs from developed countries undertaking an international experience (Al Ariss, 2010). For example, Inkson and Myers (2003) focused on overseas experiences undertaken by young people from New Zealand. Jokinen et al. (2008) discussed the work experiences of SIEs from Finland. Nevertheless, SIEs from less developed countries undertaking an international career remains a less researched aspect of the international labor market. However, it is also important to study SIEs from developing countries as they constitute a pool of important international human resources

that offers organizations alternatives to traditional corporate expatriation, which is usually costly (Bonache & Zarraga-Oberty, 2008). Moreover, SIEs from developing countries are more likely to face more administrative barriers in obtaining visas and work permits from developed countries, and this often leads to stronger career constraints (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). Adding to this, organizations and institutions in the developed countries often discredit SIEs' educational qualifications and professional experiences from developing countries, leading to an underuse of their skills (Carr et al., 2005). Given these challenges, what motivates SIEs from developing countries to go abroad and pursue work opportunities in developed countries, and how SIEs cope with the challenges they encounter during their career transition, are rather interesting and deserve future research attention.

Last but not least, the underlying psychological mechanisms that motivate SIEs to embark on and continue their expatriation remain unclear. Even though many studies have delved into the topic of what motivates SIEs to undertake a self-initiated expatriation (e.g., Doherty et al., 2011; Richardson, 2006; Selmer & Luring, 2010; Tharenou, 2008; Thorn, 2009); nevertheless, these studies have a limited theoretical underpinning and mainly focus on factors that motivate SIEs to go abroad before they leave their home countries. In other words, our understanding with regard to what motivates SIEs upon their arrival in the host country, as well as how and why they are motivated during their expatriation is scant. Given that SIEs often decide to go abroad not just to enjoy a short period of leisure time but to strive for career development as well as permanent residency opportunities (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010; Tharenou, 2008; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010), more rigorous, theoretically grounded research is needed

that considers SIEs' career experiences at different stages of their expatriation and the underlying motivational process.

To summarize, these future research directions set up a clear milestone for SIE researchers. My dissertation is inspired by these ideas and aims at addressing some issues identified above by developing and empirically examining part of a theoretically grounded model that clarifies the process by which SIEs are motivated in and between different stages of their self-initiated expatriation.

**CHAPTER 3: SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES CAREER TRANSITION: A  
THREE-STAGE PROCESS MODEL**

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of this chapter is to theoretically develop a model that clarifies the process by which SIEs are motivated within and between different stages of their expatriation. To achieve this goal, the first objective is to identify stages that best represent critical career decision making points SIEs encounter both before and during their expatriation. Applying and extending previous academic works on career development (e.g., Super, 1957, 1990, 1992; Super Savickas, & Super, 1996), the process model I propose delineates three stages (exploration, establishment, embeddedness) that illustrate the evolution and span of SIEs' expatriation process.

The second objective of this paper is to provide a theoretically driven framework that can strengthen our understanding about how SIEs are motivated in different stages of their expatriation. In career literatures, Super (1990) viewed career decision making as a lifelong process in which individuals continually strive to match their ever changing career goals to the realities of the environment of work. Cappellen and Janssens (2005: 356) defined careers of individuals involved in different global work experiences (e.g., expatriates, SIEs, flexpatriates) as a path, “where each move is influenced by a different intersection of the factors within the individual, organizational, and global environment domains”. In addition, researchers (i.e., Forrier, Sels, & Stynen, 2009; Peiperl & Jonsen, 2007) also contend that one's career and the mobility it generates are largely the result of an evolving sequence of interactions between personal agency and social structure. Echoing the above arguments, I draw upon self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002), which supports the idea that motivated behavior is related to the dialectic between people and their social contexts (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vansteenkiste et

al., 2006), to explore how and why various relational factors, personal factors, and contextual factors may affect SIEs' motivation pertaining to their entire expatriation process. By focusing on how and why SIEs are motivated rather than just what, my dissertation addresses a theoretical question that is relatively neglected in this area (Whetten, 1989).

Finally, the third objective of this chapter is to elucidate the mechanism linking each stage of SIE expatriation. Even though there is a fair amount of research (e.g., Cerdin & Le Pargneux, 2009; Kraimer et al., 2009) investigating corporate expatriates' career transition experience and its influence in their subsequent career or life stage (e.g., repatriation), existing research on SIEs mainly focuses on their experience in a specific expatriation stage either before or after their entry into host countries (see Tharenou, 2008; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010 for exceptions). In other words, we lack an integrative framework that delineates SIEs' long-term expatriation experiences. Based on SDT framework, yet extending existing theoretical assumptions, I highlight the critical role of psychological well-being in facilitating the transition process throughout different stages of SIEs' career transitions.

This chapter is organized as follows. First, I categorize each stage of SIE career transitions and present an overview of the three-stage process model followed by a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of the process model. Second, I describe the motivational process within each of the stages and offer propositions about how and why SIEs are motivated to explore global work opportunities and go abroad, to establish global work experience and work and live abroad, and finally to embed themselves

within the host country environment (both work and living) and stay abroad. Third, I clarify the mechanism by which each stage of SIE expatriation is linked.

### **A THREE-STAGE PROCESS MODEL OF SIE CAREER TRANSITIONS**

Given that career is defined as the patterns of work-related experiences that span the course of a person's life (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010) and career transition is the period which may involve either an objective change in career role or a change in subjective orientation toward a career role (Louis, 1980), I view SIEs' expatriation as a career transition process in that SIEs' expatriation may involve both long-term objective career changes (e.g., a British engineer searched and accepted a senior consultant position at PriceWaterhouseCoopers at Tokyo) as well as subjective career changes (e.g., a Japanese computer engineer struggles to work as a computer engineer in the United States).

Building on Super's (1957) theory of career development, I construe SIEs' career transitions as a three-stage process consisting of the exploration stage, the establishment stage, and the embeddedness stage. Central to Super's theory of career development is the notion that individuals progress through five stages of career development across their life spans (Super et al., 1996). Super's stages include growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. The growth stage begins as children and adolescents are introduced to a variety of occupations and begin to develop vocationally relevant attributes such as one's abilities, values, self-esteem, and self-efficacy (Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006). The exploration stage is the time when career choices are narrowed and individuals select and embark on training or education to prepare them for their chosen vocation. The establishment stage is a period of time during which

individuals gain employment, focus on establishing a stable work environment and workplace relationships, and work toward career advancement. Maintenance, the fourth stage, is characterized by “preserving the place one has made in the world of work” (Super, 1992: 44). Nevertheless, individuals may decide to make career changes either before or during the maintenance stage (e.g., moving to other organizations, positions, or quitting). The final stage, disengagement, is the process of disentanglement from the world of work, which usually comes in the form of retirement. In Super's career development stages, individuals' chronological age strongly dictates their career development process from stage to stage. Unlike Super's development stages, the process model of SIE career transitions I propose hinges mostly on SIEs' perceived readiness (Savickas, 1997) for transition and has nothing to do with biological factors (i.e., age, gender).

My process model of SIE career transitions starts at the *exploration stage*, defined as a time period during which SIEs explore global work opportunities, gauge the possibilities and costs associated with going abroad, evaluate personal readiness and resources to complete the transition, and finally make choices and implement their decisions. The exploration stage reflects Super's growth and exploration stages in that at this stage, SIEs develop and accumulate a relevant repertoire of knowledge and skills (i.e., language ability, professional skills, cultural awareness) for their upcoming expatriation, specify their destination and goal (i.e., to which country they want to go; what kind of job they want to pursue), and finally take off to the new host country. I also consider the exploration stage as a process of career navigation as it "includes the appraisal of internal self attributes and the exploration of external options and constraints from relevant

educational, vocational, and relational context" (Flum & Blustein, 2000: 381). In short, the goal for SIEs in the exploration stage is to *explore global work opportunities*.

Following the exploration stage is the *establishment stage*, during which SIEs physically arrive at a host country and encounter cultural shock, begin to adjust and live within a host country culture, gain employment, and establish relationships with others. The establishment stage I propose reflects Super's establishment stage in that SIEs gain employment in the host country, establish their work environment and interpersonal relationships, and pursue career development and advancement. The goal for SIEs at the establishment stage is to *establish their global work experience*.

The final stage as proposed in my model is the *embeddedness stage*, defined as a period of time during which SIEs become more involved in their host country job and embedded with the host country living environment. The embeddedness stage best represents Super's maintenance stage in that SIEs are faced with choices such as whether to remain in their chosen job and continue to live in the host country, return to their home country, or move to another host country. I propose that the goal for SIEs in the embeddedness stage is to *maintain and prolong their global work experience*. Because retirement is not a proximal concern during SIEs' career transition process, I propose that Super's disengagement stage is less relevant to SIEs' career transitions.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MODEL**

The process model of SIE career transitions draws on self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002) as an overarching theoretical framework. SDT represents a broad framework for the study of human motivation, development, and well-

being (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002). Central to SDT is the distinction between autonomous motivation (sometimes called self-determined motivation) and controlled motivation.

Autonomous motivation involves acting with a sense of volition, self-endorsement and having the experience of choice whereas controlled motivation involves acting with a sense of pressure and a sense of having to engage in the actions (Gagné & Deci, 2005). In addition, controlled motivation also refers to doing an activity in order to obtain rewards or avoid punishment, or the regulation of behavior out of self-worth contingencies like ego-involvement and guilt (Koestner & Losier, 2002). The extensive empirical evidence on the application of SDT demonstrates that autonomous motivation, when compared to controlled motivation, yields the best behavioral, attitudinal, and affective outcomes such as efforts, persistence, performance, prosocial behaviors, and various indices of psychological well-being (Vallerand, 2007; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010), while controlled motivation yields the poorest outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

SDT also highlights the importance of three basic psychological needs - autonomy, competence, and relatedness to understanding human motivations and behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Specifically, the extent to which individuals satisfy their innate needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness affects their sense of well-being and motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). The needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are also considered to be universal across people and cultures and applicable throughout all aspects of a person's life (Deci & Ryan, 2002). In line with this argument, some research has shown that satisfaction of these three psychological needs is strongly related to individual's autonomous motivation and well-being in multiple life domains (e.g., family, friends, relationship, school, work) (Milyavskaya and Koestner, 2011) and

across cultures (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, & Kasser, 2001). By definition, the need for autonomy implies that individuals strive to experience ownership of their behaviors and to act with a sense of volition (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The need for competence implies that individuals seek to feel capable of mastering the environment, to bring about desirable outcomes, and to manage various challenges (White, 1959). Last, the need for relatedness implies that individuals seek to experience a sense of belonging or connectedness and to be valued by others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The degree to which these three basic psychological needs are satisfied or thwarted is related to the extent that an individual's behavior is guided by autonomous or controlled motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Furthermore, SDT researchers found that individuals doing an activity under autonomous motivation reported positive psychological well-being, while individuals doing an activity under controlled motivation reported a lack of energy, feelings of pressure and tension (Nix, Ryan, Manly, & Deci, 1999). In addition some researchers also proposed that autonomous and controlled motivation should be considered as more proximal influences on an individual's well-being than the satisfaction of psychological needs (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ommundsen, Lemyre, Abrahamsen, & Roberts, 2010; Vallerand & Losier, 1999).

Existing research of SDT focuses on how relational contexts can facilitate or forestall an individual's autonomous motivation and psychological well-being by supporting versus thwarting an individual's psychological needs. Specifically, SDT has proposed that relational contexts that offer choice, support individual volition, minimize pressure and control, acknowledge negative feelings (i.e., provide empathy), and offer meaningful rationale for engaging in activities, can satisfy an individual's basic

psychological needs (Reeve & Jang, 2006) and represent an optimal context for promoting psychological wellness and effective functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2011). For instance, a supervisor's positive feedback (Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, & Lens, 2008) and a coach's autonomy support (Adie, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2008) were found to positively relate to employees' and athletes' psychological need satisfaction. Similarly, when managers were more autonomy supportive, their employees were more trusting of their organization and were more satisfied with various aspects of their work lives (Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989). In the family domain, Grolnick and Ryan (1989) found that parents who were more autonomy supportive had children who were more autonomous in doing their schoolwork and were rated as more competent by their elementary school teachers. Thus, I propose that *relational support*, defined as perceived support from relationships with others (e.g., family members, supervisors, coworkers, employers), can enhance individuals' psychological need satisfaction, which in turn, affects their autonomous motivation, and their well-being.

Even though substantial evidence supports the role of relational contexts in predicting individuals' psychological needs and autonomous motivation (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004), the role of individual differences has received considerably less attention, despite evidence and theory suggesting their importance (Black & Deci, 2000). Existing research on individual differences within SDT mainly focuses on the influence of general causality orientations. General causality orientations are an individual difference variable that refers to people's tendency to orient toward particular kinds of social inputs and particular interpretations of those inputs (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Specifically, Lam and Gurland (2008) found that both autonomous and control orientations predict work

motivation but in opposite directions. In addition, research has consistently demonstrated that individuals who hold positive self-evaluations (Judge, Bono, Erez, & Locke, 2005) and who have the required abilities and skills to accomplish their tasks (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009) are more satisfied with their psychological needs and more self-determined to pursue their goals. Based on these research findings, I expect that *personal resources*, defined as individuals' aspects of themselves that are generally linked to resiliency and the sense of their abilities to control and impact upon their environment successfully (Hobfoll, Johnson, Ennis, & Jackson, 2003), should enhance individuals' psychological need satisfaction which then influences individuals' autonomous motivation, and their well-being.

Studies of need satisfaction and SDT tend to examine the impact of relatively proximal factors in the lives of the targeted individuals - managers of employees, coaches of athletes, and parents of children; however, more distal influences shaped by contextual structures (e.g., social, economic, political factors) can also affect the need satisfaction, motivation, and well-being of individuals (Ryan & Deci, 2011). For example, the American corporate capitalist system of economics is found to set forth controlling influences that negatively affect the autonomy of individuals within it (Kasser, Cohn, Kanner, & Ryan, 2007). Similarly, societies that emphasize individualism, competition, and materialism are likely to thwart individuals' perceived competence and relatedness, further yielding negative effects on individuals' psychological health and well-being (Kasser et al., 2007). Because human beings are not only relational creatures but live in broader social entities composed of different political, religious, and economic sub-systems, I expect that contextual factors (e.g., economic condition, community climate)

nested within social systems can also impact individuals' psychological needs, motivation, and well-being.

Based on the empirical evidence and theoretical arguments mentioned above, I propose that relational support (an interpersonal component), personal resources (an individual component), and contextual influences (a macro-context component) should all be explicitly included in the SDT framework to better demonstrate the factors that may influence individuals' psychological needs, their autonomous motivation, and their well-being. Figure 1 presents the modified SDT framework which will serve as an overarching theoretical framework of my dissertation. Having provided an overview of the three stages of the process model and introduced the modified SDT framework I will draw upon in my dissertation, I now introduce and provide an overview of each stage of SIEs' career transition in order. I then provide propositions which explain the motivation process as well as SIEs' well-being within the three stages of SIE career transitions. Last, I elucidate the linking mechanism between each stage of SIEs' career transitions. Figure 2 presents my three-stage process model of SIEs' career transitions with detail proposed relationships.

