



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET
SAMHÄLLSVETENSKAPLIGA FAKULTETEN

Impacts on western expatriates' job satisfaction

A study of adaptation, organizational context and support

Vad påverkar västerländska utlandsstationerades arbetstrivsel?

- en studie om anpassning, organisationskontext och stöd

Bachelor thesis in Human Resource Management and Labor Relations, 15 hp

Puck Ågren
AnnaLinnéa Gosman
Supervisor: Oksana Shmulyar Gréen
June, 2013

Abstract

Bachelor thesis: 15 hp
Year: 2013
Supervisor: Oksana Shmulyar Gréen
Examiner: Bertil Rolandsson

The aim with our thesis is to explore western expatriates' view of their own job satisfaction when on overseas assignment in China. Within the field of job satisfaction, there is an extensive amount of research conducted in a western domestic setting. Also, research on expatriates has been done extensively; much of this has focused on the cross-cultural setting. There is a dearth of studies that have incorporated these two fields and those who have, used a quantitative approach. We therefore sought to conduct our study in a qualitative way, where the six respondents were to give their own views and experiences on job satisfaction in relation to the Chinese business culture. For our theoretical framework we used Locke's (1976) definition of job satisfaction, dividing our literature study into the two categories: events and agents. The previous research used a range of variables from job satisfaction, to cross-cultural training, and organizational support.

In the analysis of the data, we apply Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory to explore the motivation and the satisfaction of our respondents. We also analyze the supporting factors in transition such as administrative support, mentoring and the expatriate community within the company. We conducted interviews with managers in different locations in China, all working for the same logistics-company. This organization is a multinational corporation (MNC) and the interviews were conducted face to face. We used a constructivist approach and therefore did not exclude ourselves and our effect on the material while processing it. While doing this, we took our basis in a grounded theory strategy and followed a coding structure, ranging from open to selective coding. The results indicate that the Chinese business culture is important, yet not the most crucial factor in having impact on job satisfaction. Rather, we found that specific personality traits of the respondents is of greater importance in feeling satisfied with the overseas assignment.

The reasons why this is of importance for HR, both as research field and profession, is the increasing amount of overseas assignments and the financial implications for the organization. Due to large expenses in the overseas assignments the return of investment is highly relevant. It is therefore significant that the expatriates succeed on assignment: be productive and satisfied with their work environment and by this creating value within the company.

Key words: Job satisfaction, Chinese business culture, Adaptation, Expatriates, Self-determination theory

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION	p.3
1.1 Background	p.3
1.2 Aim and research questions.....	p.4
2. THEORY AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH	p.5
2.1 Job satisfaction.....	p.5
2.2 Events.....	p.6
2.2.1 Chinese business culture.....	p.6
2.2.2 Organization – motivating factors.....	p.8
2.2.3 Costs and reasons for failure on overseas assignments.....	p.9
2.3 Agents.....	p.9
2.3.1 Self-determination theory.....	p.9
2.3.2 Grouping - workplace diversity.....	p.11
2.3.3 Organizational support – social and informational.....	p.11
2.3.4 Cross-cultural training.....	p.12
3. METHODOLOGY	p.13
3.1 Design.....	p.13
3.2 Sample.....	p.14
3.3 Interview procedure.....	p.15
3.4 Analytical strategies.....	p.15
3.5 Validity.....	p.17
3.6 Limitations.....	p.18
4. RESULTS	p.18
4.1 Chinese Business Culture – a changing concept.....	p.18
4.2 Individual – background and personality traits.....	p.19
4.3 Adaptation – a learning process.....	p.21
4.4 Organization – corporate culture and loyalty.....	p.21
4.5 Support - administrative and emotional.....	p.22
5. ANALYSIS	p.23
5.1 Perceptions of Chinese business culture.....	p.24
5.2 Adaptations to Chinese business culture.....	p.25
5.3 Support in transition.....	p.25
5.4 Impacts of diversity.....	p.27
6. CONCLUSIVE REMARKS	p.28
6.1 Conclusions.....	p.28
6.2 Own role-reflection.....	p.29
6.3 Suggestions for future research.....	p.31

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX - Interview guide

1. INTRODUCTION

In this study we aim to give a broader understanding of the complexity of western expatriates' job satisfaction and how different aspects of daily life while working in a foreign country will effect employees' well-being at work. In this introduction, the background, aim and research questions as well as the area of job satisfactions' significance for HR will be presented.

1.1 Background

Globalization has become an indisputable feature in our societies, as communication, work and education are more intertwined and interdependent on each other through an integrated world. The world economy also demonstrates these characteristics and has become a global one where Multinational Corporations (MNCs) have to be able to compete with one another to remain in this immense and expanding market (Caligiuri, Phillips, Lazarova Tarique & Burgi, 2001, 357 & Scholte, 2005, 14). As the economy has grown, the questions for MNCs have become how to cut costs, increase efficiency and how to be more profitable (Brisco, Schuler & Tarique 2012, 13). In response, many MNCs have turned their eye toward the Asian continent and expanded their operations in Asian countries, particularly China. Due to the extensive market potential that China offers, they are seen as a key player and a global market in the global economy (Varma, Budhwar & Pichler, 2011, 355). Regarding the work aspect and working successfully abroad, which Caligiuri et al. (2001, 357) believes is critical for MNCs in order to be prosperous, job satisfaction is to be regarded as one of the most important factors. Job satisfaction is an important variable when attempting to determine if an individual will be successful in his or her work, as well as the fact that job satisfaction should be viewed as consisting of multiple facets, especially in a new country. In the few studies on the subject of expatriate job satisfaction, former researchers have discovered that several aspects correlate to this, such as support (from family, organization and host country-nationals), personality type and organizational climate (e.g. Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991; Naumann 1993 & Tung, 1981). Due to the complexity of job satisfaction, we aim to examine in detail the view of the individual expatriate regarding their working conditions, the support they receive, and how they perceive job satisfaction on assignments in China.

The fact that we chose China as the destination country in our study was a natural choice, due to that China is the number one country for foreign investment and is one of the top countries for expatriate assignments (Varma et al., 2011, 355). Furthermore, we examined previous studies of cultural sensitivity, which proved to be quite extensive. This research has mainly focused on the impact of cross-cultural training and its effect on expatriate adjustment, but also on Chinese culture, China as a host-country, role expectations and intercultural communication (e.g. Caligiuri et al., 2001; Shay & Tracy, 1997 & Qin & Baruch, 2010). However, the amount of research done within the area of job satisfaction is limited, even

though it is one of the cornerstones in succeeding with overseas assignments. In western research on domestic employees, there is a vast amount of research on job satisfaction; nevertheless this research is not applicable on expatriate assignments, since this type of job consists of more complex relationships both in and outside of the workplace (Downes, Thomas & Singley, 2002, 24 & Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011, 49).

The topic of job satisfaction is highly relevant to HR-professionals, in the role of designing and developing training programs for expatriates as well as host-country nationals. The interest also lies in having employees succeed and grow with their assignments, lowering both failure and turnover-rates. With increasing globalization international assignments become more common, making international human resource management important in the research field (Froese et al., 2011, 49). Human resource management is crucial to international business success and regulating the investment being made into overseas assignments, where failure or under-performance can be extremely costly for companies, as well as for the employees career (Forster, 2000, 63 & Shay et al., 1997, 31). Black et al. (1991, 291) refers to Copeland and Griggs who estimated that one failed expatriate assignment (i.e. leave the assignment early) can cost a firm around \$150,000, and that this number for American corporations might result in a loss of around \$2 billion every year. Besides the actual cost for the company due to turnover-rates and under-performance, the company may also suffer from damaged relations with other companies, coworkers in the host country and clients. In addition, the company's reputation could be damaged (Mahajan & De Silva, 2012, 350; Shay et al., 1997, 31). MNCs need to be aware that expatriate job satisfaction is more dynamic than domestic and should be addressed accordingly (Downes et al., 2002, 26).

1.2 Aim and research questions

The gap of knowledge within the previous research consists of a lack of qualitative approach. With this, a deeper understanding of expatriate job satisfaction was missing, together with the complexity and multi-faceted personal experiences. The objective of this thesis is therefore to contribute to the body of knowledge by gaining a better understanding of expatriates' job satisfaction by analyzing personal views regarding their work environment. We explore how expatriates feel about their job satisfaction and which factors affect them in their adjustment to their new workplace. This leads us to the following purpose and research questions:

How does Chinese business culture effect western expatriates job satisfaction?

- How does western expatriates perceive Chinese business culture in professional life?
- Does one have to make behavioral adjustments or changes to adapt to country-specific business ethics or norms? If so, how?
- What support provided by the organization has facilitated the most in the transition to working-life in China?

- In our respondents' views, what type of issues can emerge in a workplace due to cultural differences?
- What motivates our respondents in their working life in China?

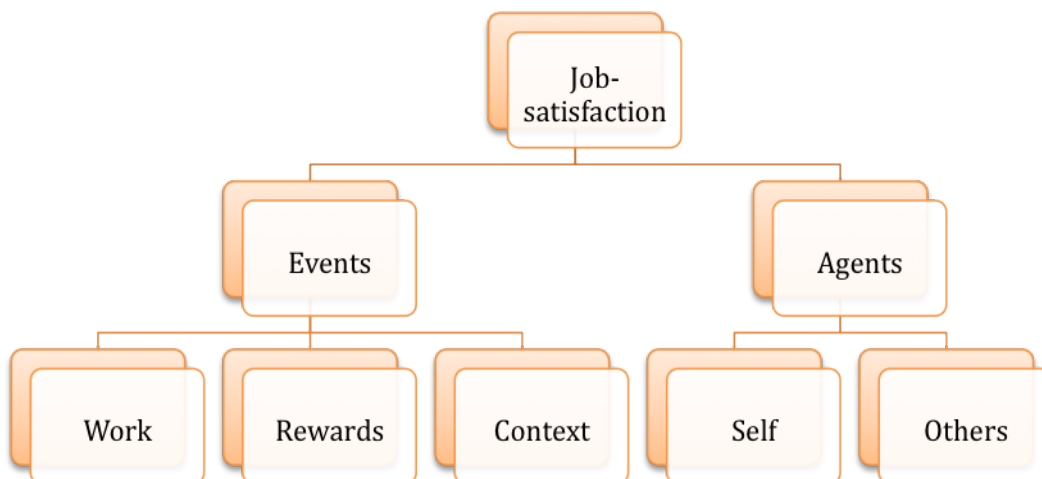
2. THEORIES AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In order to understand how expatriate job satisfaction is effected by Chinese business culture, we need to look closer at these areas and previous research. We will present research in the themes: Job satisfaction, Events and Agents, corresponding to Locke (1976) and his frame of reference.

2.1 Job satisfaction

In the aftermath of research on motivation, industrialism, and the human relations-movement, Locke (1976) aimed to create a greater understanding of job satisfaction and its causes. He proposed the definition of job satisfaction as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of ones job or job-experiences” (Locke, 1976, 1300). This definition has become the most widespread, adopted by several researchers, both previous and current, in their studies on job satisfaction (e.g. Downes et al., 2002 & Naumann, 1993). Locke discusses the different factors that effect job satisfaction and divides them first into two categories, events (or conditions) and agents. The events are then categorized into three; work, rewards and context, and the agents consist of either the self or others, thus the people around you that effect emotions concerning work and work-situations (Locke, 1976, 1301-1302).

Figure 1: Own composition of Locke's factors for job satisfaction (1976, 1301-1302)



When it comes to the aspect of expatriates and specifically their job satisfaction, it is not only the direct work-environment that affects it. When moving to a foreign country, the individual does not only face new challenges at work, but also in the non-work environment, such as culture, customs and norms (Black et al., 1991, 292). Froese et al. (2011, 49) stresses the

complexity of job satisfaction for expatriates, meaning that a new cultural setting will mean several new features that will affect it.

2.2 Events

2.2.1 Chinese business culture

The immediate context influencing the job satisfaction of our respondents is the culture of the society in which they work and live. Therefore, it is important to understand these conditions of the country-specific contexts. China is a huge country, with approximately 1.3 billion inhabitants. Naturally, all these inhabitants do not share the same experiences or one same single culture; rather there are numerous cultures, languages and religions. In 2004, the Chinese government presented a study that showed that only 53% of the population in China speaks Putonghua (Mandarin), a telling example on how little is known about China and the way it is discussed in both media and research. This is important, as presenting a culture as a coherent whole could lead to disregarding factors such as surrounding society (Ooi, 2007, 114).

Culture can be described as items either “above or below the water line” (Forster, 2000, 64). Those items above the water line are those visible to the eye, such as food, clothing, architecture or art. Those below the waterline are excessive in number, and much more subtle, including business ethics, norms, morals, values and employee loyalty. Being successful in an overseas assignment means being aware of these cultural items, and this is why cross-cultural training can be of significance (ibid). Below we will present a very brief overview of Chinese culture, business and current modern life in China.

Collectivism is maybe one of the most important cornerstones of Chinese culture, together with hierarchy. They can be described as: the importance of being part of a group, and the importance of knowing ones position in the hierarchy. Typical Chinese notions such as guanxi (interpersonal connections) or renqin (compassion) are parts of these two cultural concepts (Leung, 2008, 185). Regarding collectivism, it is of great importance to many Chinese people to cultivate good feelings and reciprocity in their relationships. This includes empathizing strongly with one's group and also feeling very strongly with one's supervisor. Reciprocity is important both socially and in business, and it has to do with the fact that the dealing of favors has to be approximately equal between two individuals over time. Favors are very common in the business context and these favors are always returned, sooner rather than later, keeping the relationship in harmony. This is an example of the importance of the personal relationship within the organizational setting (Renjun & Zigang, 2005, 75). With regards to the high power distance, we can conclude that position at work is of great importance in China and that the steps in the stairs of hierarchy should be clearly followed. One does not offend authority by cutting across business lines, not even to resolve issues that emerge at work. The important thing is in this case not to find a solution as soon as possible, but rather to follow protocol and

to demonstrate the right behavior (Renjun et al., 2005, 75).

There are many problematic aspects that come to mind when we try to present a culture. Firstly, living in a culture is very different from a presented culture (Ooi, 2007, 111). Chinese culture is diverse and heterogeneous and has evolved for thousands of years and there is not one single Chinese culture – as opposed to what is presented by most scholars (Ooi, 2007, 120). Secondly, China's rapid growth has led to a change in the way of conducting business, and young people in business may not have traditional values influencing them. Fang, Shao and Worm (2008) claims that the reason for China's success is “China's entrepreneurial spirit, it's humility to learn from the west, it's courage to experiment new things and it's determination to never give up that have tuned China around after Mao” (Fang et al., 2008, 141). Due to the modernization of Chinese society and the economical growth, social norms have changed. Leung (2008, 185) suggests that of these new norms and institutional characteristics, materialistic achievement is the one aspect that sticks out. This could be because of a more permissive society - where it once was shameful to be rich, it is now desired and appreciated. This also means more challenges for both Chinese and Western companies operating in China, and especially the HR-departments. The reason is the increased turnover rate, the fact that many Chinese employees will not commit to and be loyal to their employer, but rather changes jobs quickly and willingly for better employment. This is demonstrated when reviewing the statistics, where many firms have annual turnover-rates of 30% (ibid). The challenges that China is facing are of social character, meaning growing segregation – gaps between rich and poor (not only people but also provinces), and psychological - meaning increasing individualism and materialism. In addition, developing HR and the adaptation of best-practice strategies are essential in the strategic decision-making (Fang et al., 2008, 143).

One important thing to be said about Chinese business culture is that in the past, Chinese corporations have not been able to predict future success in the frame of the Chinese political system. To find some way to control the business environment, Chinese business people established relationships, taking control by creating networks of trust (guanxi). Within these networks one can perform and ask for favors, but as with any other business in the world, it is mostly important to protect one's own interest and profits (Ooi, 2007, 123). In conclusion on the topic of culture, we'd like to stress the complexity of such a concept, even if narrowed down to business culture. It is of importance to stay critical to both media and previous research on the matter, since different scholars and areas have different target groups. To put it another way: “One may politely argue that each stream of research on culture is like a blind person feeling only a small part of an elephant” (Ooi, 2007, 123).