**FIGURE 1**

**Extended Core Constructs of Self-Determination Theory**

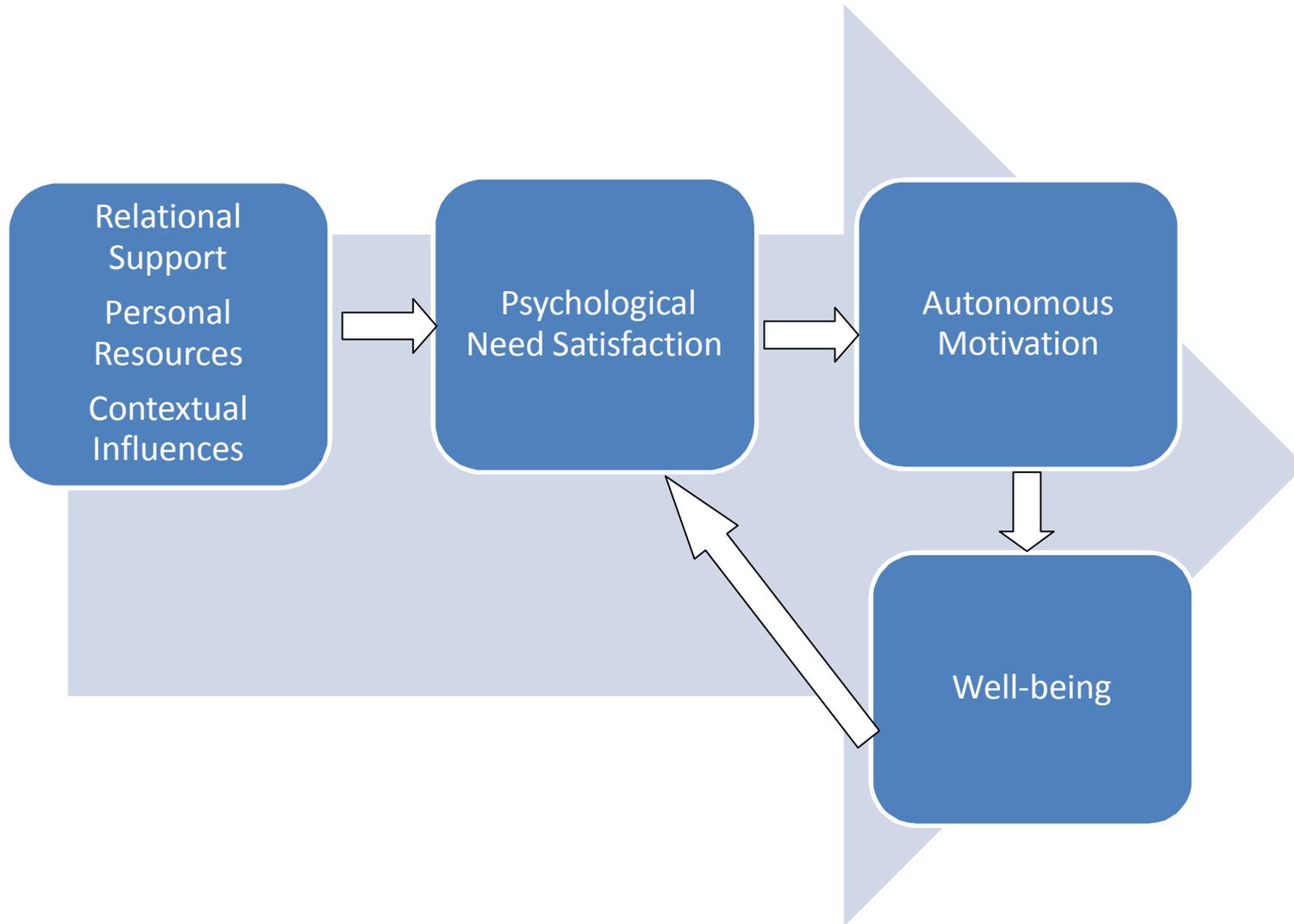
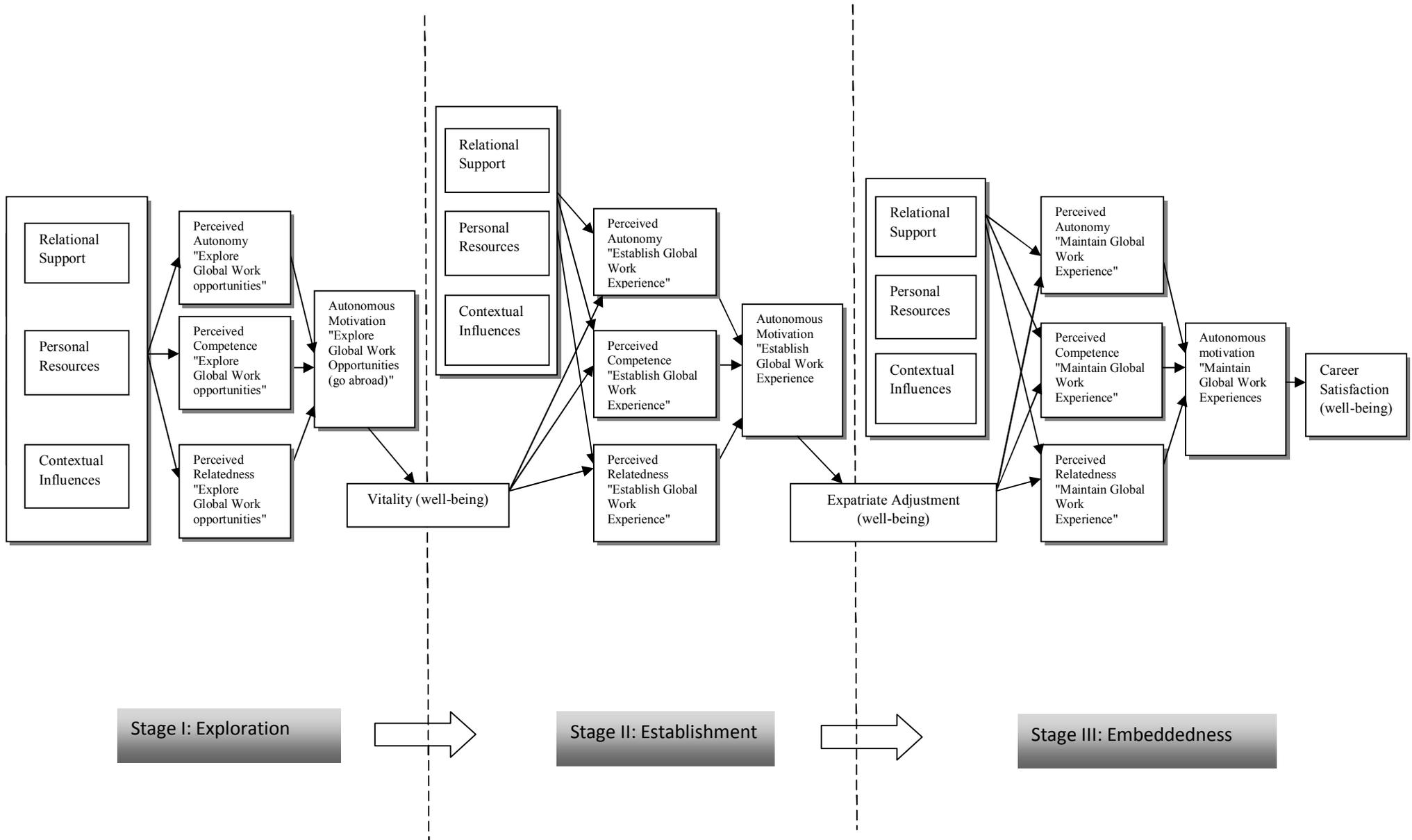


FIGURE 2

A Three-Stage Process Model of SIE Career Transitions



## **OVERVIEW OF SIES' CAREER TRANSITION STAGES**

SIEs' career transition process begins at the exploration stage, a time period during which SIEs collect information, evaluate their capability, explore the opportunity and appraise the possibility of their self-initiated expatriation, and make their decisions to go abroad. When SIEs physically arrive in a host country, they enter the establishment stage, during which they actually encounter both work and non-work environments of the host country, and they begin to establish their work environment and interpersonal relationships. Similar to traditional corporate expatriates, SIEs face culture shock and cross-cultural adjustment difficulties during the early stage of establishment; however, the responsibility to overcome these hurdles is generally their own because they do not have a "home" company supporting them. At the later stage of establishment, SIEs generally begin adapting to the new culture, feeling more positive, establishing both work and non-work relationships, working more effectively, and living a more satisfying life. Ultimately, SIEs enter the embeddedness stage, during which they face a choice: whether they want to put their roots permanently in the host country soil or repatriate and return to their home country or move to other host countries. Indeed, leaving one's home country for good is never an easy decision given that leaving one's country of origin and permanently moving to another often brings disconnection from familiar social institutions and cultural practices, separation from family members, friends, and other contacts, and isolation from sources of support in one's new homeland (Suárez-Orozco, Todorova, & Louie, 2002). Unlike most traditional corporate expatriates, SIEs themselves have the full volition to choose whether to stay in a host country or repatriate but they also have to face the derivative consequences.

## **MOTIVATIONAL PROCESS WITHIN SIES' CAREER TRANSITION STAGES**

Because moving to a different country, working and living there, and permanently staying there are all important life-changing decisions and carry a lot of uncertainties and risks, it seems obvious that various reasons and motives play a role therein (Hall, 2004). Accordingly, many models of migration and cultural adaptation have included motivational factors as important determinants of both the migration and adaptation processes (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). The question of what motivates an individual to move to another country, either temporarily or permanently, is often raised in the global mobility literatures but has often been answered from the view of a single stakeholder such as expatriates themselves, their family, or environment (Raghuram, 2004). However, Ackers (2005) suggested that there might be a range of factors involved in one's decision to be mobile and the relative importance of each factor might change over time.

Within the SIEs context, Thorn (2009) identified six motives for SIEs' global mobility: cultural and travel opportunities, career motives, relationship motives, economic motives, quality of life, and political environment. Tharenou (2008) also argued that SIEs may become embedded in the host country by a web of family links and friendship; a strong fit with the community in which they live; and the family and social sacrifices they would make by repatriating. Both Thorn's (2009) and Tharenou's (2008) findings with regard to SIEs' motives to go abroad and stay abroad can be generally categorized into the same three domains I propose as influences on SIEs' psychological need satisfaction and autonomous motivation based on SDT: relational (relationship, family links, sacrifices, and friendship), personal (cultural and travel, career,), and

contextual (economic, quality of life, political environment, and fit with community). Therefore, drawing on the extended SDT framework I proposed in Figure 1, I provide further specificity and explanation and offer general propositions that portray SIEs' motivation to explore global work opportunities, establish global work experience, and maintain global work experience as a sequential process involving the causal relationships among relational support, personal resources, contextual factors, psychological need satisfaction, autonomous motivation, and well-being.

### **Relational Support and Psychological Need Satisfaction.**

At the exploration stage, my main focus is to investigate what motivates SIEs to make their decision to explore global work opportunities and how they are motivated. Within the traditional corporate expatriate context, family concerns and supports have been the top reasons for why employees accept or refuse to take global work assignments (Brookfield Global Relocation Services, 2010). Within the SIE context, Inkson and Myers (2003) found that the major motivations for New Zealand sojourners to pursue self-initiated overseas experiences include family support, social relationships, and personal partnership. Based on a study of British faculty members who self-initiated their expatriation to various countries, Richardson (2006) also found that family members, especially SIEs' spouses, play an important role in their decision to expatriate. In addition to the influences from family, I also expect influences from SIEs' friends, given the impact of friend support on individuals' career planning, career exploration, self-exploration, and decision-making (Creed, Fallon, & Hood, 2008). Applying the SDT framework to the arguments listed above, I argue that relational support will enhance SIEs' perceived autonomy, perceived competence, and perceived relatedness with regard

to their decisions to explore global work opportunities and the satisfaction of these psychological needs will in turn positively influence SIEs' motivation to explore global work opportunities. Focusing on the relational support-needs satisfaction relationship, I expect that SIEs who receive various forms of relational support (House & Kahn, 1985) such as emotional support (e.g., encouragement, showing concerns), informational support (e.g., provision of information, advice), instrumental support (e.g., provision of tangible help such as money subject matter knowledge), and appraisal support (e.g., the provision of information relevant to self-evaluation) provided by family members and friends in the home country aiming at facilitating SIEs' decisions to explore global work opportunities and go abroad should feel more autonomous, competent, and related with regard to their decisions. Specifically, I anticipate that emotional support (e.g., offering SIEs a meaningful rationale for their decisions to explore global work opportunities, encouraging SIEs with regards to their expatriation decision) should increase SIEs' perceived autonomy. I also expect that informational, instrumental, and appraisal support (e.g., offering advices on how to successfully live abroad, providing financial support on related expenses, helping SIEs understand their capability for exploring global work opportunities) should lessen SIEs' pre-departure anxiety and increase SIEs' perceived competence of exploring global work opportunities. Last, because of the relational nature of these supports mentioned above, I expect that SIEs who receive these relational supports will perceive themselves as higher level of relatedness.

At the establishment stage, there are several challenges SIEs will encounter when they are abroad. These include lack of support from host country nationals (HCNs) and organizations, feelings of isolation, and an inability to adapt to a foreign culture (Cheung,

2002). Insofar as SIEs enter a host country and begin their employment in a new organization, the process of adaptation requires an initial period of socialization whereby uncertainties and anxieties associated with the entry process can be reduced (Jones, 1986). The findings from domestic socialization literatures (e.g., Ashforth, Saks, & Lee, 1998) suggested that supportive peer and supervisor relationships positively influence organizational newcomer socialization by providing information that is effective in reducing the uncertainty associated with perceived novelty. Mezas and Scandura (2005) also proposed that formal hierarchical mentoring, and both formal and informal peer mentoring, can positively influence expatriate adjustment during their assignment. Within the SIE context, Fu, Hsu, and Shaffer (2008) examined the influence of organizational socialization tactics on SIEs and found that structured organizational practices facilitate their social integration and are especially important in their cross-cultural adjustment. Empirical findings mentioned above suggest the importance of organizational support on facilitating SIEs' adaptation to the host culture. Last, because family members are an important stakeholder during the expatriation process (Takeuchi, 2010), family support, family communication, and family adaptability to host country cultures were also found to facilitate expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi, & Bross, 1998).

Applying the SDT framework to the cases mentioned above, I argue that SIEs who receive relational support from their host country employers, host country nationals (including supervisors, coworkers, and non-work related friends, and family members), will perceive more autonomy, competence and relatedness with regards to their decisions to establish global work experience. For instance, organizations that provide job skill

training and offer socialization practices, host country supervisors and peers who provide work-related feedback and other work or non-work assistance, accompanying family members who wholeheartedly support SIEs' decision to work abroad and act as SIEs' backup both instrumentally (e.g., take care of household chores and children) and emotionally (share concern and empathize with SIEs' feelings) should increase SIEs' perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness with regard to their decision to establish global work experience.

Similar to the logic I proposed at both the exploration and the establishment stages, at the embeddedness stage, I anticipate that SIEs' perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness with regard to their decisions to maintain global work experiences and stay abroad permanently are positively related to relational support provided by their employer, host country counterparts, and family members. SIEs' employers who assist SIEs in applying for and obtaining permanent residency status and host country supervisors and peers who provide hands-on support (e.g., provide assistance in finding long-term accommodation and finding education for SIEs' children) can enhance SIEs' perceived competence and relatedness in their decisions to maintain their global work experience. At the embeddedness stage, I also expect that family members have a strong influence on SIEs' decisions to permanently stay abroad given long-term and sustaining influence of their decision on family members (Clark, Glick, & Bures, 2009). Significant family members should include those who accompany SIEs in the host country and those who remain in the home country (Richardson, 2006). For instance, elderly home country family members (e.g., SIEs' parents or elderly family members who need to be taken care of) and accompanying family members who support

SIEs' decision to maintain their global work experience will make SIEs feel more autonomous and related because the pressure to go home is minimized and SIEs can volitionally choose to stay abroad given that their decision has been taken in and supported by their family members. Indeed, SIEs' family members who actively encourage SIEs to return may exert considerable pressure on SIEs to repatriate (Jones, 2003), and Tharenou and Caulfield (2010) found that the strong pull by SIEs' home country family members increased SIEs' intention to repatriate.

To summarize, although I am not aware of any existing study that examines the association between relational support and need satisfaction within either the expatriate or the SIEs literatures, numerous studies based on SDT have already indicated that relational support directly predicts psychological need satisfaction. For instance, Guay, Senécal, Gauthier, and Fernet (2003) posited that parental and peer autonomy support promoted college students' career decision-making self efficacy and autonomy. In the sports management context, empirical findings (e.g., Adie et al., 2008; Taylor, Ntoumanis & Standage, 2008) have also shown that perceptions of coach support are positive predictors of athletes' satisfaction of their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. As discussed, theoretically-driven association and empirical evidence suggest that various forms of relational support, such as that from organizations, supervisors, peers, host country nationals, and family members, positively influence SIEs' perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness at the exploration, establishment, and embeddedness stage respectively. Thus, I propose:

*Proposition 1: Relational supports are positively related to SIEs' perceived autonomy, competence, and perceived relatedness at each stage of their career transition process.*

### **Personal Resources and Psychological Need Satisfaction**

In general, resources have been found to stimulate employee motivation to fully participate in one's role and dedicate one's efforts and abilities to a particular task and goal (Llorens, Bakker, Schaufeli, & Salanova, 2006). Within the expatriate context, Lazarova, Westman, and Shaffer (2010) proposed that various types of resources (e.g., personal related resources, work related resources, and family related resources) have positive influences on expatriates' well-being such as expatriate adjustment, role engagement, and performance both at work and at home. In this chapter, I pay special attention to personal resources, given the salient influence of personal agency on SIEs' receptivity to international relocation (Tharenou, 2003; 2008) and the critical role of personal resources for coping with the uncertainties and demands of moving, working, and living in a foreign culture (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005). Indeed, because most times SIEs need to rely on their own to cope with difficulties throughout their career transition process, their personal resources are their best armor.

Acknowledging there are too many types of personal resources that can be identified, my selection criterion for SIEs' personal resources in this chapter is generally based upon previous research findings (e.g., Ones & Viswesvaran, 1997; Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black, & Ferzandi, 2006) on expatriate personal attributes and expatriate effectiveness (e.g., adjustment, performance). Personal attributes associated with expatriate effectiveness are considered personal resources in this study. Specifically,

I consider SIEs' self-evaluations, personality traits, and several specific knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) as their personal resources during their career transition process.

Detailed descriptions of how these personal attributes influence SIEs' needs satisfaction at each stage of SIEs' career transitions is provided in the following section.

At the exploration stage, I propose that SIEs with international work self-efficacy, defined as how certain individuals are that they can work and live in countries with different cultures from their own (Cianni & Tharenou, 2002), are more likely to judge themselves as capable of managing an international environment (Bandura, 1997; Betz, 2000). Similarly, SIEs who believe they have control over external events in their life (high internal locus of control) are more likely to feel autonomous about going abroad (Kimmons & Greenhaus, 1976). In brief, SIEs who hold positive self-evaluations of themselves should perceive higher levels of autonomy and competence with respect to their decision to go abroad and explore global work opportunities.