2.2.2 Organization – motivating factors

In regards to the organization and its relation to Locke's (1976, 1301) events, one needs to take the local context into account as much as the overall context, such as the Chinese business culture. In this case, the company portrays the organizational context and its affect on job satisfaction. The category organization also provides the element of work to Locke's (1976, 1301) frame of reference, as well as rewards. As the expatriates perform the tasks and assignments the organization assigned them, compensation is given as a motivator/ reward for performed work.

In Naumann's (1993) study on organizational indicators of expatriate job satisfaction, he, and several researchers, claim that individuals who possess certain traits or characteristics will succeed better on assignments abroad (Naumann, 1993, 64 & Tung 1981, 68-69). In addition, he suggests that work tasks are indeed of great importance, especially being a part of the decision making process will most likely increase job satisfaction, together with the perception that the overseas assignment will have an impact on future career-opportunities (Froese et al., 2011, 50 & Naumann, 1993, 76).

Further, Naumann (1993) differentiate job satisfaction between intrinsic and extrinsic, in which different factors affect the individuals' feelings. Intrinsic job satisfaction is achieved through self-fulfilling tasks; it comes from identifying with the work and/or the organization and from the feeling of accomplishments. Extrinsic job satisfaction comes from more instrumental factors like external rewards, such as benefits, career opportunities or different types of compensation. Naumann (1993, 63) claims that both these are of importance when it comes to expatriates situation since the international setting brings an individual more challenges, such as adapting to and learning about a new culture. The stimulating effect of working in a foreign country together with the feeling of accomplishment when overcoming certain cultural obstacles, can lead to higher intrinsic satisfaction. In regards to the extrinsic satisfaction, many expatriate assignments often comes with a number of benefits; such as housing, schooling for children and/or language course, things that most likely will affect the extrinsic satisfaction (Naumann 1993, 63). One important characteristic that is unique to the international setting is the value the assignment will have on the employees' future career. According to Naumann (1993, 63) most expatriates will use their assignments as a stepping-stone for advancement, mainly towards higher management or executive positions.

The study showed that the factors that had the highest positive correlation to job satisfaction on both intrinsic and extrinsic level was task identity, task significance and participation, implying that the most important aspects are job and organization characteristics. The characteristics that may improve the job satisfaction for expatriates are clearer role-description, autonomy and significant tasks. Further, it is important that on an organizational level, management gives room for input in the decision making-process, both on a local and

corporate level. Lastly, since career-opportunities are an important incentive, clear career-paths are important for a more satisfied expatriate workforce (Naumann 1993, 75-76).

2.2.3 Costs and reasons for failure on overseas assignments

Huge investments are made into expatriate assignments, successful adjustment is an essential outcome of the assignment, when it comes to both training and job satisfaction (Black et al., 1991, 291). When organizations invest money and resources on sending employees to another country, it is expected that the performance of the employees is high (Locke, 1976, 1301). These companies need to make sure that the employees are ready for the complexity of living and working in a foreign country. In order to reduce turnover-rates and failures, companies need to identify the factors and circumstances important for increased expatriate job satisfaction (Downes et al., 2002, 24). Tung (1981, 69-70) suggests that one reason for failure of overseas assignments, contributed to by a lack of job satisfaction in this new setting, is adjustment-difficulties not only for the expatriate, but also for his/her accompanying family. This is supported by Qin et al. (2010, 311) who propose that family package, such as housing, schooling for children, relocation assistance and flight tickets, together with extensive cross-cultural training, is closely linked to job satisfaction.

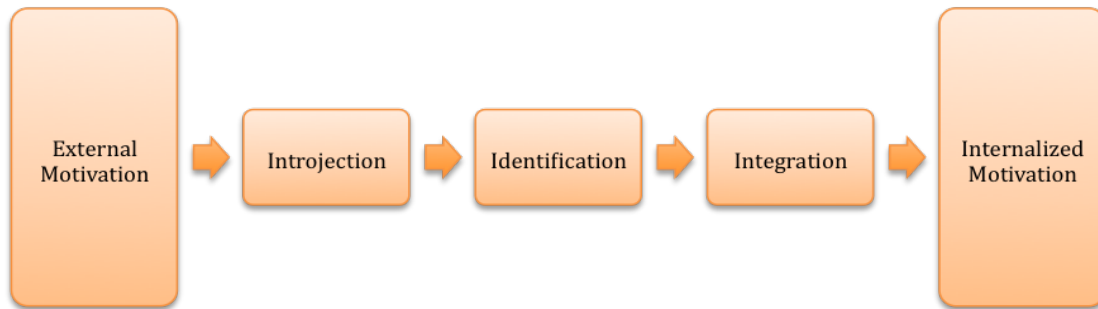
2.3 Agents

2.3.1 Self-determination Theory

As the category agents is about individuals, as well as others around them, it is of importance to understand the personality and motivation. In our study we want to explore how the expatriates experience their work abroad but also the cultural adjustment. It is therefore significant to investigate what the individuals are motivated by and how that motivation can be explained.

Self-determination theory (SDT) was developed by Deci and Ryan in 1985, in an attempt to explain motivation and satisfaction. SDT proposes that work-motivation will differ depending on the regulatory process; if the motivation is autonomous or controlled. Both controlled and autonomous motivation is intentional, as opposed to amotivation, which involves the absolute lack of motivation. The two cornerstones of the theory are two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is when someone is doing a task for its own sake, for instance because it is enjoyable and they find it satisfying. Extrinsic motivation on the other hand refers to an act that is motivated by an external reward, such as payment (Gagné & Forest, 2008, 225). According to SDT there is no dichotomy between controlled and autonomous motivation, rather it is a continuum and the external motivation can be internalized through these three processes: introjection, identification, and integration. This continuum starts with amotivation and ends in the intrinsic motivation, which is fully internalized motivation.

Figure 2: Revised composition of Deci and Ryan's Self Determination Theory (2008, 17).



The least effective process is called introjection – at this stage an individual performs a certain task or work because they need to, but tend to feel controlled. The next stage is identification. At this stage of the continuum, people accept the importance of the behavior for themselves and are motivated through accepting it as their own. The last one is the individuals' integration of the behavior, identifying with it to the extent that it becomes a part of themselves. When a behavior regulation and the value associated with it becomes internalized within the individual, the extrinsically motivated behavior can become autonomous (Deci & Ryan 2008, 17). According to Deci et al. (2008, 15) when people are given extrinsic rewards such as money or awards for doing an already intrinsically interesting activity, their intrinsic motivation tend to decrease. This would mean that the two types of motivation could not be combined - rather they seem to work against each other (Deci et al., 2008, 14). In sum, autonomous motivation includes both intrinsic motivation and well-internalized extrinsic motivation; it means that the activity is motivated through a person's interest in the activity per se. The controlled motivation is the one that is regulated by external aspects, such as rewards (Gagné & Deci, 2005, 334).

SDT assumes that people by nature are active and self-motivated, curious and interested. The theory also postulates that the reason people strive for success is the reward of being satisfied due to succeeding (Deci et al., 2008, 14). Every human, disregarding cultural surroundings, have needs to be fulfilled. These needs may be satisfied in different ways, but nevertheless they have to be satisfied for people to experience well-being. Needs are universal and so is the necessity of their fulfillment for human development. When using this definition, the conclusion comes to be that need-fulfillment, such as progression at work, competence and autonomy, is something that is important for all individuals. SDTs' focus therefore lies on to which extent the individuals can achieve and satisfy these needs, but also states that these needs always exist (Gagné et al., 2005, 334). SDT has an impact on HR-research regarding work-motivation, and the outcomes of need-satisfaction. Gagné et al. (2005, 336-337) claim that work climate that promote satisfaction and increase intrinsic motivation will give return on the following; 1) persistence and maintained behavior change 2) effective performance 3) job satisfaction 4) positive work-environment 5) company loyalty. Gagné et al. (2005, 342)

uses SDT in the claim that need-satisfaction is the way to not only increase well-being, but also performance improvement, this being the reason that it is an important theory to use in HR.

2.3.2 Grouping – workplace diversity

An important category to describe others is grouping. The importance of discussing grouping in relation to expatriates and the support they receive, is due to the fact that diversity at a workplace, especially a foreign one, can affect the expatriates' job satisfaction. Because of this diversity, grouping between HCNs and expatriates can be formed and effect the support given by and between these two groups (Froese et al., 2011 & Moore, 1999).

Moore (1999) discusses the importance of understanding diversity, and ultimately grouping, within an organization. She means that to understand diversity one must understand that diversity is context depending. It is a selective- and relative concept that may have characteristics that are visible or invisible. In addition, diversity within an organization could be used as a measure to segregate jobs both horizontally and vertically (Ibid, 208-209). From these factors there are risks that people who are a minority, but also the majority, will be stereotyped in situations concerning work and through this be restricted in their development opportunities (Moore, 1999, 210). Moore (1999, 211) also states that diversity in relation to performance is something that organizations need to pay attention to since diversity will create heterogeneous groups as wells as homogeneous groups.

Froese et al. (2011, 52) contribute to this line of thinking when discussing the possibility of in- and out groups within the organization. They focus on the relationship between supervisors and their employees, and how nationalities affect the integration and the quality of information provided to the subordinates. They also discuss cultural differences that in regards to values and behaviors at work, are likely to put pressure on the expatriates, decreasing job satisfaction (Froese et al., 2011, 52). The researchers conclude that there will be a difference in the support given to the expatriates depending on if the supervisor is a foreigner or an HCN. This could be due to limited understanding; assumptions and expectations of both supervisor and subordinate may be implicit, not giving clear role-expectations for the expatriate (Froese et al., 2011, 57). In other words, the foreign supervisors that provide support are more likely to treat other foreigners that are their subordinates as an in-group member (Froese et al., 2011, 52). Besides this, Froese et al. (2001, 57) concludes that if an expatriate has a foreigner as a supervisor, the expatriate will display higher job satisfaction.

2.3.3 Organizational support – social and informational

When researchers have conducted empirical studies regarding support they have viewed it as a factor of cross-cultural adjustment or job satisfaction for expatriates (Adelman, 1988;

Mahajan et al., 2012 & Varma et al., 2011). The reviewed studies have had different focus in job satisfaction and/or cross-cultural adjustment (e.g. Black et al., 1991; Froese et al., 2011 & Naumann, 1993) and there is no clear definition/-s of the aspect support. As support has been broadly focused, we aim to portray the different types of support within an organization.

Mahajan et al. (2012, 353-354) presents a theoretical framework relating to two categories of support, informational and social. The latter focuses on and is characterized by emotional and instrumental support, which can be related to support outside the work environment as well as within the organization. They illustrate social support by highlighting the proper way of greeting, courtesy and correct attire in relation to the work environment. When it comes to informational support they suggest that it is related to the actual work task or information regarding ones role, the organization and the culture of how to conduct business (Mahajan et al., 2012, 353-354). Mahajan et al. (2012, 354-356) also accentuates that support is easier to accept by expatriates if it comes from a credible host-country national (HCN). The reason for this is that expatriates are more likely to hold this information as true. Along with HCNs, other expatriates also function as a social support (Adelman, 1988, 193). Adelman (1988, 189; 193) points out that expatriates within the same organization can supply each other with useful information concerning norms, culture and other behaviors that characterizes the organization and host environment. The already located expatriates can help the newcomers' cultural integration within the company as well as providing a feeling of belonging in regards to workplace and to a group.

Feldman and Bolino (1999, 58) have focused on the socialization within in the actual organization. The two particular areas are socialization to the task and socialization to the group in relation to job satisfaction. The process regarding task considers to what extent and how proficiently the expatriates have accumulated the knowledge of the routines, duties and work procedures. Socialization to the group regards how well the expatriates adapt and how comfortable they are with the norms of the organization, the colleagues and supervisors. Feldman et al. (1999, 57-58) discuss mentoring and conjecture that mentoring that is career related, focused on task, psycho-social norms and role modeling will positively influence the expatriates' socialization towards the organization and the work. The mentoring in this case should be on-site in order for the expatriate to get the support needed.

2.3.4 Cross-cultural training

Cross-cultural training is, according to Black and Mendenhall (1990, 131), to be perceived as a tool, which should be used to adapt more efficiently to other cultures. In other words, it is a mean that is used by the individuals themselves – consequently, this is related to the concept of Agents as designated by Locke (1976). In addition to this, cross-cultural training is provided from the organization, others, which is also to be regarded as Agents.

When Black et al. (1990, 131) began their research on cross-cultural training, they studied its effectiveness and stressed that it was not only important as a tool in order to develop cultural sensitivity, it also positively effected job satisfaction. This would lead to a greater success for expatriates on assignment, and also result in lowering the turnover rates. Black et al. (1991, 292) claims that cross-cultural training gives the participants the opportunity to adapt to a new country more rapidly. The subject of cross-cultural training is also broached by Qin et al. (2010, 311), who suggest that attending cross-cultural training before going on an overseas assignment is positively related to the expatriates' job satisfaction. Further, they suggest that mentoring can play an important role in the expatriates' adjustment and development. Qin et al. (2010, 311-312) concludes that the better cross-cultural training the organization provides, the higher rate of job satisfaction will emerge.

A reason for cross-cultural trainings' effectiveness in facilitating the adjustment process is that the individuals that go abroad are usually chosen for their technical skills, rather than their personal (Black et al. 1991, 294-295). Since the selection process may not always include an evaluation of the expatriates' personal characteristics, cross-cultural training may be an efficient way of developing this to ease the adjustment process. Black et al. (1991, 294-295) claim that those who are most likely to succeed on their assignment are people who possess certain traits, such as self-efficacy, stress management and ability to build relationships.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this part of the thesis we will present the design as well as the sampling and how the interviews have been conducted. In addition to this, the methodology section will also provide a description of the limitations, the way the material have been processed, the validity and the ethical stances taken.

3.1 Design

When first looking at research for the literature study, a pattern emerged showing that most studies had been conducted in a quantitative way that tried to either prove or deny their hypothesis (e.g. Froese et al., 2011; Shay et al., 1997 & Qin et al., 2010). On the contrary, our purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of job satisfaction in this setting, and if and how Chinese business culture effects western expatriates job satisfaction. We found that the best way to gain this understanding of the respondents' views and opinions was to use a qualitative approach. Through this approach we were able to explore the individuals experiences of both social and environmental context (Bryman, 2011, 40-41). Birkinshaw et al. (2011, 573- 575) motivated the usage of qualitative study by enhancing that when it came to the dynamic and multi-dimensional nature of a discipline, qualitative studies are fit for use to understand the complexity that is related to multiple contexts. Our study's focus was to be interpretive but also comprehensive, contextual and process-oriented

(Bryman, 2011, 371-372; 651). The reason for using semi-structured interviews, and also the goal of the qualitative approach, was to gain information-rich data on a particular subject from the perspective of the respondent (Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, 95). The use of interviews was fruitful in the sense that the respondents could express themselves on their personal views and emotions, as well as perceptions on surroundings such as society, organization and policies (ibid, 98).

Within the qualitative approach we chose the constructivist perspective. We found that the usage of this perspective corresponded with the aims of a qualitative study as well as our purpose. The constructivist perspective and its focus of how the social actors perceive, view and experience their situation in regards to the context, was of great interest to us (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2011, 55). When using this method, it facilitated to display the complexity and the instability that characterizes the social reality. The knowledge of the respondents is something that is constructed through a social process, in which the he or she as a social actor constantly adapts their actions to the shifting reality. The interviews were in themselves a situation where the interviewees constructed and adapted their knowledge and their actions. With this said, we as interviewers effected the situation and therefore the context in which the answers were given. It was therefore important that we discussed how we through our presence affected the situation in relation to age, education, sex as well as other factors (Justesen et al., 2011, 55-56).

The interview guide (See Appendix 8.1) that was used for this study was comprised of three themes: Individual qualities and background, Support and Organization and one underlying theme; Host country. These themes were chosen from the literature-review of the previous research. From these the intent was to uncover the factors that would help us answer our research questions. On the topic of job satisfaction we have asked our respondents about factors that would make a difference in their work-life in China, as well as questions regarding working overseas, language skills and cultural differences. For us as interviewers the choice of a semi-structured interview was motivated by the fact that it gave us opportunities to follow the respondents' chain of thought and ask questions that the interview guide did not necessarily cover (Bryman, 2011, 413; 415). The guide was used to facilitate the interview as a knowledge-creating situation, to which both we and our respondents contributed.