Personality traits have long been investigated as important influences on occupational mobility (Crockett, 1962). Personality traits are relatively stable and enduring patterns in how individuals feel, think, and behave. Specifically, I look at the influences of conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience, agreeableness, and extraversion (the Big Five factors) on SIEs' psychological need satisfaction. In general, conscientiousness refers to the extent to which individuals are careful, diligent, self-disciplined, and dependable (Costa & McCrae, 1992); emotional stability is the tendency to experience positive emotional states and to respond calmly to stress events (Costa & McCrae, 1992); agreeableness is the tendency to get along with others; extraversion refers to the degree to which individuals are energetic, outgoing,

warm, assertive, optimistic, and sociable (Costa & McCrae, 1992); openness to experience describes individuals in terms of their being original, innovative, and willing to take risks and novel events (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Conscientious SIEs are motivated to achieve so they will be more likely to make an effort to learn how to achieve their goal (e.g., explore global work experience) (Schmidt & Hunter, 1992), and this may directly increase their perceived competence. Conscientious SIEs are also motivated to find meanings for themselves (Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1999) which enables them to make sense of their decisions (i.e., why they decide to explore global work opportunities); This may increase their perceived autonomy. Emotionally stable SIEs are more confident, less susceptible to uncertainty, and more likely to make sense out of their lives (Hogan & Shelton, 1998); therefore, emotionally stable SIEs should feel more autonomous and competent with regard to their decision to explore global work opportunities. SIEs who are open to experience are more curious and eager to learn (Barrick & Mount, 1991), which should enhance their efforts to make sense of their choices (Hogan & Sheldon, 1998). Those high on openness to experience are also more likely to accept novel information, which should also enhance their understanding of foreign cultures. Thus, SIEs who are open to experience should feel more autonomous and competent regarding their decisions to explore global work opportunities. Last, agreeableness and extraversion are important personality traits that facilitate interpersonal relationships, and I expect that agreeable and extraverted SIEs are more likely to have connections and get along with either foreign people or people with international experiences living in their home countries. These social ties are likely to provide SIEs with pre-departure information regarding foreign cultures and living environments that

may directly increase their perceived competence and relatedness of exploring global work opportunities.

In addition to SIEs' self-evaluations and personality traits, I also anticipate that having some KSAs that will facilitate SIEs' upcoming expatriation (e.g., prior international work experience, host country language proficiency) should positively influence their psychological needs and their motivation to explore global work opportunities. For example, SIEs who have prior international experience are likely to develop more comprehensive cognitions about people, roles or events that govern social behaviors in the foreign culture (Fiske & Taylor, 1984), thus making SIEs feel more prepared and competent to explore global work opportunities. Similarly, SIEs who excel in the host country language should also feel more competent as they will face fewer barriers in communication and will be able to interact with HCNs more effectively (Peltokorpi, 2008).

At the establishment stage, based on the same theoretical logic I have proposed at the exploration stage, I expect that SIEs with positive self-evaluations should perceive more autonomy and competence with regard to their decisions to work abroad. With regard to personality traits, I anticipate that conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience, agreeableness, and extraversion will have similar influences on SIEs' psychological need satisfaction at the establishment stage as proposed at the exploration stage. Conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience should enhance SIEs' perceived autonomy and competence to work and live abroad, and agreeableness and extraversion can enhance SIEs' perceived competence and relatedness to work and live abroad.

In addition to these stable individual characteristics, SIEs who have specific KSAs, especially those that can facilitate their host country work responsibilities and cross-cultural adjustment, will also increase their perceived competence of establishing global work experience. From the establishment stage to the embeddedness stage, SIEs must physically encounter foreign cultures and people directly and frequently. Cultural flexibility, the capacity to adjust one's familiar behavioral patterns to different and distinct circumstances in the host country (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001), has the potential to enhance expatriates' adaptation to the foreign environment in daily activities taking place in both work and non-work contexts (Black, 1990; Sinangil & Ones, 1997), as well as effective interpersonal interactions in the social context (Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001). Thus, I propose that SIEs' cultural flexibility should positively influence their perceived competence and relatedness in establishing global work experience. In addition, host country language proficiency can help SIEs understand the dynamics of a new culture, communicate with peers at work to learn the appropriate work values, expectations, and standards, and enhance subtle interpersonal relationships with HCNs (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985; Takeuchi, Yun, & Tesluk, 2002). In addition, host country language proficiency has also been consistently found to positively influence expatriates' interaction adjustment (Takeuchi et al., 2002). Therefore, I expect host country language proficiency to positively influence SIEs' perceived competence of establishing global work experience. Similarly, because previous international experience can help SIEs more accurately perceive the foreign culture, the social customs, business practices, and appropriate interpersonal conduct in the host country (Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005), I anticipate that prior international

experience should positively influence SIEs' perceived competence of establishing global work experience. Last but not least, I expect that SIEs who have specific subject matter knowledge with regard to their host country job should feel more competent in working and living abroad. This argument is in line with Greguras and Diefendorff's (2009) empirical finding that the match between employees' skills and abilities and those required to effectively perform their jobs increases employees' perceived competence need satisfaction.

At the embeddedness stage, I anticipate that SIEs' positive self-evaluation, personality traits (conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience, agreeableness, extraversion), and KSAs (cultural flexibility, host country language proficiency, prior international experience) should have similar influences on SIEs' psychological needs to those I proposed at the establishment stage. However, I also propose two stage-specific personal resources for SIEs at the embeddedness stage. Unlike immigrants, SIEs generally have already worked and lived in a host country for a while before making their decisions to stay permanently. Their working and living experiences in the host country may provide both career instrumentality (the extent to which SIEs expect that a host country job will produce career benefits) and lifestyle instrumentality (the extent to which SIEs believe that host country life will offer lifestyle benefits) to SIEs (Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010). SIEs who perceive greater host country career and life instrumentality should feel more comfortable, experience greater enjoyment, and have more confidence, thus increasing their perceived competence of staying abroad and maintaining their global work experience.

To summarize, drawing upon Shaffer and her colleagues' (2006) argument that stable personality traits and specific behavioral competencies have enduring influences on expatriate effectiveness, I anticipate that SIEs can carry their personal resources throughout different stages of their career transitions, which enables them to perceive a higher level of psychological need satisfaction during their career transition process. Therefore, I propose:

*Proposition 2: Personal resources are positively related to SIEs' perceived autonomy, competence, and perceived relatedness at each stage of their career transition process.*

### **Contextual Factors and Need Satisfaction**

At the exploration stage, I contend that certain contextual factors can facilitate SIEs' psychological needs. For instance, countries that have a climate which values international experiences implicitly encourage their citizens to go abroad and pursue cultural experiences as well as personal and career growth opportunities. I expect that SIEs from these countries should perceive more autonomy for exploring global work opportunities, given that SIEs from these locations feel less regulatory stringency with regard to their decisions to explore global work opportunities. On the other hand, controlling social events such as downward economic conditions or lack of career opportunities in their home country may force SIEs to go abroad to seek better career or life opportunities. This can undermine SIEs' personal autonomy, producing an internal-to-external shift in the perceived locus of causality for one's behavior (Wild & Enzle, 2002). However, supportive home country contextual factors can support SIEs' perceived competence to explore global work opportunities. For example, countries or regions (e.g.,

Singapore, Hong Kong, and India) with educational systems that aim to improve citizens' language proficiency (especially in universal languages such as English) can increase SIE's perceived competence to explore global work opportunities. Moreover, because frequent cultural exposure is instrumental in building international awareness, knowledge, and connections relevant for future international career development (Inkson & Myers, 2003), I also anticipate that SIEs living in a city or region composed of residents from diverse cultures (e.g., Hong Kong, Shanghai, Montreal) should feel more competent and related with respect to their decisions to explore global work opportunities due to their frequent interactions with people from different cultures and with international experiences and the resultant knowledge acquisition.

At the establishment stage, countries that welcome SIEs and have friendly policy and infrastructures toward foreign visitors can facilitate the employment and assimilation of SIEs. For example, Agullo and Egawa (2009) found that a change in migration procedures (e.g., certain employment visas no longer require employer sponsorship) facilitated the increase of Indian knowledge workers in Japan as well as their mobility within occupations. Thus, less stringent regulations and more friendly policies toward foreign workforces may directly influence SIEs' volitions, such as which company they can work for and where they want to reside, that may directly increase their perceived autonomy in establishing global work experiences abroad. In addition, infrastructures (i.e., transportation, public facilities) that consider foreigners' needs such as road signs and menus written in mainstream foreign languages or public announcements spoken in multiple languages should directly increase SIEs' perceived comfort. This may directly

increase their perceived competence for establishing global work experience in a host country.

At the embeddedness stage, I expect that countries that do not welcome foreign visitors and foreign workforces have stringent regulations on permanent residency. This should negatively affect SIEs' perceived autonomy and competence in staying abroad and discourage SIEs from maintaining global work experiences. For example, Germany has had a protective, relatively non-welcoming tradition that views workers recruited from other countries as temporary, despite the fact that many of them never return to their home countries (Rubio-Marin, 2000). For SIEs, integrating into such countries is likely to be particularly challenging, as compared to nations built on immigration such as New Zealand and Australia. Hostile host country environments may inevitably thwart SIEs' perceived autonomy and competence in their decisions to permanently stay abroad and maintain their global work experiences given that their volitions are inhibited and their capabilities not able to exceed the hurdles set by institutional constraints. In contrast, SIEs who live in a host country with foreigner-supportive or diverse climates should feel more autonomous (i.e., freely choose where to live, where to travel), competent (i.e., feel capable of dealing with daily activities), and related (i.e., feel connected to host country communities) to permanently stay abroad and maintain their global work experience. Thus, I propose:

*Proposition 3: Supportive contextual factors are positively related to SIEs' perceived autonomy, competence, and perceived relatedness at each stage of their career transition process.*

### **Need Satisfaction, Autonomous Motivation, and Well-being**

SDT proposes that human beings have basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and satisfaction of these needs will promote a person's enjoyment of activities and the autonomous self-regulation of behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In other words, individuals are likely to perceive a higher level of autonomous motivation when they can freely choose to pursue the activity, when they master the activity, and when they feel connected and supported by important people (Gagné, 2003). Along the same vein, I argue that when SIEs experience a greater sense of volition to pursue their own interests and goals associated with global work experiences (i.e., to explore global work opportunities, to establish global work experience, and to maintain global work experiences), they are likely to perceive a higher level of psychological freedom, which motivates SIEs to behave according to their self-endorsed (autonomous) wishes and decisions (Luyckx, Vansteenkiste, Goossens, & Duriez, 2009). When SIEs perceive a higher level of competence with regard to their decision to pursue global work opportunities and experiences, they are more intrinsically motivated to proactively explore and pursue their decision because highly competent individuals usually feel sufficiently equipped to engage in exploration (Luyckx et al., 2009). In line with this assumption, Guay et al. (2003) found that when individuals perceived themselves as less competent with respect to career decisions, they experienced a higher degree of indecision about their career choices. Last, when SIEs perceive a higher level of relatedness, they are more likely to have a sense of psychological security, which in turn motivates them to fearlessly explore the self-endorsed decisions they have made to pursue global work experiences. This argument is also in line with the proposition of

attachment theory (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002) which proposes that individuals who have close and supportive relationships with others (high level of relatedness) tend to feel securely attached, which enables them to engage in novel activities and exploratory actions. Although I am unaware of any study that directly examines the need satisfaction - autonomous motivation association within the expatriate or SIE context, the proposed relationship between need satisfaction and autonomous motivation has been empirically supported in other contexts such as students (Grouzet, Vallerand, Thill, & Provencher, 2004), athletes (McDonough & Crocker, 2007), and nursing home residents (Philippe & Vallerand, 2008). Therefore, I propose:

*Proposition 4: SIEs' need satisfaction with regard to their decisions within each career transition stage relates positively to their autonomous motivations to explore global work opportunities, establish global work experience, and maintain global work experience.*

Based on SDT, the associations between need satisfaction, autonomous motivation, and well-being are equivocal. According to the basic needs theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), one sub-theory of SDT, need satisfaction, in order to qualify as a motivating force, must have a direct impact on well-being. For example, Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, and Ryan (2000), using both individual-difference and daily-diary procedures, found that satisfaction of psychological needs predicted individuals' well-being. Similarly, Gagné, Ryan, and Bargmann (2003) found that gymnasts' daily experiences of psychological need satisfaction predicted change in well-being over the 4 weeks of their study. On the other hand, some researchers have argued that autonomous motivation should have a more proximal influence on well-being than need satisfaction. For instance,

Sheldon and Elliot (1998, 1999) found that personal strivings that are more self-determined or autonomy-oriented were associated with higher subjective vitality. Similarly, Philippe and Vallerand (2008) found that nursing home environments that satisfy psychological needs of residents were positively associated with autonomous motivation in major life domains, which in turn predicted increases in psychological adjustment. Deci and Ryan (2008) also argued that the degree that three basic psychological needs are satisfied or thwarted indicates the extent that an individual's behavior is guided by autonomous or controlled motivation. Indeed, many SDT researchers have argued that autonomous or controlled motivation should be considered as a more proximal influence on individuals' well-being than the satisfaction of psychological needs (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ommundsen et al., 2010; Vallerand & Losier, 1999). Following this rationale, I propose:

*Proposition 5: SIEs' autonomous motivation to explore global work opportunities, establish global work experience, and maintain global work experience positively relates to their well-being within each career transition stage.*

### **THE LINKING MECHANISM BETWEEN EACH STAGE**

Another feature of this chapter is to clarify the mechanism linking each stage of SIEs' career transitions. Specifically, I expect SIEs' well-being derived from their autonomous motivation within each career transition stage plays a critical role. Based on SDT, volition and autonomous self-regulation (autonomous motivation) can facilitate individuals' vitality, defined as having physical and mental energy (Ryan & Deci, 2011). More specifically, actions that are directed by autonomous motivation, because it

involves less inhibition and control and more volition, are more energy enriching than actions directed by external or controlled reasons (Ryan & Deci, 2011). Thus, at the exploration stage, I argue that SIEs who are autonomously motivated to explore global work opportunities will experience a sense of enthusiasm, passion, aliveness, and energy (all related to vitality) with respect to their decision to go abroad (Ryan & Deci, 2011). SDT also posits that motivation toward one's important life domains and decisions will be conducive to different levels of psychological adjustment. More specifically, autonomous motivation was found to facilitate psychological adjustment whereas controlled motivation was conducive to psychological dysfunction within the domestic work transition context (Ratelle, Vallerand, Chantal, & Provencher, 2004). Extending this finding to the SIE context, I argue that SIEs who are intrinsically and autonomously motivated to establish global work experiences at the establishment stage should be willing to expend more effort to do their jobs effectively, adapt to the host cultures, and establish relationships with host country nationals. Thus, they should have higher levels of expatriate adjustment.

Drawing upon conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2002), I argue that vitality experienced at the exploration stage and expatriate adjustment experienced at the establishment stage will facilitate SIEs need satisfaction at the subsequent career transition stages. One of the central components of COR theory is the idea of resource investment and the subsequent resource generation. Hobfoll (2002) proposed that as resources are acquired, they will be re-invested to obtain additional resources. For instance, as individuals develop skills at work, those skills are often invested in increasing job performance in order to acquire other resources such as pay and status. I

believe that this aspect of COR theory is especially useful for understanding how SIEs' well-being can influence their psychological needs at the subsequent career transition stages.

Specifically, I argue that SIEs who perceive a higher level of vitality (a resource) at the exploration stage, when entering the establishment stage, will feel more energized and autonomous to pursue their self-directed decision to establish global work experience. Because of vitality, a positive energy, SIEs will be more able to actively establish interpersonal relationships and should feel more confident to cope with accompanying stressors. In other words, SIEs who experience a high level of vitality at the exploration stage can bring this positive energy, a resource, into the next stage; this resource will then help them feel more autonomous, competent, and related with regards to their decision to establish global work experience. Similarly, I argue that SIEs who perceive a higher level of expatriate adjustment (another form of resource) at the establishment stage should feel more energized and autonomous to pursue their self-directed decisions to stay permanently and maintain their global work experience. Highly adjusted SIEs should also feel competent with regards to their decisions to stay abroad, and maintain global work experiences because their current adjustment can partly assure their possibility of successfully staying abroad as they have worked and lived in the same host country for a while. Last, SIEs who are adjusted to the host country may have more resources to facilitate their interpersonal relationships with host country nationals and receive assistance with respect to their decisions to stay permanently, and they should feel more related. Indeed, Harrison and Shaffer (2005) found that corporate expatriates' adjustment to international assignments has a direct impact on expatriates' effort regulation and the

allocation of personal resources (time and energy) to job activities. Similarly, I expect SIEs who have higher expatriate adjustment at the establishment stage should be able to put more effort toward their self-directed decision to stay permanently.

To summarize, I argue that SIEs' perceived well-being at the exploration and the establishment stage, in the form of vitality and expatriate adjustment, has the motivational potential to help SIEs obtain more resources and pursue their goals. This will satisfy all three forms of SIEs' psychological needs at the following career transition stage.