3.2 Sample

In this thesis we used purposive sampling (Bryman, 2011, 392), which entails that the sampling of locations, organizations and respondents are of relevance for the posed research questions. The sampling of participants for our study was based on the criterion that they were westerners (i.e. from a “developed” country in the so called western world, such as western Europe, America or Australia) and worked for a MNC that had a part of their operations in

China. Other criterions were that the respondents were all working for the same company and held a management position. With this in mind we started to contact different companies that fit the description and amongst these were DHL Supply Chain (DSC). After deciding to conduct the study with DSC, we finally settled upon Shanghai, and later on Beijing, in which DSC has offices. Another reason for choosing these cities was because they are a common setting for expatriates and the study would therefore portray a normal working situation. The reason that our sampling was not more specific, for instance in relation to gender or experience in China, was due to that DSC as company only has a limited number of expatriates. Should we have decided to conduct the study with respondents from several companies, the sampling would have been more specific. However, due to the fact that we wanted our respondents to remain within one organization, we chose a broader set of criterions. Our first intent was that the location of the office was to be the same throughout the thesis, however due to travel and limited amounts of managers, the choice was taken to conduct the study at two locations instead of one (for more, see 3.6 Limitations). To point out, this was not an assignment initiated by DSC; rather they agreed to participate in our study.

3.3 Interview procedure

To get access to the respondents in Shanghai we gained a contact that served as a gatekeeper. The gatekeeper contacted people that were of interest for our study, using our sampling criterions and the information provided concerning the aim and research questions. Concerning the matter of interviews in Beijing and the respondents there, the gatekeeper in Shanghai functioned as a key gatekeeper and got us in contact with a local gatekeeper at the DSC office in Beijing. He in turn helped us to get in touch with the right respondents using the same criterions and information as was done in Shanghai. Our gatekeepers were also interviewed for this study.

The six interviews were conducted face-to-face and all lasted approximately one hour. The interview was semi-structured and the interview guide that was used was constructed into specific themes. This made it possible to compare the information obtained by the participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, this apart from one due to technical malfunction of our recorder.

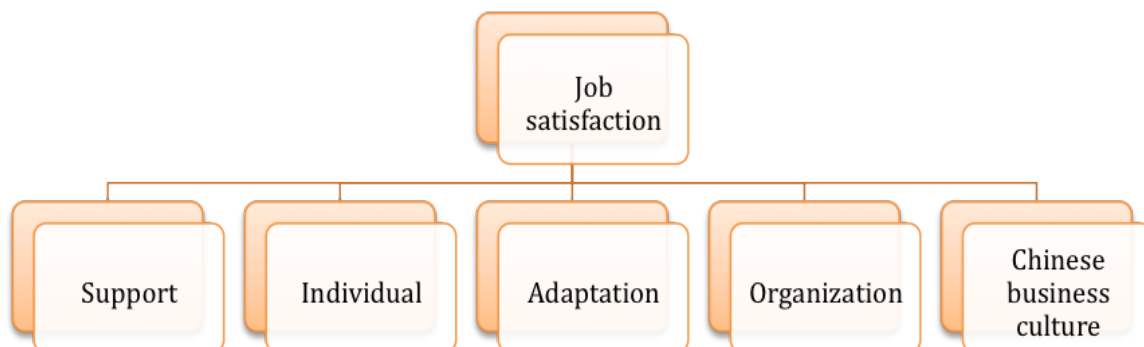
3.4 Analytical strategies

When processing and coding our data, we were inspired by a grounded theory strategy, meaning that, from the empirical material itself, we coded through three different phases called open, axial and selective coding (Dey, 2004, 81). We tried to stay as close as possible to the empirical data when coding the interviews. Our first step was to prepare the data, in other words, transcribe the recorded material. After this we read through the material on our own to get more familiar with the content. We then started with open coding. As Dey (2004, 81) described it, the open coding is the process where the transcribed material is broken down into

sections, sentences and words that is compared, examined and categorized. These codes are then to convey meaning through the comparison with other codes and parts of the material (Dey, 2004, 84). When conducting the open coding Dey (2004, 85) points out that researchers need to approach open coding without any preconceived notions. The purpose is to generate as many codes/categorizes as possible, without any anticipation on which would later become more valuable in the other stages of the coding (Dey, 2004, 85). During our coding in this initial phase, some of our open codes were: recruiting process, language, cultural differences, trust and westernized Chinese.

The second phase was the axial coding, which is characterized by the action of stringing the codes from the previous phase together and thereby making new connections between the data and the new categories (Dey, 2004, 81). While open coding was to be made without prejudgment, this phase and it's purpose was to integrate analysis into the process trough the connection of the new categories. Some of these categories were; mentoring, respondents' social background, education and cross-cultural training. With these, a frame of reference was created in order to put the codes into context (Dey, 2004, 85). As the third phase emerged, we began to integrate the analysis even more, creating core categories. These core categories would then act as a fulcrum in which other information and categories could be referred to, and with that create a cohesive whole (Dey, 2004, 85). In our study, this meant that background and education, which is mentioned above, was sorted and later referred to as the core category individual. The same procedure was for the codes mentoring and cross-cultural training that was given the core category support. As Dey (2004, 85) remarks, the selective coding enriches and deepens the analysis due to the necessity of creating and developing a tight integration. The analysis was then based on the core categories, Individual, Support, Adaptation, Chinese business culture and Organization, which emerged from the coded material. Our theory and previous research was then related to these categories in order to answer our research questions. The core categories that our coding resulted in is presented in the following model:

Figure 3: Results, our core categories



3.5 Validity

During the study we were living in Shanghai and Beijing in similar contexts to our respondents, which could have led to the problem of “going-native”, meaning identifying with our study objects and feeling as a part of their group (Bryman, 2011, 390). Our strategy to avoid going native was to be aware of the possible in-groups, the Chinese, and out-groups, the Westerners, thus avoiding to relate too much to any of these groups. We believe that our position in the context is the one of students, which gave us a strong social identity to hold on to. The fact that we conducted interviews gave the important signal to the respondents and ourselves that we were in Shanghai and Beijing mainly for research. In the discussion of possible replication and evaluation of this study, we hypothesized regarding the gatekeeper and the participants of the study. We are of the opinion that our study is possible to replicate, both with other respondents and the same. Should the same participants take part of a similar study but later in their career, our belief is that their views on the matter might have changed, since our area of research has to do with emotional and cultural aspects that are changeable over time (Bryman 2011, 49; 352).

The original intent was to conduct eight interviews at one specific location, namely Shanghai. However, due to work and travel of our respondents the number of interviews was limited to six. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Shanghai as intended, but for the last two we went to Beijing. Nevertheless, the result is still to be regarded as valid on account of that the interviews were conducted within the same company and that the two cities share similar characteristics. This gave the respondents resembling conditions in what they relate themselves to. Due to the attributes of the respondents (see 3.6 Limitations) this study cannot attest to how expatriate women perceive themselves in the same situation as well as to people with different cultural background than our respondents. Another restriction was that the study regarded only one company within a certain industry, and it is therefore not plausible to make generalizing remarks to other industries as well as other cultural contexts.

To ensure the validity of our study, we contemplated several ways of doing so. We chose to interpret our data through a theoretical framework, and to see how our study was positioned in the light of previous research. We also looked for negative cases amongst the transcribed material and when found, analyzed if and how they effected our interpretation (Nagy Hesse-Biber et al., 2011, 315-136). When conducting this study we took into consideration the ethical principles of Swedish Council of Research: the requirements of information, consent, confidentiality and usage of information (Swedish Council of Research, 2002). We informed our participants that they were to be anonymous throughout the thesis, however that it would be known that DSC was the company they worked for. In addition to this, we informed them that the information obtained in the interviews were to be handled with care. Information containing traits, statements or data that could lead to a specific person would be either generalized to the group as a whole or not used. It was important for us to encourage the

participants to speak freely about their work-situation, without having to think about their responsibility towards DSC. However, we recognize the difficulties of this, since the interviews were in fact addressing their working life.

3.6 Limitations

As our research questions attest, this thesis explores western expatriates' job satisfaction within the context of Chinese business culture. The limitations regarding the circumstances that effect job satisfaction was restricted to work and the environment around work as well as support. Support was limited to the one given by co-workers in relation to work, and support given by the organization. The limitations was motivated by the limited time of this thesis, otherwise the area of research would be too great and vast to explore. Thus other factors that resided outside the actual work area, such as family, were not taken into consideration when it came to their job satisfaction. Worth noting is also that the respondents we interviewed included only Caucasian men over 30, something we believe effected our results.

4. RESULTS

In this section we will present the results of our empirical data. The material will be presented through the core categories that emerged from our coding.

4.1 Chinese Business Culture – a changing concept

When asking about China and the Chinese business culture we found that some topics seemed more important than others. The initial and current impressions varied between the respondents. These impressions included the pragmatic way of doing business - getting things done quickly, hierarchy at the workplace and personal relationships. The pragmatic aspect is describes as a strength: “I particularly think is a big, big is strength of China, so they don’t waste too much time and thinking on abstract level but immediately go into thinking how do we get it done, what’s the problem?”. In regards to Chinese business culture and the personal relationships, employee loyalty lies with their supervisor rather than the company. One respondent describes it as: “Loyalty to a company is close to non...” due to that the employees always try to get better employment. In addition to this aspect, the majority of the respondents have Chinese subordinates that are western educated. These people bring another dimension to the Chinese business culture in regards to the way of thinking, conducting business and incorporating western business culture in the Chinese setting.

In terms of hierarchy, half of our respondents claim that the Chinese business culture is more hierarchal than in western societies, and that this also applies to their workplace. The other half claimed that the hierarchy at the office was flat. One of them believe that this probably is due to the corporate culture: “...pretty flat, you know what I said before about DHL being quite good in that we communicate across borders that, I think that, that’s also very much true in how we work as an organization so... there is very little hierarchy here. Very little.”. The

strict hierarchical setting is described with mixed emotions; some managers appreciate the possibility to get things done rapidly, since “...people always do what you tell them...” but others describes it as “I found that you have to be a lot more patient, talk through things much more. Yeah it could be a bit more waste of time from my perspective”. Because all of our respondents are in management-positions, they have to take the hierarchical role that is suitable within their workplace in China. One issue that is raised is that “...you do not hear critical reflection...” and that there is a certain finesse in how to get feedback and how to be a leader in China. One respondent describes that he, through a long learning process, had to develop an approach to handle it: “So you have to be a role model and say look this is how it goes, and I appreciate feedback. But before you appreciate feedback you need to tell them how it works“. The same respondent means that it is important to show respect for peoples honor, and if not treated properly it “...would mean that they’ll lose their face. So with positive questions, by reading between the lines, you need to slowly get to the point what is gone wrong”. Another describes the hierarchy as follows:

“So when I first came to China and I was trying to get input from the teams on you know, I was saying I can help you with processes, I have this experience and so, so etcetera but I don't know the local market, you have to help me understand. And they would just look at me like a deer in headlights, like 'but you're the boss, you should be telling us what to do”

When adapting to the new hierarchal setting, they express different ways of doing so. One expressed frustration over having to be too precise in his instructions: “Yes, but you have to pull it out of them sometimes. So what you tend to do is that you'll find your stars, and then you latch on to those people because you get a lot more out of them than just, you know, if I have to tell someone exactly what to do I might as well do it myself.” Another had the strategy of constantly reminding his team that they need to challenge him if they do not agree. He means that it is not in their culture; “...they don't confront.” so he has to remind them to “...challenge me. Do not accept it. And that... I don't tell them once, I tell them all the time.”

4.2 Individual - background and personality traits

All respondents are male, coming from a western country (i.e. developed country in the western world) and between the age of thirty and fifty-five. They have various degrees of education, ranging from people with no higher education to MBA, within different fields. Their working background is rather varied. Some of them started their careers in China, coming straight from university, others have moved with DSC to China, and some have had previous experience in the same sector. In common for all respondents is that none of them actively sought a position in China, but rather was brought to China due to a certain job opportunity. Another commonality for them is that they have previous overseas experience as they have either worked abroad before, conducted their education overseas, worked with

several countries in their previous jobs or have overseas experience through their personal life. However, as one respondent puts it, this experience did not necessarily prepare him for the business culture in China: “I was basically globe-hopping constantly, I was used to working with different cultures etcetera. But China was different from anything else.” Another respondent states “...nothing actually prepares you, to actually move and live here day to day.”

In regards to the respondents’ language-skills, none of them claimed to know more than a couple of words of mandarin. Those respondents who have some knowledge of mandarin tend to describe it as “taxi-Chinese”. When asked if they think increased knowledge of mandarin would effect their working life they all answer that it would: “...be an advantage.” effect their working-life “...hugely...” and one respondent declared it would make him “...the king of the castle.” The reasons for not learning mandarin is for instance the complexity of the language, the hectic lifestyle and the nature of the job, making it difficult to be at one place a certain time every week, as well as not perceiving language skills as important. It was also expressed that when moving to China the priority was to get settled as quickly as possible, both with work and personal life and therefore language “took a backstep”, it was not prioritized.

When we talked about trainings and introductions with our respondents, we got somewhat different information on what was well received and appreciated. The most common view is that they do not need help in that area, they perceive that they can deal with it themselves. One claimed, “I think a lot of that sort of stuff you need to figure out and it's part of you know, ingrained into, into a new place.” The reason for this was motivated from them by what lied in their personality, such as being old-fashioned and wanting to take care of things on ones own. The belief is that they do not need it because they already know it, some do not want to bother people and some express that introductions are a waste of time.

Career is the single most prominent feature in where the majority of our respondents are similar to one another. They are very career-focused, and their working life seem to be of very big importance. This also seems to be the reason that they are in China. None of them actively sought a position in China because of the country per se, but rather as the place that gives them the most opportunities at this time. “So I badly wanted the job and after the, the interviews with my boss I saw that he was a really nice guy that, that I would like to work for him. So I really didn’t care much where it is and where it has to do, so I just came here and saw.” Most of our respondents also see their future in Asia, and the determining factors for this is also career-related, one being the business culture because it is healthy and rapidly moving forward: “Because of business culture. Everything is about growth”, “ I think it’s very hard to leave Asia once you’re here.” This is also lifted as the main reason for staying in China; “Certainly job prospects are far better, right? ”, “So career wise it's definitely a good place to be.” It was not necessarily business prospects in Asia that drove all the respondents here; it was also the position or the challenge. The one reason that was raised for either

leaving China or Asia were relationships outside of work, i.e. family. However it was implied during the interviews that career-opportunities might take them elsewhere in the world.

4.3 Adaptation – a learning process

The adaptation to Chinese business culture is described as a learning process that takes half a year to a year. The discussions were focused on communication, leadership-style and the adaptation to what the other employees and the company expects. This is described as follows: “But all these things you need to learn over time. You need to know how they communicate, you need to know what kind of things they want from you, they need from you...” and “These are the things that in the first six months you do wrong over and over again until you start to see the big picture and you start to see that you need to approach things differently.” Support in this area is not given by the company, but as one of our respondents says, it is more of an individual process: “...on the job I think that it’s... you have to figure these things out, there is a learning process involved in it, and that’s the best way of learn it because you figure out what works for you.” This process is emotionally described as including both frustration and happiness: “Like I think I had one of the, some of the funniest and happiest moments in my life, in my working life, here in China. But also some of the saddest and most depressing moments, in my working life, in China.”