*Proposition 6: SIEs' well-being at the prior stage of career transition will enhance their perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness to pursue their decision at the subsequent stage.*

In brief, Chapter 3 provides a theoretically grounded model of SIE career transitions. Drawing upon this model, in the next chapter (Chapter 4), I empirically examine SIEs' experiences of establishing their global work experience at the second stage (establishment) of their career transitions.

**CHAPTER 4: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION OF SELF-INITIATED  
EXPATRIATES' EXPERIENCES OF ESTABLISHING GLOBAL WORK  
EXPERIENCE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

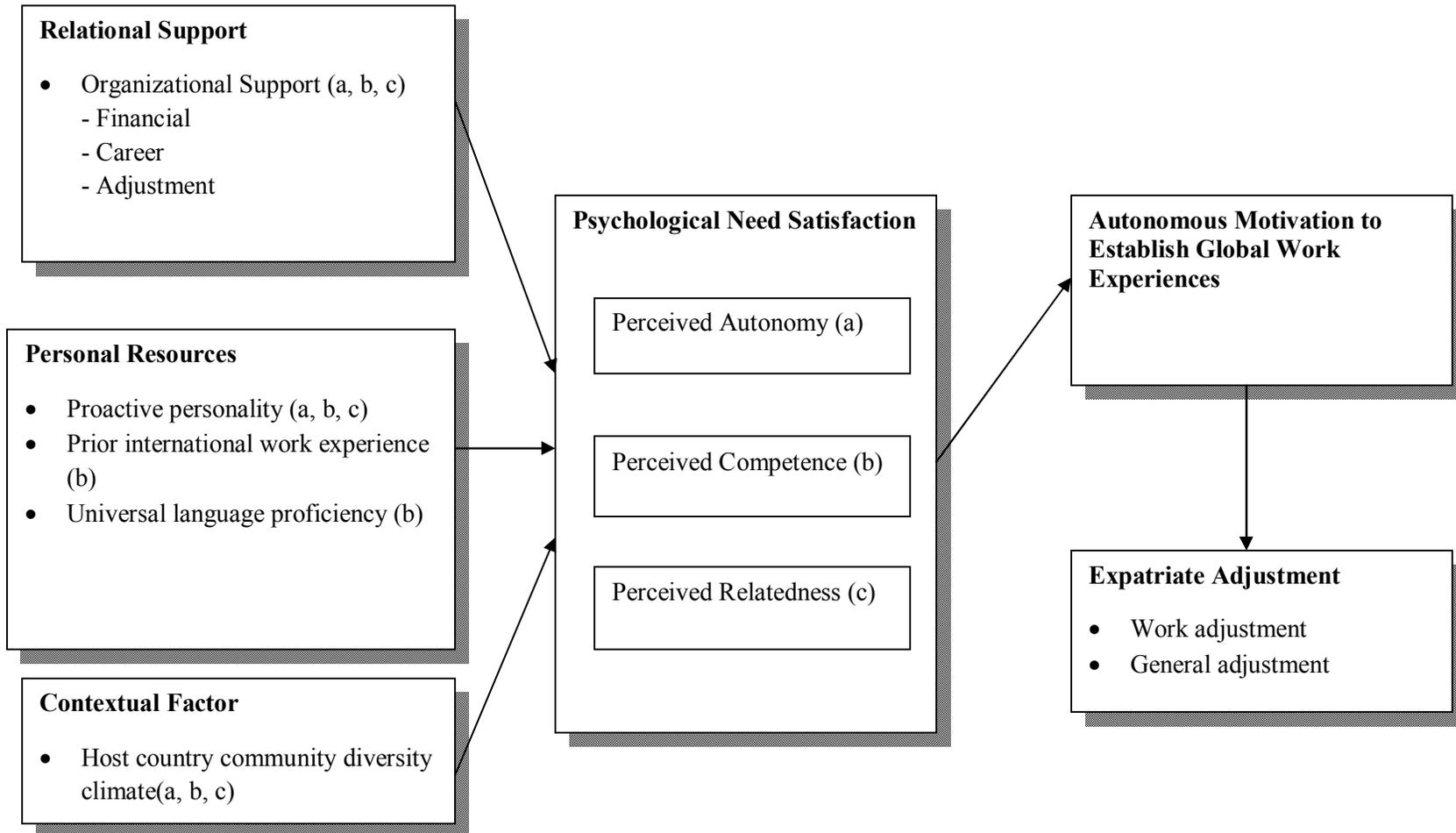
Given the challenges faced by SIEs during their expatriation, psychological mechanisms that drive SIEs' motivation to establish their global work experiences deserve further research attention. Therefore, the purpose of this empirical study seeks to respond to the scant attention paid to psychological theory that explains SIEs' motivations to establish global work experiences. Specifically, I will draw upon self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000) to elucidate and empirically examine SIEs' motivations and well-being with respect to their decision to establish global work experience.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH MODEL**

Self-determination theory (SDT) forms the overarching theoretical base (please see Chapter 3 for a detailed description of this theory). By applying SDT to empirically investigate SIEs' motivation and well-being with respect to their decisions to establish global work experiences at the establishment stage, Chapter 4 aims at providing a conceptually-grounded study that advances our understanding of SIEs' experience of establishing global experiences. Figure 3 demonstrates the model I plan to examine empirically. Please note that even though I proposed various relational support, personal resources, and contextual factors in Chapter 3, in Chapter 4, I choose to empirically examine those that are specifically relevant to the SIE context at the establishment stage. Factors that are general to domestic employees will be excluded in this empirical study. Please also note that I selectively chose a limited number of variables to test in this study in order to show some level of statistically valid results, given the complexity of my theoretical model as well as the sample size of my target group.

FIGURE 3

**A Research Model of SIEs' Motivation to Establish Global Work Experience and Their Well-being\***



\*Letters in parentheses indicate the influence on corresponding psychological needs

## **Relational Support and Psychological Need Satisfaction**

Based on the SDT framework, SIEs who receive various forms of relational support from important others (e.g., their employers, their colleagues) should feel more autonomous, competent, and related with regard to their decision to establish global work experience abroad. In this chapter, I focus on the resource of organizational support. Organizational scholars have argued that organizational support may be an important determinant of employees' adjustment and performance following a job transfer or career transition (Anderson & Stark, 1985; Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). Researchers have also proposed that perceived organizational support (POS) is a valued resource because it assures employees that help will be available from the organization when it is needed to carry out one's job effectively and to deal with stressful situations (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Following Kraimer and Wayne's (2004) three dimensions of POS (adjustment, career, financial) in the context of expatriate assignments and their statement that POS is positively related to expatriates' adjustment and commitment, I expect these three dimensions of organizational support will also influence SIEs' psychological needs. Specifically, I argue that host country organizations that offer adjustment support (i.e., helping SIEs and their families adapt in their global work), career support (i.e., offering career-related guidance), and financial support (i.e., providing monetary assistance) will positively influence SIEs' perceived autonomy, perceived competence, and perceived relatedness. When receiving these supports, SIEs will feel autonomous regarding their decisions to establish global work experience because organizations offering these supports take employees' feelings and decisions into consideration (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

SIEs who receive these supports from their organizations will also feel competent regarding their decisions to establish global work experience given that these supports are instrumental to their work and life in the host country. Last, receiving support from their organizations will also make SIEs feel that they are cared for and connected to the organization. Thus, I propose:

*Hypothesis 1: Organizational support is positively associated with SIEs' perceived autonomy (a), perceived competence (b), and perceived relatedness (c) with respect to their decision to establish global work experience.*

### **Personal Resources and Psychological Need Satisfaction**

As discussed in Chapter 3, I have proposed that there are various types of personal resources SIEs can rely on at the establishment stage. In this chapter, I specifically examine the influences of proactive personality, prior international work experience, and universal language proficiency (including written and spoken fluency).

**Proactive personality.** Personality traits have long been investigated as important influences on occupational mobility (Crockett, 1962). Personality traits are relatively stable and enduring patterns in how individuals feel, think, and behave, and I specifically look at the influence of proactive personality on SIEs' need satisfaction. Indeed, SIEs, unlike other organization sponsored global employees, need to deal proactively by themselves with any difficulties they may encounter by themselves. Proactive personality refers to individuals' disposition toward engaging in active role orientations, such as initiating change and influencing their environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Proactive people are relatively unconstrained by situational forces, and they identify opportunities,

act on them, show initiative, and persevere until meaningful changes occur (Crant, 2000). Because proactive people act in a self-endorsed manner and feel less constrained by the external environment, I anticipate that proactive SIEs should feel more autonomous with regard to their decisions and behaviors. Research has also shown that proactive people behave more confidently, actively work to control their environments, and seek out information and feedback (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000). Thus, I expect that proactive SIEs should feel more competent with regard to their decisions and behaviors. Last, proactive people are more likely to be socially integrated in a relational context such as their work environments (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 1999), which may increase their perceived relatedness. Based on all these arguments, I argue that proactive personality is positively related to all three forms of psychological need satisfaction with respect to SIEs' decision to establish global work experiences.

*Hypothesis 2: Proactive personality is positively associated with SIEs' perceived autonomy (a), perceived competence (b), and perceived relatedness (c) of establishing global work experience.*

### **Prior international work experiences and universal language proficiency**

In addition to SIEs' positive personality trait (e.g., their proactive personality), I also anticipate that SIEs who have some personal qualities that facilitate their pursuit of global work experiences (i.e., prior international work experience, universal language proficiency) will have their psychological needs met, which in turn increases their autonomous motivation to establish global work experiences. When people travel to foreign countries, they learn the behaviors, customs, and norms of these cultures through

either direct experience or indirect observation of the host country nationals' behaviors (Bandura, 1997). Thus, SIEs who have prior international work experience are likely to develop more comprehensive cognitions about people, roles, or events that govern social behaviors in the foreign culture (Fiske & Taylor, 1984), thus making SIEs feel more prepared and competent to establish global work experience.

Individuals living in different areas of the world speak different languages. Universal language refers to a hypothetical, historical, or constructed language spoken and understood by all or most of the world's population (Crystal, 2003). Even though there is not a sole universal language, English remains the dominant language of international business and global communication through the influence of global media and the former British Empire that had established the use of English in regions around the world such as North America, India, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand (Crystal, 2003). Thus, English is generally recognized as an universal language. I expect that SIEs who excel in universal language (such as English) should feel more competent in establishing their global work experience, as they will face fewer language barriers in communication and have more effective communications with host country people in both work and non-work domains (Peltokorpi, 2008). Thus, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 3: Prior international work experience is positively associated with SIEs' perceived competence to establish global work experience.*

*Hypothesis 4: Universal language, both written (a) and spoken (b) proficiency, is positively associated with SIEs' perceived competence in establishing global work experience.*

### **Host Country Diversity Climate and Psychological Need Satisfaction**

When SIEs are physically abroad, their perceptions regarding how they are treated by the host country community may influence their psychological needs directly. In this study, I specifically focus on the influence of host country community's diversity climate, defined as individuals' perceptions of the importance or value their community places on diversity, and the degree to which they experience inclusion, fairness, and lack of discrimination in their community (Ragins, Gonzalez, Ehrhardt, & Singh, in press). A positive diversity climate refers to an understanding that each individual is unique and individual differences, which could be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and cultural differences, are valued as opposed to condemnation (McKay, Avery, Tonidandel, Morris, Hernandez, & Hebl, 2007). A positive diversity climate provides a secure and nurturing environment where individual differences are positively explored (Thomas & Ely, 1996). Because living in a community that has a positive diversity climate can motivate individuals to present their true selves and boost their individual confidence (Singh, 2011), I expect the host country community's diversity climate will increase SIEs' perceived autonomy and perceived competence in establishing global work experience abroad. Because communities with a positive diversity climate welcome individuals from different cultures, I also expect the host country community's diversity climate to increase SIEs' perceived relatedness in establishing global work experience abroad. Thus, I propose:

*Hypothesis 5: Host country community's diversity climate is positively associated with SIEs' perceived autonomy (a), perceived competence (b), and perceived relatedness (c) in establishing global work experience.*

### **Need Satisfaction, Autonomous Motivation, and Expatriate Adjustment**

SDT proposes that human beings have basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness and satisfaction of these needs will promote a person's enjoyment of activities and the autonomous self-regulation of behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In other words, individuals are more likely to be intrinsically motivated when they can freely choose to pursue the activity, when they master the activity, and when they feel connected to and supported by important people (Gagné, 2003). When SIEs experience more sense of volition to establish their global work experience, they are more likely to perceive a higher level of psychological freedom, which motivates SIEs to behave according to their self-endorsed wishes to establish global work experiences abroad (Luyckx et al., 2009). When SIEs perceive a higher level of competence with regard to their decision to establish global work experiences, they should be more intrinsically motivated and proactively pursue this decision because highly competent individuals usually feel sufficiently equipped to engage in goal pursuit (Luyckx et al., 2009). In line with this assumption, Guay et al. (2003) found that when individuals perceived themselves as less competent with respect to career decisions, they experienced a higher degree of indecision about their career choices. Last, when SIEs perceive a higher level of relatedness, they are more likely to have a sense of psychological security which motivates them to fearlessly pursue the self-endorsed decisions they have made with respect to establishing global work experiences. This assumption is also in line with the proposition of attachment theory (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002) that individuals who have close and supportive relationships with others (high level of relatedness) tend to feel

securely attached, which enables them to engage in novel and exploratory actions.

Therefore, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 6: SIEs' need satisfaction with regard to their decisions to establish global work experience is positively associated with their autonomous motivation.*

In Chapter 3, I drew upon SDT to argue that autonomous motivation should have a more proximal influence on well-being than need satisfaction. Empirical results also exist to support my argument. For instance, Sheldon and Elliot (1998) found that personal strivings that are more self-determined were associated with higher subjective vitality. Similarly, Philippe and Vallerand (2008) found that nursing home environments that satisfy psychological needs of residents were positively associated with autonomous motivation in major life domains, which in turn predicted increases in psychological adjustment of residents with lower depression and higher levels of life satisfaction, meaning of life, and self-esteem. Along a similar vein, I expect that autonomous motivation should have a direct and proximal influence on SIEs' well-being. When SIEs are establishing their global work experiences abroad, I expect their autonomous motivation to have a direct influence on their cross-cultural adjustment, which has been most commonly defined as the "degree of a person's psychological comfort with various aspects of a new setting" (Black & Gregersen, 1991: 498). Based on SDT, SIEs' autonomous motivation to establish global work experiences can trigger effort and proactive behaviors that enable SIEs to deal effectively with the challenges inherent in establishing global work experiences such as getting the job done, interacting with host country nationals, and adapting to daily life. In a recent study, Chen, Kirkman, Kim, Farh,

& Tangirala (2010) also found that expatriates' cross-cultural motivation enhances their work adjustment. Thus, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 7: SIEs' autonomous motivation to establish global work experience is positively associated with SIEs' expatriate work (a) and general (b) adjustment.*

### **The Entire Motivational Sequence**

The last goal in this study is to test the entire motivational sequence from relational support, personal resources, host country diversity climate to expatriate adjustment through psychological need satisfaction and autonomous motivation. Indeed, to the best of my knowledge, only one study (Philippe & Vallerand, 2008) has tested the whole motivational sequence underlying SDT as proposed in my dissertation. The examination of the entire motivational sequence constitutes a critical assessment of the assumptions of SDT. Thus, I hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 8: SIEs' relational support, personal resources, and perceived host country community's diverse climate positively impact their expatriate adjustment through the influences of psychological need satisfaction and autonomous motivation.*

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

To empirically test my proposed model, I conducted a field study. Field study is a common and important research methodology in social research (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007) and serves as a great way to gather reliable information from environments where

the phenomenon occurs naturally (Babbie, 2009). To collect data, I used a survey approach, which makes it convenient to observe relationships and make generalizations about the object of study (Babbie, 2009). Specifically, I used a web-based survey given the savings in time and money for researchers and its geographically unrestricted feature (Schmidt, 1997).

To empirically examine the proposed model, I conducted a cross-sectional study of a sample for the population of interest (SIEs who are currently working abroad) to investigate the relationship between relational support, personal resources, contextual factors, psychological need satisfaction, autonomous motivation, and well-being with respect to their decision to establish global work experiences. A cross-sectional design, though not ideal, is chosen for the sake of time and feasibility for my dissertation. However, because my proposed theoretical model is a process model that needs a longitudinal design to effectively test its theoretical and empirical robustness, the same population of interest will be tracked over time to obtain longitudinal data for my proposed process model. Therefore, the stage-linking role of SIEs' well-being, though proposed in my theoretical model in Chapter 3, will not be empirically examined in my dissertation. To correctly examine the proposed relationships in my proposed model, I will have to use both established and some slightly modified measures to fit the SIE context. They are identified in the following section. Please also check Appendix A for the details of these scales.