Since all the respondents are in management-positions, we addressed the adaptation of management style. The main component regarding the management style and the adjustment of this was of emotional nature, meaning that the main adaptation the respondents had to go through concerns the relationships at the workplace: “You need to become much more of a people person” one says, whereas another expresses the same opinion; “I think here you have to be far more sympathetic, you have to be a lot more, probably caring as well.” continuing to more bluntly stating that “Yelling does not work... to be honest.” In comparison to his home country one respondent express “...if I have an issue with someone we can have a bit of a, you know, heated discussion, whereas here, you're more diplomatic.” The subject of peoples emotions were often brought up, and the respondents mean that westerners such as themselves have to become more empathetic: “...they teach me, you know, how to work in China, how to treat them or they show me by that, their kind of feedback that whatever I did hurt them or harm their feelings so...” Adaptation is perceived as necessary to be able to continue a working life in China. “I have to adapt to the way it is here” one respondent says, it is either to adapt or go home, there is no in between. A similar statement is “So it’s grow or go. But I like that. I like this honesty. I like this being tested everyday.”

4.4 Organization – corporate culture and loyalty

There is a strong consensus among the respondents regarding the satisfaction with the company and their working conditions. Many of them speak fondly of the logistics business and its importance and impact on all markets. It is described as a “...necessary motor for other

markets...” and also that people who work within the logistics business are like the business in that way that they are “...not too fancy...” and the business is not a “...show off-industry.” DSC is described as “...honest and open.” and “...very fair and they look out for the employees.” In general there is a very strong belief in the company and loyalty towards it: “My testament to my boss, my team and DHL – is when I wake up I have a smile on my face and when I go home I’m still smiling.”

At the offices where the interviews were conducted there has been an absolute majority of Chinese employees, with only a few expatriates in Shanghai and Beijing. This of course reflects on the working relationships. The majority of our respondents work closely and almost only with Chinese employees. However, when it comes to socializing, like going out to lunch, they say that they mainly turn to other westerners. There are differences in regards to which extent they claim that grouping occur, but the majority means that there is a certain extent of grouping. The reasons for this tend to be a perceived commonality; “...all of us, we tend to spend most of the time with, yeah western faces. Which I think is a natural process that you can’t avoid, because communication is much easier if you share a common set of experience in the past.” Culture differences are also stated as a reason for grouping: “Cultures tend to stick to each other. Very much so.” One respondent answered more hesitantly when asked about grouping, saying “So other than a few times to sort of getting away from work and talk about things that we talk about when we are back home, yeah sometimes I will go to lunch with some of the expats sometimes, but other than that, no, not really.” Besides this, the perception is that them being westerners in China gives them a head start on their career in comparison to their counterparts in their home countries.

When it comes to their relationship to their supervisors, all of our respondents mean that this relationship is good. They also express their individual strengths and that they appreciate that their supervisor acknowledges their competence. The latter is illustrated by these three quotes: “It’s not much, I sort of go off doing my thing and I think he trust that I know what I’m doing and... And when we do catch up we just review things and makes sure that everything is aligned and move forward so... it’s really good”, “He understands that I bring a certain expertise to the business that he doesn't have, so he leaves that to me.”, “It’s not so much of a teacher student relationship as between me and my people. It’s more of a sparring partner.” In regards to the nationality of the supervisors they are both western and Chinese. All of them were asked if they thought it would make a difference if the supervisor was local or foreign and the results of that were ambiguous. One claimed that he was sure it would be different, whereas the others did not believe it mattered.

4.5 Support – administrative and emotional

All of our respondents have a great deal of trust towards the organization and the support they receive, or would be given if they required it. They are also pleased with the support in their

relocation process. They express many positive emotions towards the organization such as the possibility to grow, the efficiency of getting ideas implemented and the emotional support given by the management team.

The absolutely biggest supporting factor for the majority of our respondents in relocating to China was the administrative support. They emphasize that this support was the single most important and critical factor for them in adjusting and facilitating to working and living in China. These are things such as organizing viewing of apartments, translation, visa, and in many of our respondents' cases, a car and a driver. The administrative support also includes language training, which the company provides for one year, should the employee wish for it. Here it seems to be a difference between the offices, where the head office in Shanghai officially offers expatriates mandarin-classes, as opposed to the Beijing office.

When it comes to support in terms of cross-cultural training, none of our respondents received or were provided with cross-cultural training from DSC, however one person states that he has been offered cross-cultural training but declined it. Nevertheless, all claim that they are sure they would have gotten cross-cultural training if they requested it. Some claimed that it was not necessary for them, stating "...it depends on the person not the company." or that "...these are the things that I think better discussed when you go out with a work colleague after work for a beer or something like that." - thus claiming that it is not something that the company needs to be bothered with. However, two respondents expressed that they would have liked some sort of preparation before coming to China, regarding both language and culture.

Four respondents have mentors, something they appreciate on both a personal and professional level. The mentorship between the mentors and the mentees have not been nominated or set up by DSC, but has evolved through personal relationships in the company. This way is believed to be the best to get a mentor, one respondent saying "If you try to nominate someone you might not have this chemistry were you actually trust each other to speak about things that you speak about." In other words, an initiative from the company is believed not to be fruitful. One claimed that this also has to do with the working life in China and that mentorship cannot be imposed because of the hierarchal structure of Chinese business culture: "So mentoring relationship in Asia is something very, very intra-personal so, mentor and mentee relationship can't be assigned from outside, it just doesn't work." The career-aspect of mentors is also important since it concerns "...how to play the political games..." but in the context of being in China it can also be about practical skills in how to do business in Asia.

5. ANALYSIS

We will analyze the complexity of expatriate job satisfaction within the frame of previous

research and self-determination theory and with this answer our research questions. The notion of motivation will be embedded throughout the section.

5.1 Perception of Chinese business culture

Culture is hard to illustrate, since the lived culture is not the same as presented culture, this also holds true for China. Due to the fact that China has a vast number of inhabitants, there is no such thing as one Chinese culture (Ooi, 2007, 111; 114). Our respondents' answers reflect this when expressing their initial impressions of Chinese business culture as well as their overall view of working life in China. Regarding the hierarchical setting, some of the respondents witness that conducting business in China is strict hierarchical, whereas some of them express the opposite. In addition, the economic growth over the last decades has accelerated the process of change, leading to an even more diverse spread of culture and values within the country (Leung, 2008, 185). We argue that previous research in this field have been conducted within the frame and influenced by the current discourse on Chinese business culture. Within this discourse a phenomenon such as the strict hierarchy is recognized as common knowledge, and scholars have continued to reproduce this. Our study gives a more multi-faceted view on the Chinese business culture, showing that many factors affect the workplace setting. This could partly be due to the fact that our study has been conducted at a European company and that the corporate culture affects the hierarchical setting. Another reason for this could be the changing of Chinese business culture and that the new generation workforce is not affected by traditional values to the same extent as the older generation might be (Fang et al., 2008, 141 & Leung, 2008, 185). As an example, many of our respondents' subordinates are western educated Chinese and also quite young, this could contribute to the fact that the hierarchy is no longer as significant in the Chinese work setting.

The working life in China is described as oriented around personal relationships in the workplace, how to earn and maintain trust and to be a role model. These personal relationships are described by our respondents as essential both in the office setting as well as dealing with customers. This type of culture is not one that is visible straight away, but something that has to be experienced over time in the daily working life (Forster, 2000, 64). In this sense, our study is confirmed by previous research (Renjun et al., 2005, 75); to create and uphold these personal relationships and networks of trust can be difficult for western expatriates in China, not knowing the language as well as being unfamiliar with the norms at the workplace. However, scholars have not discussed the importance of language-skills and the impact it could have on personal relationships, and ultimately expatriate job satisfaction. It is therefore possible to argue that knowledge of mandarin would be an advantage for the expatriates in creating relationships, earning trusts and showing respect.

We found that the respondents' identification with DSC as a company and its values is very strong. This identification is due to factors such as the significance of their work and the value created by it. By internalizing extrinsic factors such as company values our respondents are

more motivated towards the actual work tasks (Deci et al., 2008, 14 & Naumann, 1993, 63). Many of them mean that their career-opportunities here are far greater here than in their domestic setting and this seem to positively correspond to their job satisfaction, since career and work-progress is a motivating factor (Gagné et al., 2005, 338). Career would usually be perceived as an external motivator but from our study's results we argue that the self-fulfillment due to career advancement would be an intrinsically motivating factor. This motivation takes place due to the respondents' pro-activeness and career-focus - their needs can be satisfied by career-advancement, making the motivation intrinsic and autonomous (Gagné et al., 2008, 225).