## **Sample and Survey Procedures**

I collected data from SIE academics currently working and living in several regions around the world including Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Australia, Korea, Canada, the United States, and many countries in Europe. Academics are usually well-educated and may find it relatively easy to transfer and find a job globally. Thus, SIE academics are a suitable target group for my dissertation. In order to ensure that only SIE academics are selected, four initial screening methods were used which is in line with a current study that researched SIE academics (Selmer & Luring, 2011). First, foreign sounding names related to a country or region (e.g., an Asian name in an U.S. institution) were selected for further investigation. Second, the nationality of the respondent should be different than that of the host country to ensure their expatriate status. This can be done by checking the educational backgrounds of potential respondents as well as their curriculum vitae. Most of the SIE academics obtained their bachelor and/or masters' degree in their home countries but acquired their terminal (e.g., Ph.D.) degree in a host country. Third, SIEs' current academic job is a regular position at their university (the respondent is a tenure-track or tenured professor and is not a PhD student). Fourth, the respondent should have acquired their current academic job independently to ensure that they are self-initiated, not seconded. Potential respondents' contact information (e.g., email) was obtained from their school's faculty website. Overall, 4,125 SIE academics with valid email addresses were identified and included in my email list.

Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, I contacted SIEs in my email list and asked for their willingness to participate in my study. To increase the response rate, I offered ten \$50 gift cards as an

incentive. The recruitment email and two reminder emails (please see Appendix B for these recruitment letters) were sent to SIE academics at two-week intervals. The first reminder email was sent two weeks after the recruitment email was sent out. The second reminder email was sent to the same set of SIE academics two weeks following the first reminder email. Please see Appendix B for all three recruitment letters. Due to the presence of spam filters and changes in email addresses, it was not possible to precisely determine how many of the sent emails were actually received by the recipients. Two hundred and sixty-eight SIE academics responded to the survey request and started the survey, but 23 surveys had to be dropped due to significant missing data. Thus, I have 245 useable responses and the overall response rate is about 6%.

The average age of participating SIE academics was 39.15 years ( $SD = 7.29$ ), 63.6% of them were male, 78% were married, 49.3% of them had children, 93.3% of them had a Ph.D. degree and they had worked with their current employer (university) for an average of 3.85 years. In addition, 73.3% of these SIE academics were assistant professors and they were originally from 37 countries/regions: Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Netherlands, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Venezuela. In addition, these SIE academics were from a number of disciplines including but not limited to business, engineering, sciences, medicine, and literature.

## Measures

In this study, most of the measures were adopted from previously established and validated scales. However, I still needed to slightly modify some measures in order to fit the context of this study. Detailed information on each measure used in this study is described in the following section.

**Relational support.** *Perceived organizational support (POS)* was measured using a 12-item scale developed by Kraimer and Wayne (2004). The scale consists of three subscales measuring adjustment POS, career POS, and financial POS. A sample item for adjustment POS is “The organization has provided me with many opportunities to ease the transition to the foreign country.” A sample item for career POS is “I feel that the organization cares about my career development.” A sample item for financial POS is “The organization has taken care of me financially.” All items were rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's alpha) for the adjustment POS, career POS, and financial POS subscales based on Kraimer and Wayne's study are .87, .88, and .92 respectively.

**Personal resources.** *Proactive personality* was measured using a 10-item scale developed by Seibert et al. (1999). Sample items are " I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life" and "If I see something I don't like, I fix it." All items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The internal consistency estimate (Cronbach's alpha) for core proactive personality is .82 (Seibert et al., 1999).

*Prior international work experiences* was measured by subtracting respondents' tenure (in months) with their current employer from their total work experience in an international setting (in months). Tenure with current employer was measured by asking the question: How long have you worked with your current employer? Total work experience in an international setting was measured by the following question: What is your total work experience in an international setting (Consider all countries where you have worked)?

*Universal language proficiency.* As English is usually considered a universal language (Crystal, 2003), universal language proficiency was measured by their English written fluency and spoken fluency. In the survey, respondents were asked to list any languages they speak other than their native language and indicate their level of written and spoken fluency. Both written and spoken fluency were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = poor to 5 = excellent. For those who indicated English as their native tongue, I assigned "5 = excellent" to both their written and spoken English fluency.

***Contextual factors.*** *Community diversity climate* was measured using a 5-item scale originally developed by Ragins et al. (in press). Sample items are "The host country community welcomes people of different races and ethnicities" and " People of different races and ethnicities would want to move to my community." All items were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The internal consistency estimate (Cronbach's alpha) for community diversity climate is .84 (Ragins et al., in press).

***Psychological needs satisfaction.*** *Psychological needs satisfaction* was measured using a 21-item scale from Deci and his colleagues (2001) which assesses the extent to which individuals experience satisfaction of their three basic psychological needs (i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness) at work. Sample items include "I feel like I can pretty much be myself at work" (autonomy satisfaction), "Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from working" (competence satisfaction), and "People at work care about me" (relatedness satisfaction). All items were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = not at all true to 7 = very true. The internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's alpha) for autonomy satisfaction, competence satisfaction, and relatedness satisfaction are .79, .73, and .84 respectively (Deci et al., 2001). Because the internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's alpha) for the three dimensions of psychological need satisfaction were not ideal and because researchers still question the validity of this measure for psychological need satisfaction at work (Roca & Gagné, 2008; Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, Soenens, & Lens, 2010), I conducted a pilot study to determine whether I should adopt and retain this scale in my dissertation. Using a sample from 200 U.S. business travelers (average age= 46.5; 55% male; 92% married) collected from Zoomerang.com (an online survey website), I conducted a series of tests to validate the psychometric properties of this measure. First, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to confirm the dimensionality of this measure and assess the model fit. To evaluate the model fit, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were used. Values higher than .90 (for CFI and NFI) or lower than .1 (for RMSEA) signify acceptable model fit (Kline, 2005). The CFA results suggest that the three-factor

model which separated three different psychological needs presented a better fit [ $\chi^2(124) = 483.66$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .976, NFI = .948, RMSEA = .04] than the one-factor model [ $\chi^2(170) = 1041.533$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .560, NFI = .686, RMSEA = .161] and other alternative two-factor models. The three-factor psychological need satisfaction measure (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) also showed satisfactory convergent validity with work adjustment ( $r = .48, .38, .41$ ,  $p < .01$ , respectively) and work performance ( $r = .34, .54, .38$ ,  $p < .01$ , respectively) as well as satisfactory discriminant validity with age ( $r = .13, .15, .23$ ,  $p > .1$ , respectively) and gender ( $r = .12, .14, .04$ ,  $p > .1$ , respectively). Cronbach's alphas based on this pilot study are .79, .86 and .91 respectively for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Although the Cronbach's alpha for autonomy is still not ideal, it is very close to the more stringent cutoff point of .80, suggesting appropriate internal consistencies for all three dimensions of psychological need satisfaction. Thus, I retained the three-factor structure of psychological need satisfaction for my dissertation based on these results.

***Autonomous motivation.*** *Autonomous motivation* was measured using six items from a modified 19-item scale titled Revised Motivation at Work Scale (R-MAWS) developed by Forest et al. (2010). This scale comprises five types of reasons for work based on SDT: external (e.g., Because others will respect me more), introjected (e.g., Because otherwise I will feel bad about myself), identified (e.g., Because putting effort in this job aligns with my personal values), intrinsic (e.g., Because the work I do is interesting), and amotivation (e.g., I don't think this work is worth putting effort into). All items were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = not at all because of this reason to 7 = completely because of this reason. Identified motivation and

intrinsic motivation were merged to form the measure for autonomous motivation. Cronbach's alpha for this measure is .89 (Forest et al., 2010), suggesting appropriate internal consistency.

***Expatriate adjustment.*** *Expatriate adjustment* has usually been examined using the three established dimensions of adjustment developed by Black and his colleagues (Black & Stephens, 1989). The work adjustment items focus on the expatriates' adjustment to the job. The cultural adjustment items focus on expatriates' adjustment to living conditions, housing and food. The interaction adjustment items focus on expatriates' adjustment to socializing with HCNs. While multidimensionality of the adjustment construct has been widely embraced and used by researchers, some researchers (Lazarova et al., 2010; Thomas & Lazarova, 2006) have raised concern about the dimension of interaction adjustment because it is ambiguous in that it refers to interactions with host country nationals both within the work domain and the general environment. In my dissertation, expatriate adjustment was measured in terms of work adjustment and general adjustment. Both work adjustment and general adjustment measures were adopted and modified from Black and Stephens' (1989) as well as Thomas and Lazarova's (2006) expatriate adjustment scales and now include interaction adjustment items (see Appendix A for a detailed listing of these items). There were 10 items for the work adjustment scale and nine items for the general adjustment scale. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they feel comfortable with each aspect of their global employment or host country. Sample items for work adjustment are "My specific job responsibilities" and "Communications among my colleagues (e.g., other professors, administrative staff)." Sample items for general adjustment are "Safety

and crime level” as well as “Communications with nonwork host country nationals (e.g., shopkeepers, taxi drivers).” All items were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = not at all to 7 = to a great extent. Because both work adjustment and general adjustment measures were modified from previously established scales, I conducted a pilot study and checked their psychometric properties based on a sample of 123 SIE professionals (89% male; average age: 39.67 years old) graduated from an European business school's EMBA program. First, I conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to evaluate the factorial structure of the modified expatriate adjustment measures. All 19 items (including 10 items on work adjustment and 9 items on general adjustment) were entered into an EFA with oblique rotation (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Table 1 displays the factor loadings of the EFA results based on these 19 items. The EFA result presents a clear two factor structure between work adjustment (items 1-10) and general adjustment (items 11-19). The second step was to confirm the dimensionality of the expatriate adjustment measures and the model fit by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The two-factor measurement model of expatriate adjustment which separated work adjustment and general adjustment demonstrated a much better overall fit [ $\chi^2(151) = 546.791$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .913, NFI = .925, RMSEA = .045] when compared to the one-factor model [ $\chi^2(54) = 792.033$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .374, NFI = .347, RMSEA = .183] when work adjustment and cultural adjustment were combined to form a single construct of expatriate adjustment. Internal reliabilities based on this pilot study were .92 and .88, respectively, for work and general adjustment, suggesting appropriate internal consistencies for both work and general adjustment. Thus, I retained the two-factor structure of expatriate adjustment based on these results.

**Table 1. Factor Loadings of Expatriate Adjustment Measures**

	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. My specific job responsibilities	<b>.633</b>	.224
2. My activities or tasks at work	<b>.864</b>	.035
3. My work hours	<b>.737</b>	.207
4. My workload	<b>.712</b>	-.151
5. Communications among my colleagues	<b>.734</b>	-.014
6. The work attitudes of colleagues in the host country	<b>.803</b>	.171
7. Skill levels of colleagues in the host country	<b>.694</b>	.108
8. The organizational structure	<b>.664</b>	.231
9. Collegiality among colleagues	<b>.424</b>	.077
10. Teamwork among my colleagues	<b>.429</b>	-.032
11. Safety and crime levels	-.166	<b>.662</b>
12. The cultural infrastructure (e.g., theaters , museums, etc.)	-.015	<b>.731</b>
13. The transportation infrastructure (e.g., public transportation, traffic conditions)	-.073	<b>.715</b>
14. Opportunities for leisure activities	-.132	<b>.410</b>
15. Communications with nonwork host country nationals (e.g., shopkeepers, taxi drivers)	-.117	<b>.497</b>
16. Availability of goods and services	-.219	<b>.792</b>
17. Availability of medical care	-.173	<b>.532</b>
18. Environmental pollution	-.076	<b>.656</b>
19. Climate/weather conditions	.005	<b>.483</b>

**Control variables.** I controlled for both age and gender of SIE academics in my dissertation. Age was measured in terms of number of years. Gender was measured as male (coded 0) and female (coded 1). Both age and gender were chosen as control variables because they are found to influence SIEs' decisions to expatriate (Selmer & Luring, 2010; Tharenou, 2010). In addition, I also controlled SIE academics' tenure working with their current employer because those who have longer tenure are likely to have better psychological adjustment (Harrison et al., 2004). SIE academics' tenure with current employer was measured in terms of months they have worked with their current employer. Controlling these variables will eliminate alternative explanations to the research findings of this study and promote the internal validity.

### **Analytical Strategy**

**Sample size.** Even though a hard rule does not exist with regard to the minimal requirement for an appropriate sample size, there are a couple of proxies that can be used to suggest the sample size for my dissertation as I used structural equation modeling (SEM) procedures (e.g., Kline, 2005). First of all, one of the rules of thumb is that the minimum number of observations should be 200 (Gorsuch, 1983). Similarly, Kline (2005) suggested that samples with greater than 200 participants can be considered large. In addition, researchers also suggest that the participant to variable ratio should not be lower than 10 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The number of variables (including control variables) in my dissertation is 17; thus, a sample size that exceeds 170 participants will be deemed appropriate. Based on these rules of thumbs, the sample size of my dissertation (N = 245) can be considered as appropriate. I chose SEM as my analytic method because SEM is a method of analysis that allows for the estimation of multiple

associations, permits the simultaneous analysis of observed and latent (unobserved) constructs, allows for the inclusion of control variables in models, and accounts for the biasing effects of random measurement error in the latent constructs (Medsker, Williams, & Holahan, 1994). Following guidelines presented by Kline (2005), I first explored measurement models, and then tested the hypothesized structural model (i.e., relations among variables). Because my hypothesized structural model is complex and contains many variables with multiple dimensions, I explored factor structures of these variables prior to testing the full model. I also tested the data for normality before any analyses were conducted.

## **Results**

*Normality test.* Before testing the factorial structures of measures and examining the measurement and structural models of my dissertation, I tested the data for normality. This procedure is important given that factor analysis procedures assume that all variables are normally distributed (Kline, 2005). First of all, all items for each scale were screened for univariate outliers, defined as responses greater than 3.29 standard deviations from the mean (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), and for univariate normality, defined as skewedness index between -2.0 and 2.0 and kurtosis index between -7.0 and 7.0 (Kline, 2005). Results of these tests showed no univariate outlier. Regarding univariate normality, I visually examined the normal probability plots and the skewedness index and kurtosis index. The normal probability plots showed that all data were distributed normally. Results of skewedness and kurtosis tests also showed that all data were well within the acceptable range, indicating that all data were normally distributed.

***Confirmatory factor analysis for multi-dimensional measures.*** Before examining the measurement and structural models, I explored the possibility of including higher-order latent constructs represented by multiple scales. To evaluate the model fit, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were used. Values higher than .90 (for CFI and NFI) or lower than .1 (for RMSEA) signify acceptable model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005). First of all, perceived organizational support is comprised of three subscales: financial support, career support, and adjustment support. The CFA procedures can help me determine if I can use a combined, higher-order factor to represent these three measures. The three-factor measurement model of organizational support demonstrated the best overall fit [ $\chi^2(51) = 264.518$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .931, NFI = .917, RMSEA = .098] when compared to the one-factor [ $\chi^2(54) = 1011.883$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .692, NFI = .683, RMSEA = .262] and other alternative two-factor models. In terms of psychological needs, the three-factor model, though indicating marginal fit [ $\chi^2(186) = 643.787$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .897, NFI = .882, RMSEA = .098], is still better than the one-factor model [ $\chi^2(190) = 977.458$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .765, NFI = .727, RMSEA = .127] and other alternative two-factor models. As the model fit of the three-factor model of psychological needs was not ideal, I followed the recommendation from researchers (e.g., Edwards & Bagozzi, 2000; Williams, Vandenberg, Edwards, 2009) to further investigate the factor loadings of items for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In terms of autonomy, item 13, 17 and item 20 exhibited comparatively low loadings on their assigned factor (.43, .44, and .58 respectively) so they were dropped from the autonomy measure. In terms of competence, items 10 and 19 were dropped because of low loadings on their assigned factor (.43

and .49 respectively). In terms of relatedness, items 9, 16 and 21 were dropped because of their low loadings on their assigned factor (.47 .44 and .37, respectively). The remaining items all have high loadings on their designated factors (all above .70). Dropping these items significantly improved the three-factor model fit of psychological needs [ $\chi^2(62) = 187.03$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .930, NFI = .910, RMSEA = .087] and the three-factor model fit is better than that of the one-factor model [ $\chi^2(65) = 261.229$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .890, NFI = .861, RMSEA = .107] and other alternative models. Thus, the modified psychological need scales obtained here were retained for further analyses. Last, for expatriate adjustment, the two-factor (work and general adjustment) model provided a better fit [ $\chi^2(151) = 892.407$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .927, NFI = .893, RMSEA = .092] than the one-factor model when work and general adjustment are combined [ $\chi^2(57) = 1313.168$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .573, NFI = .548, RMSEA = .172]. To conclude, these results indicate that I cannot combine and use the higher-order construct for variables that have multiple dimensions listed above.

***Descriptive statistics and scale reliabilities.*** The means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each scale used in this study and are presented in Table 2. All scales demonstrated good internal reliability ( $\alpha \geq .70$ ). The correlations between all variables are also shown in Table 2. Directions of all correlations were consistent with my theoretical predictions. There was no sign of multicollinearity as all correlations were below .70 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Though the correlations between the three types of psychological needs were moderately high, this finding was in line with the theoretical predictions of basic psychological need theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) which indicates that perceived autonomy, perceived competence, and perceived

relatedness are supposed to be moderately and positively correlated with each other. In order to make sure that none of the variables I used suffered from any potential problems of multicollinearity, I also computed the variance inflation factors (VIFs) for all independent variables (three types of POS, proactive personality, prior international work experience, universal language proficiency, host country diversity climate, three dimensions of psychological need satisfaction, and autonomous motivation) with their correspondent dependent variables according to my hypotheses. VIFs for all independent variables were less than 3, which is well below the recommended cut-off of 10 (cf. Cody and Smith 2006). Thus, multicollinearity was not a serious concern in this study.

**Table 2.** <sup>a b</sup> Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1 POS (Adjustment)	4.56	1.53	(.92)											
2 POS (Career)	4.78	1.49	.68**	(.93)										
3 POS (Financial)	5.06	1.49	.62**	.61**	(.94)									
4 Proactive Personality	3.65	.63	.13*	.21**	.05	(.89)								
5 Prior International Work Experience (months)	59.26	33.08	-.06	-.04	-.04	.04	-							
6 Universal Language Proficiency (Written)	4.58	.60	.06	-.02	.04	.16*	.10	-						
7 Universal Language Proficiency (Spoken)	4.56	.61	.04	-.01	.04	.13	.05	.64**	-					
8 Host Country Diversity Climate	5.16	1.33	.41**	.35**	.32**	.19**	-.07	-.06	-.05	(.93)				
9 Perceived Autonomy	5.24	.98	.46**	.44**	.32**	.21**	-.03	.08	.08	.31**	(.83)			
10 Perceived Competence	5.62	.98	.45**	.48**	.29**	.36**	.13*	.15*	.18*	.23**	.63**	(.87)		
11 Perceived Relatedness	5.60	1.05	.51**	.54**	.34**	.23**	-.02	.12	.15*	.34**	.64**	.68**	(.93)	
12 Autonomous Motivation	5.72	1.07	.24**	.28**	.15*	.39**	.03	.20**	.27**	.27**	.33**	.44**	.35**	(.93)
13 Work Adjustment	5.31	1.10	.56**	.54**	.39**	.11	-.01	.10	.14*	.33**	.47**	.47**	.55**	.42**
14 General Adjustment	5.30	.98	.38**	.23**	.28**	-.05	.13*	.01	.02	.42**	.31**	.23**	.26**	.20**
15 Age	39.15	7.29	-.08	-.15*	-.10	-.06	.26**	-.13	-.16*	-.01	-.10	-.03	-.15*	-.03
16 Gender	1.37	.49	.15*	.03	-.07	-.08	-.01	.10	.03	-.12	-.01	.04	.02	-.04
17 Tenure	46.20	35.92	-.19**	-.29**	-.17**	-.12	.06	-.05	-.01	-.01	-.05	-.06	-.14	.01

**Table 2 (continued).<sup>a b</sup> Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations**

Variables	13	14	15	16	17
13 Work Adjustment	(.91)				
14 General Adjustment	.39**	(.81)			
15 Age	-.14*	.11	-		
16 Gender	.01	-.11	-.08	-	
17 Tenure	-.15*	.03	.40**	-.21	-

<sup>a</sup> Reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha), when applicable, are indicated on the diagonal.

<sup>b</sup> POS stands for perceived organizational support.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$

***Test of measurement model.*** Confirmatory analysis was undertaken to evaluate the model fit for the full measurement model including 11 latent variables (adjustment POS, career POS, financial POS, proactive personality, host country diversity climate, perceived autonomy, perceived competence, perceived relatedness, autonomous motivation, work adjustment, and general adjustment) that were assessed by different sets of indicators. This eleven-factor measurement model provided an acceptable fit [ $\chi^2(1961) = 4435.893$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .923, NFI = .915, RMSEA = .063] which suggested that this 11-factor measurement model was acceptable. Further, each indicator's loading on the appropriate latent construct was significant. An alternative measurement model which is theoretically supported was assessed where three dimensions of POS, three dimensions of psychological needs, and two dimensions of expatriate adjustment were combined respectively to form three higher-order constructs. The alternative 6-factor measurement model demonstrated a poorer fit [ $\chi^2(2215) = 5273.662$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .673, NFI = .699, RMSEA = .183]. Thus, the eleven-factor measurement model was retained and I proceeded to test the structural model.

***Test of structural model.*** In order to test the hypotheses and the motivational sequence, a path analysis was conducted with AMOS 20.0 (Arbuckle, 2011). Results of the path analysis did not reveal an excellent fit [ $\chi^2(2762) = 5484.602$ ,  $p < .001$ , CFI = .915, NFI = .912, RMSEA = .070]. However, the fit of this model can still be considered acceptable according to SEM scholars (e.g., Kline, 2005). Hypothesis 1 proposed that organizational support is positively associated with SIEs' perceived autonomy (a), perceived competence (b), and perceived relatedness (c) with respect to their decisions to establish global work experiences. Results from the path analysis indicated that only

career POS was significantly related to perceived autonomy ( $\beta = .46, p < .01$ ), perceived competence ( $\beta = .47, p < .01$ ), and perceived relatedness ( $\beta = .52, p < .01$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was partially supported. Hypothesis 2 proposed that proactive personality is positively associated with SIEs' perceived autonomy (a), perceived competence (b), and perceived relatedness (c) with respect to their decisions to establish global work experiences. Results from the path analysis indicated that proactive personality was significantly related to perceived autonomy ( $\beta = .24, p < .05$ ), perceived competence ( $\beta = .26, p < .05$ ), and perceived relatedness ( $\beta = .19, p < .05$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was fully supported. Hypothesis 3 proposed that prior international work experience is positively associated with SIEs' perceived competence with respect to their decisions to establish global work experiences. SIEs' prior international work experience was significantly related to perceived competence ( $\beta = .15, p < .05$ ) which supported Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 4 proposed that universal language proficiency is positively associated with SIEs' perceived competence with respect to their decisions to establish global work experiences. Results showed that only universal language spoken fluency ( $\beta = .27, p < .05$ ), and not written fluency, was significantly related to perceived competence. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported. Hypothesis 5 proposed that host country diversity climate is positively associated with SIEs' perceived autonomy (a), perceived competence (b), and perceived relatedness (c) with respect to their decisions to establish global work experiences. Results from the path analysis indicated that host country diversity climate was significantly related to perceived autonomy ( $\beta = .17, p < .05$ ) and perceived relatedness ( $\beta = .14, p < .05$ ) but not perceived competence. Thus Hypothesis 5 was partially supported. Hypothesis 6 indicated that SIEs' needs satisfaction with regard to

their decisions to establish global work experiences is positively associated with their associated autonomous motivation. Results indicated that only perceived autonomy ( $\beta = .11, p < .05$ ) and perceived competence ( $\beta = .48, p < .01$ ) were significantly related to autonomous motivation, while perceived relatedness was not. Last, Hypothesis 7 indicated that SIEs' autonomous motivation to establish global work experiences is positively associated with SIEs' expatriate adjustment. Results showed that autonomous motivation was significantly related to work adjustment ( $\beta = .45, p < .01$ ) and general adjustment ( $\beta = .23, p < .01$ ), fully supporting Hypothesis 7.

Statistical tests were also conducted to determine the significance of the motivational sequence underlying SDT as proposed in Hypothesis 8. In order to test this, the whole model sequence was broken in two parts in order to assess each part of the chain composed of a predictor, a mediator, and an outcome. In line with recent studies with respect to mediation analysis (Shrout & Bolger, 2002), I focused on the significance of the association between the predictor and the mediator and that of the mediator and the outcome, that is, Baron and Kenny's (1986) steps 2 and 3. Baron and Kenny's step 1 to assess the relationship between the predictor and the outcome was dropped as simulation studies have shown that this step is not a necessary condition (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002). I then tested the significance of the whole mediation sequence with Sobel tests. If the Sobel test is significant, the mediation effect is significant. There are seven mediation sequences from the predictors (e.g., career POS, proactive personality, previous international work experience, universal language spoken fluency, and host country diversity climate) of psychological needs to the consequence (e.g., autonomous motivation) of psychological needs.

Sobel tests of these mediation sequences indicated four significant mediations: "Career POS  $\rightarrow$  Perceived competence  $\rightarrow$  Autonomous motivation ( $z = 4.33, p < .01$ )", "Proactive Personality  $\rightarrow$  Perceived competence  $\rightarrow$  Autonomous motivation ( $z = 3.45, p < .01$ )", "Prior international work experience  $\rightarrow$  Perceived competence  $\rightarrow$  Autonomous motivation ( $z = 7.71, p < .01$ )", "Universal language spoken fluency  $\rightarrow$  Perceived competence  $\rightarrow$  Autonomous motivation ( $z = 1.98, p < .05$ )". Sobel tests also showed that autonomous motivation mediated the relationship between perceived competence and work adjustment ( $z = 3.83, p < .01$ ) and between perceived competence and general adjustment ( $z = 3.65, p < .01$ ). Finally, in line with recently recommended statistical procedures to test a three-path mediated effect (Taylor, MacKinnon, & Tein, 2008), I conducted the joint significance test. The joint significance test provides evidence for mediation insofar as all paths involved in the mediated effect are significantly non-zero (Taylor et al., 2008). Thus, the mediation sequences from career POS, proactive personality, prior international work experience, and universal language spoken fluency to both work adjustment and general adjustment, through perceived competence and autonomous motivation, were significant at  $p < .05$  (as the parameter estimate of each path in the sequence is significant at least at  $p < .05$  level). These results supported the motivational consequences from different types of relational support and personal resource to expatriate adjustment through the increase of perceived competence and autonomous motivation. Thus, Hypothesis 8 was partially supported. Table 3 presents and summarizes the results of all the hypotheses tested in Chapter 4.

To briefly summarize, this chapter presents an empirical test of SIEs' experience of establishing global work experience and the underlying motivational process. The next chapter (Chapter 5) will discuss the proposed model of SIE career transitions (in Chapter 3) and the empirical test of the second (establishment) stage of the model (in Chapter 4). Theoretical and practical implications are discussed as well as limitations and suggestions for future research.

**Table 3. Summary of Hypotheses Results from Chapter 4**

Hypotheses	$\beta$	Support
H1a. POS (Adjustment) → Perceived autonomy	.18	N
POS (Career) → Perceived autonomy	.46**	Y
POS (Financial) → Perceived autonomy	.07	N
H1b. POS (Adjustment) → Perceived competence	.10	N
POS (Career) → Perceived competence	.47**	Y
POS (Financial) → Perceived competence	.16	N
H1c. POS (Adjustment) → Perceived relatedness	.13	N
POS (Career) → Perceived relatedness	.52**	Y
POS (Financial) → Perceived relatedness	.08	N
H2a. Proactive personality → Perceived autonomy	.24*	Y
H2b. Proactive personality → Perceived competence	.26*	Y
H2c. Proactive personality → Perceived relatedness	.19*	Y
H3. Prior international work experience → Perceived competence	.15*	Y
H4a. Universal language fluency (written) → Perceived competence	-.05	N
H4b. Universal language fluency (spoken) → Perceived competence	.27*	Y
H5a. Host country diversity climate → Perceived autonomy	.17*	Y

H5b. Host country diversity climate → Perceived competence	.09	N
H5c. Host country diversity climate → Perceived relatedness	.14*	Y
H6a. Perceived autonomy → Autonomous motivation	.11*	Y
H6b. Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation	.48**	Y
H6c. Perceived relatedness → Autonomous motivation	.09	N
H7a. Autonomous motivation → Work adjustment	.45**	Y
H7b. Autonomous motivation → General adjustment	.23**	Y
<p>H8. POS (Career) → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → Work adjustment</p> <p>POS (Career) → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → General adjustment</p> <p>Proactive personality → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → Work adjustment</p> <p>Proactive personality → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → General adjustment</p> <p>Prior international work experience → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → Work adjustment</p> <p>Prior international work experience → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → General adjustment</p> <p>Universal language spoken fluency → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → Work adjustment</p> <p>Universal language spoken fluency → Perceived competence → Autonomous motivation → General adjustment</p>	Based on joint significance test, all these sequences were significant at the $p < .05$ level.	Y

**CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

## DISCUSSION

In this Chapter, I summarize my dissertation by discussing the proposed model of SIE career transitions as well as results from the empirical examination of the establishment stage of SIEs' career transitions. I also discuss theoretical and practical implications as well as limitations and suggestions for future research.

My proposed theoretical model of SIE career transitions (presented in Chapter 3) makes four unique contributions to the literatures with regard to SIEs and SDT. First, drawing upon both career development literature (e.g., Super, 1990) and SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000; 2002), I develop a three-stage process model of SIE career transitions that delineates how and why SIEs' innate motivations contribute to their success and well-being at different stages of their career transitions: *exploration, establishment, and embeddedness*. This approach is likely to yield more meaningful insight at this juncture of research as it clarifies SIEs' different goals and nested motivation at different stages as well as contrasting with existing work on SIEs that has dichotomized SIEs experience into just pre-departure and post-departure stages.

Second, I contribute to the SIE literatures by incorporating key concepts from self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002) to explain how and why motivations may influence the success of SIEs at different career transition stages. While extant research has begun to acknowledge the importance of motivation on corporate expatriation and other types of international assignments (Chen et al., 2010), by and large it has not provided a comprehensive theoretical explication of how corporate expatriates are motivated, not to mention that corporate expatriates and SIEs are distinctly different. Furthermore, even though recent studies on SIEs and expatriates have continued to

explore what motivates these individuals to pursue global work opportunities or take international assignments (e.g., Doherty et al., 2011; Hippler, 2009; Selmer & Lauring, 2010), none clearly explains how these motives influence SIEs or expatriates psychologically. Applying the SDT framework to study SIEs' motivation addresses this research void and is theoretically appropriate in that both SDT and SIEs highlight the importance of personal agency and autonomous decisions.

Third, my proposed model of SIE career transitions also contributes to SDT by reframing and adding individual (personal resources) and macro-context (contextual factors) factors that can further extend our knowledge of how humans' basic psychological needs are affected beyond the influence of relational factors. Furthermore, the process model of SIE career transitions responds to the critique of boundaryless and protean career concepts, the basis of many SIE studies, that overemphasize the desirability and possibilities of individual agency on career transitions (Arnold & Cohen, 2008; Inkson, Roper, & Ganesh, 2008) while environmental factors are often neglected (Mayrhofer, Meyer, & Steyrer, 2007). To address this shortcoming, my process model of SIE career transitions argues that relational support, personal resources, and supportive contextual factors at different stages (most of these factors are not controlled by and fully accessible to individuals except personal resources) contribute to SIEs' motivation to pursue their decision at each career transition stage by generating the motivational state of basic need satisfaction. Table 4 provides a summary of relational supports, personal resources, and supportive contextual factors at each stage of SIEs' career transitions.

Last but not least, the fourth contribution of my proposed model is that I explore the pivotal role of SIEs' well-being that links the three stages of SIEs' career transitions.

In contrast to much of the extant research on SIEs that focuses primarily on a single career transition stage, I propose that SIEs' well-being at the prior career transition stage will positively influence SIEs' basic needs satisfying experiences at the subsequent stage which in turn enhances SIEs' motivation and well-being. This proposition implies that the outcomes of a prior striving cycle (e.g., SIEs successfully establish their global work experiences) may carry over to affect processes and outcomes occurring during a subsequent striving cycle (e.g., SIEs who strive to maintain their global work experiences and permanently stay abroad) (Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2000). This proposition is also in line with Conservation of Resource (COR) theory's (Hobfoll, 2002; 2003) assumption that individuals who possess resources are more capable of gain, and in addition, initial resource gain begets future gain, thus generating gain spirals. To summarize, SIEs' well-being at each career transition stage can be regarded as a type of their personal resource that, when obtained, facilitates SIEs' future decision and goal pursuit through psychological need satisfaction, autonomous motivation, and well-being.

**Table 4. Summary of Relational Supports, Personal Resources, and Supportive Contextual Factors**

	<b><u>Exploration</u></b>	<b><u>Establishment</u></b>	<b><u>Embeddedness</u></b>
<b>Relational Support</b>	- Family Member Support - Friends Support (both work and non-work)	- Organizational Support - HCNs Support (both work and non-work) - Family Member Support	- Organizational Support - HCNs Support (both work and non-work) - Family Member Support
<b>Personal Resources</b>	- International Work Self-Efficacy - Internal Locus of Control - Conscientiousness - Emotional Stability - Openness to Experience - Agreeableness - Extraversion - Previous International Experience - Host Country/Universal Language Proficiency	- International Work Self-Efficacy - Proactive personality - Internal Locus of Control - Conscientiousness - Emotional Stability - Openness to Experience - Agreeableness - Extraversion - Cultural Flexibility - Cultural Intelligence - Previous International Experience - Host Country/Universal Language Proficiency - Work-Related Subject Matter Knowledge	- International Work Self-Efficacy - Internal Locus of Control - Conscientiousness - Emotional Stability - Openness to Experience - Agreeableness - Extraversion - Cultural Flexibility - Cultural Intelligence - Previous International Experience - Host Country Language Proficiency - Work-Related Subject Matter Knowledge - Career Instrumentality - Lifestyle Instrumentality
<b>Supportive Contextual Factors</b>	- Encouraging Environment - Multilingual Education - Diverse Living Environment	- Friendly Policy Toward Foreign Workforce - Friendly Host Country Infrastructure and Environment - Diverse Host Country Climate	- Friendly Immigration Policy - Friendly Host Country Infrastructure and Environment - Diverse Host Country Climate

In terms of the empirical test conducted in Chapter 4, I examined the influences of relational support (perceived organizational support), personal resources (proactive personality, prior international work experience, and universal language proficiency), and contextual factors (host country diversity climate) on SIE academics' psychological needs, autonomous motivation, and two types of expatriate adjustment. The core contribution of this empirical study is finding support for the proposed establishment stage of the process model of SIE career transitions in Chapter 3 in which (1) different relational support, personal resources, and contextual factors relate to SIE academics' perceived autonomy, perceived competence, and perceived relatedness of establishing their global experience and (2) the satisfaction of these psychological needs enhances their motivation and their expatriate adjustment. Specifically, this study aimed at testing the motivational sequence of SIEs when they are abroad to establish their global work experiences. Results from this study also showed that the motivational consequences from different types of relational support and personal resources on SIEs' expatriate adjustment flow through the increase of perceived competence and autonomous motivation.

Overall, the results from Chapter 4 enrich our understanding of how SIEs are motivated when they strive to establish their global work experience in a host country. Specifically, this study contributes to the SIE and SDT literatures in at least two ways. First, extending previous work examining what motivates SIEs to work abroad and establish their global work experience (e.g., Thorn, 2009; Selmer & Luring, 2011), Chapter 4 conceptualized and tested how SIEs are motivated. As far as I know, this empirical study is one of the first field studies to show how SIEs are motivated when they pursue their global career and establish their global work experience. My findings

indicate that SIE academics' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness regarding their decisions to establish global work experience were satisfied when SIE academics received career support from their employers, when they have a proactive personality, when they have prior international work experience, when they have a good universal language spoken fluency, and when they perceived a diverse host country climate.

One of the noteworthy findings was that proactive personality was positively related to all three types of psychological needs. This result highlights the importance of being proactive as a SIE. Most SIEs generally lack of systematic organizational support and they have to proactively seek for help, expand their social networks, and deal with unexpected hassles in order to feel autonomous, competent, and related. Surprisingly, only career support was found to be positively related to SIE academics' psychological need satisfaction, not adjustment or financial support. This finding, though surprising, could be explained by the fact that three-fourths of the SIE academics in my dissertation study are assistant professors and most of them obtained their terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D) in the same country in which they are currently employed. For assistant professors, because they are not tenured, they have not yet successfully established their careers, so career-related support would have a more salient influence on their psychological needs when compared to adjustment- and financial-related organizational support. In addition, many SIE academics have stayed in the same host country where they are currently employed since their graduate study. This fact may lower the impact of adjustment-related organizational support on SIE academics' psychological need satisfaction. Last, because SIE academics are generally well-paid, financial-related organizational support

may not have a significant influence on SIE academics' psychological needs. Thus, future research along these lines to investigate SIEs' motivation should acknowledge the contextual differences (Johns, 2006) among different groups of SIE professors in order to assess what are the important factors that will satisfy their psychological needs.

Second, the study in Chapter 4, as far as I know, is the first to assess the complete motivational sequence that influences SIEs' decisions to establish their global work experience and their well-being based on the theoretical framework of SDT. Results of this study suggest that the mediation sequences from career POS, proactive personality, prior international work experience, universal language spoken fluency to both work adjustment and general adjustment, are solely through perceived competence and autonomous motivation. In general, findings here support SDT claims that factors that satisfy individuals' psychological needs were in turn conducive to their autonomous motivation as well as their well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Philippe & Vallerand, 2008). More specifically, findings here also showed that perceived competence was the most important factor that influence SIE academics' motivation to establish global work experience and their subsequent psychological adjustment during the proposed motivational sequences. One explanation for this finding could be attributed to the fact that the nature of academics' life is very competitive. Most academics, especially assistant professors that represent a large portion of my sample, need to strive for research opportunities, publications, and tenure. This kind of life pattern may make them focus on perceived competence as remaining competent within the academic battleground is the key to survival. Again, this finding re-emphasizes the importance of acknowledging contextual differences to understand SIEs' motivations and behaviors.

Last but not least, most studies that have delved into the topic of SIE motivation (e.g., Doherty et al., 2011; Richardson, 2006; Selmer & Luring, 2010; Tharenou, 2008; Thorn, 2009) focus only on factors that motivate SIEs to go abroad before they leave their home countries. This study, by examining the underlying psychological mechanism that motivates SIEs to establish their global work experience, extends beyond previous studies by theoretically exploring SIEs' experiences and motivations when they are actually abroad.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

In terms of the empirical study described in Chapter 4, there are a number of strengths and limitations that should be acknowledged, and this will provide some implications for future research. In terms of strengths, the hypotheses of my empirical study in Chapter 4 were developed and tested based on the SDT literatures. This is noteworthy in that SIE research has been basically atheoretical and descriptive. Furthermore, the sample of this study was composed of SIE academics originally from 37 different countries/regions around the world that are culturally diverse. The diversity of my sample increases the cross-cultural validity of the results. The diversity of my sample also supports the applicability of SDT toward individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

There are also limitations related to this empirical study. First, it is possible that my results could be inflated by common method variance because all measures were assessed by the same source at the same time (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). First of all, when I designed the surveys for my dissertation, I followed Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) suggestions by mixing the order of the questions, using different types of scales,

and adding reverse items. Although self-report is deemed an appropriate option when studying perceptual variables (as I did in this dissertation), and Spector (2006) also argued that self-reports do not automatically and inevitably inflate associations between variables, future research should consider investigating the effects of SIEs' motivational sequence when they establish their global work experience over time. I also conducted one post-hoc test to examine the potential issue of common method variance. Harman's single factor analysis was conducted for all the variables in the empirical study to detect the potential problem of common method variance. As the emerged single factor only explains 27% of the variance which is lower than the 50% cut-off point (though it is still higher than a stringent cut-off of 20%), common method variance should not be a significant issue in this empirical study (cf. Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

The other potential limitation of this study rests with the sample, which limits the generalizability of my findings. Results from my sample of SIE academics, though informative, cannot be generalized to other SIE professionals. Thus, future researchers are urged to consider using samples comprising of employees from other occupations, especially those who work in the real business world. For example, researchers can contact companies that employ SIE professionals (e.g., information technology companies in Silicon Valley, California, employ many SIE engineers from India and China).

Another limitation of this study has to do with the low response rate as well as the small sample size. While previous research on SIE academics tends to have a good response rate (20-30%), unfortunately, this is not the case here. One potential explanation is that I invited SIE academics to participate in my survey during the academic semester.

Many SIE academics could be too busy to complete my survey. Another explanation is that existing SIE academic studies were mostly conducted by established scholars (e.g., Selmer and his colleagues, 2010, 2011) in a specific region (e.g., Denmark). As a Ph.D. student, the weight of my invitation may not have been as strong as those sent by well-established scholars. Even though the sample size in my study ( $N = 245$ ) is deemed appropriate to conduct a path analysis using SEM (Kline, 2005), a more stringent analysis (Soper, 2012) with effect size = 0.1, power = 0.8, and significance level = 0.05 would require a sample size larger than 736 in order to detect statistical effects. Thus, using a larger sample to test similar process models is highly warranted.

Last, for the sake of time and feasibility of my dissertation, I did not test the mechanism of SIEs' well-being, which was proposed to link SIEs' motivational sequences between different stages of their career transitions. This will be the next step of my research based on my dissertation. Along the same vein, I would also suggest SDT researchers to investigate the role of well-being in creating a positive gain spiral between well-being and psychological need satisfaction over time.

### **Future Research Implications**

Based on my process model of SIE career transitions in Chapter 3, I identify several issues that provide a roadmap for future research. The first issue for future research has to do with the accumulation of resources. According to COR theory, resources individuals possess can facilitate the development and the use of other resources they desire. Drawing on this idea, it is possible that relational support, personal resources, and supportive contextual factors can enhance each other and create a resource gain spiral. For example, a friendly atmosphere toward SIEs in the host country can

probably bridge an invisible gap between SIEs and HCNs, which can in turn facilitate SIEs' interpersonal relationships and increase SIEs' perceived relatedness. In addition, SIEs who are extraverted can facilitate their friendships with HCNs, and then receive more relational support. Indeed, there are many more possibilities to be explored.

Therefore, future research is warranted on how relational support, personal resources, and supportive contextual factors interweave to affect SIEs' basic need satisfaction. In particular, given the enduring nature of personal resources in facilitating individuals' basic need satisfaction, further research might especially benefit from further examining how SIEs' personal resources might strengthen or mitigate the influences of relational and contextual factors on SIEs.

The second issue that deserves future research attention rests on SIEs' country of origin and their nested cultures. The literature on SIEs has a tendency to ignore skilled individuals from developing countries who self-initiate their expatriation to a developed country (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). However, it is important to study SIEs from developing countries traveling to more developed ones, as they constitute a pool of international human resources that offer alternatives to traditional corporate expatriates in those well-developed countries (Bonache & Zarraga-Oberty, 2008). Moreover, because SIEs from developing countries face more challenges and barriers, the fact that they still strive to go abroad sets up a strong basis for studying their motivation.

In addition, various relativistic cross-cultural researchers have criticized SDT's cross-cultural adaptability, especially the universally positive influence of autonomy in collectivistic cultures (Cross & Gore, 2003; Iyengar & DeVoe, 2003). Proponents of SDT (see Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003; Jang, Reeve, Ryan, & Kim, 2009;

Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens, & Soenes, 2005) have responded to this cross-cultural critique by arguing that it is a conceptual error to equate the concept of autonomy with individuality and by arguing that a cultural value on social harmony does not necessarily mean that members of that society do not have a need for autonomy. The third issue that deserves research attention is to further investigate this debate; I suggest that future researchers obtain data of SIEs from both individualistic and collectivistic cultures and compare their motivational process based on my proposed model of SIE career transition.

Because my proposed model is a process model, any full examination of the model must necessarily incorporate longitudinal designs. Indeed, the linking pathway specified in my sixth proposition (the linking mechanism between each stage) implies causality and a longitudinal study needs to be conducted to statistically test its validity. Tracking SIEs' motivational process starting from the exploration, and moving to the establishment, and then to the embeddedness phases, will involve periodic measurements as well as inputs from SIEs at different time points. Researchers employing longitudinal designs should be aware of the different temporal dynamics derived from different contexts (Johns, 2006).

Although each SIEs' expatriation stage is proposed to have similar motivational processes in my process model, it is likely that the importance of different basic needs satisfaction varies across stages. For instance, I expect that perceived need for autonomy should be more salient at the exploration stage given that SIEs need to feel autonomous before they can volitionally strive for their self-initiated decision to explore global work opportunities and go abroad. On the other hand, perceived competence and perceived relatedness could be more salient for SIEs at the establishment and the embeddedness

stages given that SIEs have to be competent enough to survive in the host country and given that SIEs usually lose all their social network and support they had before going abroad. Along a similar vein, factors that facilitate SIEs' need satisfying experiences, even though some of them are proposed to have influences across the three stages in this chapter, may have different impacts at each stage. For example, family support might have more influence on SIEs at the exploration stage (Richardson, 2006) and the embeddedness stage, whereas HCN support might have more influences on SIEs at the establishment stage. Thus, my fourth suggestion is to urge future researchers to explore this vein of research.

Last, given the complexity and the longitudinal nature of my proposed process model, I recognize the challenges involved in testing the model in its entirety. Indeed, it would be difficult for researchers to track the same group of SIEs going through the three career transition stages in terms of the time spent and sample dropout rate. However, future researchers could focus on various parts of the process model. For example, researchers can explore SIEs' motivation process to explore global work opportunities, establish global work experience, and maintain global work experience at any specific stage they can recruit. This is the strength of the proposed model in that SIEs' motivational process is deemed similar based on SDT, and assessing this process can be accomplished by just focusing on any stage. In order to examine the linking mechanism of well-being in my proposed model, researchers can longitudinally survey SIEs between any two stages, whichever is easier for them.

## **Managerial Implications**

The process model in Chapter 3 argues that SIEs' motivation to pursue their goal in their career transition process hinges on relational support, personal resources, and supportive contextual factors as well as their psychological need satisfaction. This proposition is generally supported based on the empirical results from Chapter 4. Thus, the results of my dissertation suggest actions organizations can undertake to select, manage, and retain SIEs. Even though organizations generally do not assist SIEs at the pre-departure stage, I recommend that organizations select and recruit SIEs who have a proactive personality, prior international work experience, and better spoken English fluency, which could facilitate their survival and success in the host country by satisfying their psychological needs and increasing their autonomous motivation. Results from Chapter 4 also suggest that perceived career support from employers and host country diversity climate contribute to satisfying SIEs' psychological need for competence. I would expect that this may be true not only for SIE academics but also for other SIE professionals who desire to establish their global work experience abroad. Thus, organizations should consider providing career-related training or related interventions to enhance their SIE employees' perceived competence. In general, organizations and managers should consider how to satisfy SIEs' psychological needs so they can be highly motivated. For example, organizations should offer different types of support that facilitate SIEs in becoming more effective either at work or in their personal lives. These supports could include providing customized organizational socialization practices, hands-on training, support for their accompanying family members, and empowerment.

All these supports could increase SIEs' perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Empirical results of my dissertation also suggest that perceived competence plays a key role in SIE academics' motivational sequences. Though this result cannot be generalized to SIEs in other occupations, organizations and managers should try to determine what is the most important factor in their SIE employees' motivational sequences. For example, what is the most important psychological need for SIE engineers and SIE designers? SIEs working in different occupations may value different types of psychological needs based on the nature of their jobs. By understanding SIE employees' motivational sequences while they try to establish their global work experience, organizations may not only enhance their SIE employees' well-being but may also increase organizational effectiveness.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, my dissertation contributes to the body of literature on SIEs and SDT both theoretically and empirically. Through the lens of SDT, I theoretically proposed a process model that elucidates the motivational sequences of SIEs at and between different stages of their career transitions. This attempt extends previous research on SIEs by investigating how SIEs are motivated, not just what motivates them. An empirical study that examines SIE academics' motivational sequences while they try to establish their global experience also suggests that relational support, personal resources, and contextual factors are all conducive to SIEs' psychological needs, as well as their motivation and well-being. Thus, findings from my dissertation have important

implications both theoretically and professionally. I hope my dissertation can provide guidance to researchers who work on similar endeavors.

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## APPENDIX A

### **RELATIONAL SUPPORT**

#### **Perceived Organizational Support (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004)**

Instruction: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements about your organization (university).

Items: [1=Strongly Disagree to 7=Strongly Agree]

1. The organization has taken care of me financially.
2. The financial incentives and allowance provide to me by the organization are good.
3. I have received generous financial support from the organization.
4. I cannot complain about the financial benefits associated with my job.
5. The organization takes an interest in my career.
6. The organization considers my goals when making decisions about my career.
7. The organization keeps me informed about career opportunities available within the organization.
8. I feel that the organization cares about my career development.
9. The organization has shown an interest in my family's well-being.
10. The organization has provided my family with enough assistance to help them adjust to the foreign country.
11. The organization has provided me with many opportunities to ease the transition to the foreign country.
12. Help is available within the organization whenever I have questions or concerns about living in the foreign country.

**Scoring Information.** Form three subscale scores by averaging item responses for each subscale.

Financial support: 1, 2, 3, 4

Career support: 5, 6, 7, 8

Adjustment support: 9, 10, 11, 12

## **PERSONAL RESOURCES**

### **Proactive Personality (Bateman & Grant, 1993)**

Instruction: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

Items: [1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree]

1. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life.
2. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change.
3. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality.
4. If I see something I don't like, I fix it.
5. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.
6. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition.
7. I excel at identifying opportunities.
8. I am always looking for better ways to do things.
9. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.
10. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.

### **Prior International Work Experiences**

Instruction: Prior international work experience was measured by subtracting respondents' tenure (in months: see question 1 below) with their current employer from their total work experience in an international setting (in months: see question 2 below).

1. How long have you worked with your current employers? \_\_\_\_\_ Months
2. What is your total work experience in an international setting (Consider all countries where you have worked)? \_\_\_\_\_ Months

### Universal Language Proficiency (specifically developed for this study)

1. Please list any languages you speak other than your native language and indicate your level of written and spoken fluency in each using a scale from 1 = poor to 5 = excellent.

	Language	Written fluency	Spoken fluency
Language 1			
Language 2			
Language 3			
Language 4			

Instruction: Universal language proficiency was measured in terms of respondents' written and spoken fluency in English. If the respondents indicate themselves as native English speaker, I assign 5 "excellent" to both of their English written and spoken fluency.

### **CONTEXTUAL FACTOR**

#### **Host Country Community Diversity Climate (Ragins, Gonzalez, Ehrhardt, & Singh, in press)**

Instruction: Think about your host country community where you live. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

Items: [1=Strongly Disagree to 7=Strongly Agree]

1. The host country community welcomes people of different races and ethnicities.
2. Racial and ethnic diversity are not tolerated in my community. (R)
3. People of different races and ethnicities would want to move to my community.
4. My community fosters a positive climate for people of different races and ethnicities.
5. My community is a model for valuing racial and ethnic diversity.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED SATISFACTION**

### **Psychological Needs Satisfaction at Work (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001)**

The following questions concern your feelings at your global work. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements about your experiences on your global job.

1. I feel like I can make a lot of inputs to deciding how my job gets done.
2. I really like the people I work with.
3. I feel very competent when I am at work.
4. People at work tell me I am good at what I do.
5. I do not feel pressured at work.
6. I get along with people at work.
7. I enjoy working with others when I am at work.
8. I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job.
9. I consider the people I work with to be my friends.
10. I have been able to learn interesting new skills on my job.
11. When I am at work, I have discretion to do what I am told.
12. Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from working.
13. My feelings are taken into consideration at work.
14. On my job I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am.
15. People at work care about me.
16. I am close to many people at work.
17. I feel like I can pretty much be myself at work.
18. The people I work with seem to like me.
19. When I am working I usually feel very capable.
20. I can decide for myself how to go about my work.
21. People at work are pretty friendly towards me.

**Scoring Information.** Form three subscale scores by averaging item responses for each subscale.

Autonomy: **1, 5, 8, 11**, 13, 17, 20

Competence: **3, 4**, 10, **12, 14**, 19

Relatedness: **2, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16, 18**, 21

Note: Items in bold were retained for final empirical testing in Chapter 4 in order to obtain an acceptable model fit of the structural model.

## **AUTONOMOUS MOTIVATION**

### **Motivation at Work Scale (Forest et al., 2010)**

There might have been different reasons why you are motivated to work in your host country job. Please indicate to what extent each of the following reasons applied to you. Some statements may seem very similar to each other but despite this please rate all of them. Use the following scale (1 = not at all because of this reason to 7 = completely because of this reason).

1. I don't, because I really feel that I am wasting my time at work.
2. I do little because I don't think this work is worth putting effort into.
3. I don't know why I am doing this job, it is pointless work.
4. To get others' approval (e.g., supervisor, colleagues, family).
5. Because others will respect me more (e.g., supervisor, colleagues, family).
6. To avoid being criticized by others (e.g., supervisor, colleagues, family)
7. Because others will reward me financially if I put enough effort in my job (e.g., employer, supervisor, ...).
8. Because others offer me greater job security if I put enough effort in my job (e.g., employer, supervisor...).
9. Because I risk losing my job if I don't put enough effort in it.
10. Because I have to prove to myself that I can
11. Because it makes me feel proud of myself
12. Because otherwise I will feel ashamed of myself
13. Because otherwise I will feel bad about myself
14. Because I personally consider it important to put efforts in this job
15. Because putting efforts in this job aligns with my personal values
16. Because putting efforts in this job has personal significance to me.
17. Because I have fun doing my job.
18. Because what I do in my work is exciting.
19. Because the work I do is interesting.

Source: Forest, J., Gagné, M., Vansteenkiste, M., Van den Broeck, A., Crevier-Braud, L., Bergeron, E., Benabou, C., Nuñez, J. L., Martin-Albo, J., Battistelli, Picci, P., Galletta, M., Naudin, M., & Mans, N. (May, 2010). International validation of the "Revised Motivation at Work Scale": Validation evidence in five different languages (French, English, Italian, Spanish, & Dutch). Oral

presentation during the 4th International Congress on Self-Determination Theory, in Ghent, Belgium.

**Scoring Information.** Form two subscale scores by averaging item responses for each subscale.

Amotivation: 1-3

Controlled motivation: 4-13

Autonomous motivation: 14-19

## **WELL-BEING**

### **Work adjustment (Modified from Black & Stephens, 1989 and Thomas Lazarova, 2006)**

Instruction: Please indicate the extent to which you feel comfortable with each aspect of your global employment as a self-initiated expatriate academic.

Items: [1=Not at all to 7=To a great extent]

1. My specific job responsibilities
2. My activities or tasks at work
3. My work hours
4. My workload
5. Communications among my colleagues (e.g., other professors, administrative staff)
6. The work attitudes of employees in the host country
7. Skill levels of employees in the host country
8. The corporate culture of the host country
9. Collegiality among colleagues
10. Teamwork among my colleagues

### **General adjustment (Modified from Black & Stephens, 1989 and Thomas & Lazarova, 2006)**

Instruction: Think about your host country community where you live, please indicate the extent to which you feel comfortable with each aspect of the host country.

Items: [1=Not at all to 7=To a great extent]

1. Safety and crime levels
2. The cultural infrastructure (e.g., theaters, museums, etc)
3. The transportation infrastructure (public transportation, traffic conditions)
4. Opportunities for leisure activities
5. Communications with nonwork host country nationals (e.g., shopkeepers, taxi drivers)
6. Availability of goods and services
7. Availability of medical care
8. Environmental pollution
9. Climate/weather condition

## APPENDIX B

(Recruitment letter)



## The Global Employee Career Motivation Project

Dear Professor:

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study about global work experiences. This study is for my doctoral dissertation and part of a global research program, **The Global Employee Career Motivation Project**. For this phase of our research, I am especially interested in finding out more about **how various aspects of global work and global environment affect employees' career motivation and well-being**. I understand how busy you are, but I am hoping you can give me about 15-20 minutes so I can graduate on time.

Based on your career history and related information provided on your university's website, I believe that you are currently an expatriate professor living and working in a foreign country/region (outside the country/region in which you were raised). Thus, I am inviting you to complete my web survey.

If you agree to participate, please go to the following URL and complete the survey posted there **within the next two weeks**:

[https://milwaukee.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6myxTB80GEc54Ec](https://milwaukee.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6myxTB80GEc54Ec)

***In return for your participation in this study, you will be eligible to participate in a lucky draw for a chance to win a US\$50.00 (or equal value) Visa gift card.*** Totally ten prizes will be awarded.

Because global employment is a process that occurs over time, we would like to contact you in the future to learn how you are faring as a global employee. Therefore, we will invite you to participate in two follow-up studies six months and a year later. Everyone who completes the second and the third survey will again have another opportunity to

enter a lucky draw for ten US\$50.00 Visa gift cards respectively in each phase of the survey.

**All survey responses will be completely confidential.** No one other than the researchers will ever see them. Results and conclusions from the survey will be presented only as summaries in which no individual answers can be identified.

I know these requests are sometimes a pain. And, I know your time is valuable, but as an expatriate professor you are in a unique position to help me. I deeply appreciate you taking the time to consider this survey request. If you have any questions about the survey, please feel free to contact me (yuping@uwm.edu; +1-612-5018831) or my dissertation advisor, Dr. Margaret Shaffer via (shafferm@uwm.edu; +1-414-2292544). If you have *questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Institutional Review Board at +1-414-229-3173 (IRB# 12.136 dated 11/09/2011)*. Submitting your survey will indicate your willingness to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

Yu-Ping Chen

Ph.D. Candidate

Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Margaret A. Shaffer, Ph.D.

Richard C. Notebaert Distinguished Chair of International Business and Global Studies

Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

(Reminder letter #1)



## The Global Employee Career Motivation Project

Dear Professor :

About two weeks ago I sent you an invitation to participate in a study about global employee career motivation. This study is for my doctoral dissertation and part of a global research program, **The Global Employee Career Motivation Project**. I know survey requests are sometimes a pain, and I know your time is valuable. But as an expatriate professor who works outside the country in which you were raised, you are in a unique position to help me complete my dissertation on time. I deeply appreciate you taking the time to consider this survey request.

I would like to thank those of you who have already responded! For those of you who haven't yet started/completed the survey, would you please do so as soon as possible. All you need to do is go to the following URL:

[https://milwaukee.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6myxTB80GEc54Ec](https://milwaukee.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6myxTB80GEc54Ec)

***In return for your participation in this study, you will be eligible to participate in a lucky draw for a chance to win a US\$50.00 (or equal value) Visa gift card. All survey responses will be completely confidential.***

If you have any questions about the survey, please feel free to contact me (yuping@uwm.edu; +1-612-5018831) or my dissertation advisor, Dr. Margaret Shaffer (shafferm@uwm.edu; +1-414-2292544). Thank you for taking time to contribute to this research.

(Reminder letter #2)



## The Global Employee Career Motivation Project

Dear Professor :

Sorry for bothering you again and this is the last reminder. About two week ago I sent you an invitation to participate in a study about global employee career motivation. This study is for my doctoral dissertation and part of a global research program, **The Global Employee Career Motivation Project**. I know survey requests are sometimes a pain, and I know your time is extremely valuable. But as a professor who works abroad/outside the country in which you were raised, you are in a unique position to help me complete my dissertation on time. This survey will just take you about 15-20 minutes.

I would like to thank those of you who have already responded! For those of you who haven't yet started/completed the survey, I would like to ask you to consider taking/completing my survey within the next week if possible. **All survey responses will be completely confidential.** Just go to this URL:

[https://milwaukee.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6myxTB80GEc54Ec](https://milwaukee.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6myxTB80GEc54Ec)

*In return for your participation in this study, you will be entered into a lucky draw for a chance to win one of ten US\$50.00 (or equal value) Visa gift cards.*

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact me (yuping@uwm.edu; +1-612-5018831) or my dissertation advisor, Dr. Margaret Shaffer (shafferm@uwm.edu; +1-414-2292544). Thank you for taking time to contribute to this research.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### Yu-Ping Chen

Department of Organizations and Strategic Management

Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business

University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

Email: [yuping@uwm.edu](mailto:yuping@uwm.edu)

#### ACADEMIC POSITION

---

Assistant Professor of Human Resource (July 2012 - Present)

John Molson School of Business

Concordia University, Montréal, Québec, Canada

#### EDUCATION

---

Ph.D. in Management Science (August 2012)

Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business

University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Major: Organizational Behavior & Human Resources Management

Minor: Psychology

*Dissertation:* A Three-Stage Process Model of Self-Initiated Expatriate Career Transition: A Self-determination Theory Perspective

*Committee:* Margaret Shaffer (Chair), Sarah Freeman, Romila Singh

*Proposal Defended:* April 29, 2011

*Final Defense Date :* July 30, 2012

Master of Arts in Human Resources and Industrial Relations, 2007

Carlson School of Management

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business, 2002

National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

- o Global work experiences
- o Workplace motivation and emotions
- o Interpersonal relationships at work

### REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Shaffer, M. A., Kraimer, M. L., **Chen, Y. -P.**, & Bolino, M. C. (2012). Choices, challenges, and career consequences of global work experiences: A review and future agenda. *Journal of Management*, 38, 1282-1327.

**Chen, Y. -P.**, Hsu, Y., & Yip, F. W. -K. (2011). Friends or rivals: Comparative perspectives of HR and line managers on perceived future firm performance. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(8), 1703-1722.

### MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Shaffer, M. A., Joplin, J. R. W., Chan, S., **Chen, Y. -P.**, & Posthuma, R. Job demands and job resources: A comparative study of nurses in Hong Kong and the United States. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. (Under 2<sup>nd</sup> round review)

**Chen, Y. -P.**, Shaffer, M. A., Chen, S., Westman, M., & Lazarova, M. Family role performance: Development of a scale for use in international work-family research. Under Review at *Applied Psychology: An International Review*. (Invited to revise and resubmit, 1<sup>st</sup> round)

Shaffer, M. A., Singh, B., & **Chen, Y. -P.** Expatriate pay satisfaction: The role of organizational inequities, assignment stressors and perceived assignment value. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*. (Under 2<sup>nd</sup> round review)

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**Chen, Y.-P.**, Lazarova, M., Chen, S., Shaffer, M. A., & Westman, M. 2012. Family task and contextual performance: Similarities and differences between United States and Israeli employees. Presented at 2012 Work and Family Researchers Network Conference, New York, NY.

**Chen, Y. -P.**, Chen, S., Shaffer, M. A., Westman, M., & Lazarova, M. 2012. The Family Role Performance: Scale Development and Nomological Validation. Presented at

2012 Society for Industrial and Occupational Psychology Annual Conference, San Diego, California.

- Chen, Y.-P.**, Shaffer, M. A., Westman, M., Chen, S. & Lazarova, M. 2011. The family role performance: Scale development and validation. Presented at 2011 Israel Organizational Behavior Conference, Tel Aviv, Israel. (Finalist for the best paper award)
- Chen, Y.-P.** & Hsu, Y. 2011. Career motivation and development of self-initiated expatriates: A self-determination perspective. Presented at 2011 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas.
- Chen, Y. -P.** & Hsu, Y. 2011. Am I too emotional at work? Attachment styles, emotion regulation, and employee well-being. Presented at 2011 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas.
- Shaffer, M. A., **Chen, Y. -P.**, Kraimer, M. L., & Bolino, M. C. 2011. Global employment experiences and careers: A review and future research agenda. Presented at 2011 Academy of International Business Annual Conference, Nagoya, Japan.
- Ren, H., **Chen, Y. -P.**, & Zhang, L. 2011. When you feel lonely at work: Social loneliness, work strains, and performance. Presented at 2011 Global Business and Social Science Research Conference, Beijing, China.
- Chen, Y. -P.**, Shaffer, M. A., Joplin, J. R. W., Chan, S., & Posthuma, R. 2011. Etic demands and emic resources: A cross-national study of nurses. Presented at 2011 Society for Industrial and Occupational Psychology Annual Conference, Chicago, Illinois.
- Shaffer, M. A., **Chen, Y. -P.**, Bolino, M. C., & Kraimer, M. L. 2010. Global career success: A review and future research agenda. Presented at *showcase symposium* "Global Careers: Content, Choices, and Consequences" at 2010 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Montréal, Canada.
- Hsu, Y., & **Chen, Y. -P.** 2010. P-E Fit and prosocial behaviors across life domains: A conservation of resources perspective. Presented at 2010 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Montréal, Canada.
- Chen, Y. -P.** 2010. Green-eyed monster at work: An integrated model of workplace envy. Presented at 2010 Society for Industrial and Occupational Psychology Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Chen, Y. -P.** 2009. Understanding expatriate psychological withdrawal: The roles of organizational justice and satisfaction. Presented at 2009 Society for Industrial and Occupational Psychology Annual Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Singh, B., & **Chen, Y. -P.** 2009. Expatriate pay satisfaction: Influence of adjustment, justice and assignment value. Presented at 2009 Society for Industrial and Occupational Psychology Annual Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.

**Chen, Y. -P.**, & Shaffer, M. 2009. Expatriate spouse adjustment: Coping strategies and the moderating role of expatriate adjustment. Presented at 2009 Academy of International Business Annual Conference, San Diego, California.

Hsu, Y., **Chen, Y. -P.**, & Yip F. 2009. Comparative perspectives of HR and middle managers on their relationships and firm performance. Presented at 2009 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois.

Singh, B., & **Chen, Y. -P.** 2009. Determinants of expatriate pay satisfaction: A job-demands resources perspective. Presented at 2009 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois.

Fu, C, K., & **Chen, Y. -P.** 2008. Expatriate adjustment and perceived P-E fit of expatriates. Presented at 2008 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Anaheim, California.

### WORKING PAPERS

---

**Chen, Y. -P.**, & Shaffer, M. A. A three-stage process model of expatriate career transitions: A self-determination theory perspective. (Stage: Final preparation for submission to *Academy of Management Review*)

**Chen, Y. -P.** You are not my buddy: Influences of host country nationals' negative attitudes on expatriate adjustment and performance. (Stage: Literature Review; Target: *Journal of International Business Studies*)

**Chen, Y. -P.**, Hsu, Y., & Yip, F. W. -K. High performance work systems (HPWS) and HR-line manager relationship: The motivational role of psychological needs satisfaction. (Stage: Literature Review; Target: *Human Resource Management*)

### TEACHING INTERESTS

---

o Organizational Behavior

o Human Resource Management

o International Business & Cross-cultural Management

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

---

Teaching Assistant

Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

BUS ADM 330 Organizations

*Evaluations:* 4.72/5.0 (Fall 2008), 4.66/5.0 (Spring 2009)

## Instructor

Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

BUS ADM 330 Organizations (Spring 2010)

*Instructor rating:* 4.71/5 (adjunct professor mean: 4.3/5); *Course rating:* 4.78/5 (adjunct professor mean: 4.2/5)

BUS ADM 330 Organizations (Fall 2011)

*Instructor rating:* 4.79/5 (adjunct professor mean: 4.3/5); *Course rating:* 4.50/5 (adjunct professor mean: 4.2/5)

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 2007-2008  | Chancellor's Fellowship, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.   |
| 2009       | Doctoral Travel Stipend, Academy of International Business (AIB)  |
| 2009-2010  | Dean's Award Scholarship, Sheldon. B. Lubar School of Business, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.                                |
| 2009-2010  | Asian Faculty and Staff Association (AFSA) Achievement Award, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.                                  |
| 2010-2011  | Sheldon B. Lubar Doctoral Scholarship, Sheldon. B. Lubar School of Business, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.                   |
| 2010, 2012 | Graduate Student Travel Award, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.   |
| 2011-2012  | Eric Schenker Doctoral Dissertation Scholarship, Sheldon. B. Lubar School of Business, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.         |
| 2011       | Organizational Behavior Division Doctoral Consortium (invited participant), Academy of Management Annual Meeting, San Antonio, USA. |

## AD HOC REVIEWER

Academy of Management Annual Meeting, OB, HR, and IM Division (2007- present)

Academy of International Business Annual Meeting (2009, 2011)

Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (2011 - present)

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Academy of Management

Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP)  
Academy of International Business (AIB)