5.2 Adaptation to Chinese business culture

The behavioral changes that are made to adapt to the country specific business ethics are in many cases perceived to be how to adjust management style and also how to maintain personal relationships. To become more empathetic, caring and more of a people person are changes that our respondents have had go through, as well as learning how to understand the importance of face and how to address issues in a more diplomatic way. These results show factors that have not been addressed in the previous research. A reason for this could be that this type of adaptation is more easily discussed in an interview, in contrast to survey-studies with set answers. Since our aim was explorative, our results also became more in-depth. The implications became that they had to adapt their 'western ways' to become more people orientated, an adjustment that can both positively and negatively effect job satisfaction. It can be a hindrance if the individual is not open to change, or does not understand the business norms, which could lead to frustration and dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, it can also be positive in the sense that it signifies a challenge, that when overcome will lead to a higher degree of satisfaction (Gagné et al., 2005). The adjustment is described as a learning process, which progresses over time. It is learned though an intra-personal relationship, between the expatriates and their co-workers, who show them which type of behavior is appreciated and which is not. Thus, their Chinese co-workers function as their source of information by showing which type of feedback or actions is well received (Feldman et al., 1999 & Mahajan et al., 2012, 354-356).

5.3 Support in transition

Cross-cultural training is a theoretical preparation containing information on foreign countries, cultures and norms (Black et al., 1990, 131; 1991, 292). Through cross-cultural training, a culture is presented to the employee with the intention of preparing him/her for their overseas assignment. However, this does not necessarily mean that the employee would perceive the same actual situations that the trainings prepared him/her for, when actually working and living in the country (Ooi, 2007, 114). Our results indicate that the interest for cross-cultural training amongst the interviewed is low, despite the fact that all the previous research states that this is both requested and useful. In contrast, in this study the respondents'

common belief is that they could not have been prepared; culture is something that needs to be figured out on ones own. Qin et al. (2010, 311-312) concludes that the better cross-cultural training the organization provides - the better job satisfaction will emerge. This is a result of an instrumental questionnaire-study where the subject of motivation is only mentioned twice, in the literature-review. Our findings indicate that motivated participants are the key to successful cross-cultural training, and this needs to be taken into consideration in the designing-process. If the learning of cultural norms and the adaptation to this would be institutionalized, such as through cross-cultural training, it is likely that the respondents' initial intrinsic motivation would decrease (Deci et al., 2008, 14). This would be the case when externally rewarding an already intrinsically motivated activity, or making an autonomous behavior a controlled one (Ibid). All our respondents appear to be highly motivated individuals that strive for achievement, high performance and have all shown curiosity of new cultures. They do express frustration over cultural barriers but also happiness over the new cultural setting, as well as the positive emotions when they 'figured out' how to conduct themselves in this new setting. Thus, the argument could be made that from an SDT perspective, cross-cultural training could actually have a negative effect on already intrinsically motivated individuals.

A majority of our respondents found that the most important support in their transition to work-life in China was the administrative support provided by the organization. This includes practical support such as housing, car, driver, and education for children. The effect it had on the respondents was not only as compensation but also as a stress-reducing factor, easing the adjustment in working overseas. In those cases where this support was not provided, they showed a greater deal of frustration towards settling in China, both in private- and working-life. Hence the administrative support given is also an emotional support, giving the expatriates a feeling of being valued, appreciated and taken care of. This emotional aspect has been missing in the previous research, and most likely this is due to the extensive use of quantitative methods. In this qualitative study our respondents were given room to reflect upon their own impressions, expectations and emotions, unlike in the structural form of quantitative research. In addition, it would seem that administrative support such as relocation package has previously been treated as a compensation and/or benefit, while its implications on expatriates well-being has been disregarded.

At the workplace, a big support in adjustment is the social support provided by other expatriates. This support creates an inclusion and a feeling of belonging (Adelman, 1988, 193) and the majority of our respondents do express that grouping occurs at the workplace, however that it is for socializing and not work. The cultural differences in regards to values and behavior can put pressure on individuals on overseas assignments (Froese et al., 2011, 52) and the identification with a social group could ease this adjustment. It is suggested that instead of cross-cultural training these things are rather discussed with colleagues. In other

words, other expatriates can assist in the cultural integration of new expatriate employees. Another supporting factor for the respondents are their mentors, disregarding if they are unofficial or official. The mentorship is appreciated both work-wise and in personal life, and was perceived to give support in a number of aspects. Those respondents who did not have mentors did appreciate the notion, and a well functioning mentorship-relationship could positively correspond to expatriate job satisfaction. As stated in the result, mentorship is not likely to succeed if imposed through a formal mentorship-program. Nevertheless, we would like to stress organizations' possibilities to encourage these types of relationships, for instance through supporting senior managers in taking on mentees. In contrast to previous studies on mentoring in the expat setting (Feldman et al. 1999, 57-58), this study does not find any reason that the mentoring should be either on-site or task-related. The importance of mentoring is the sharing of confidence, trust and advice, regardless of how and where it takes place.

5.4 Impacts of diversity

The biggest issue for our interviewees is them lacking knowledge of mandarin. They expressed that even though their co-workers speak English, many of them proficient, there are a number of people at the offices who only speak mandarin. This was a problem when addressing the staff as a whole and also in creating work-relationships. In meetings, when the expatriates would be the only one's not knowing the local language, the conversation would drift into mandarin, resulting in missing half the conversation. Despite this they did not find it to be a big enough incentive to learn the language. We find this to be at odds with their career-orientation, since this would most likely increase their career opportunities. Learning the language is not motivated intrinsically, and the external factors are not strongly enough internalized for the motivation to take place. Even though career advancement, in this study, can be perceived as an intrinsic motivator, in the learning of mandarin there are several obstacles (Deci et al., 2008, 17). One of them is the fact that these individuals have a fully functional working life in English; another is the complexity of mandarin as a language. The commitment to learn the language would also mean spending a great deal of time and effort doing so, and the motivation for this is lacking. The nature of the work demands high flexibility in working hours and traveling, and this is a contributing factor for not learning mandarin, simply due to the lack of time. The motivation for career could also be a hindrance for committing to learn the local language, since our respondents do not know how long they will remain in China, new opportunities might take them elsewhere.

Continuously, the respondents raise the issue of the lack of critical reflection from their Chinese subordinates. The lack of this is perceived to be due to the Chinese education-system, as well as working norms. Firstly, the education-system does not encourage critical thinking, but rather repetition and compliance with superiors. Secondly, this reflects on Chinese business culture where the respondents express that they have to be much more detailed in

their instructions than in a western setting. Ultimately, it becomes an issue for western expatriates working in China, since the educational system and working norms does not correspond with their previous experience and expectations of their co-workers.

Another important issue we identified was that depending on if the expatriates' mentor or supervisor is western or Chinese, this can have an affect on the expatriate's job satisfaction. Western supervisors are more likely to treat the expatriate employees as a part of their in-group and to strongly relate to the expatriates situation (Froese et al., 2011, 57). This diversity creates a horizontal segregation but in this case it could be to the expatriates advantage. The diversity is context depending, this segregation occurs in the frame of working life in China, and our results are consistent with the findings of Moore (1999, 208-209). When working in China, it seems that the expatriate will get a career-advance in contrast to their counterparts in the same positions in Europe. In China they get credibility and respect in advance, and can work on deserving it later, they also automatically become included in the network of other westerners at the workplace. This network often consists of people in upper- and senior management positions, since expatriate assignments are most common for these types of positions. Thus, the expatriates' working network gives them a greater exposure to the management team and we hypothesize that this gives them a career-advantage, simply by being westerners. We are aware that this hypothesis could seem controversial, and this might be a reason that it has not, to our knowledge, been broached by previous studies. Yet, we would like to stress the importance of discussing these advantages western people gain from horizontal segregation, highlighting its importance and creating awareness.

6. CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

6.1 Conclusions

Our aim with this study was to create an understanding of how the Chinese business culture had an impact on job satisfaction amongst expatriates in China. Job satisfaction is a key predictor for organizational success and employee well-being (Locke, 1976). When it comes to our study, the importance of this is partly due to the large investments being made in overseas assignments (Black et al., 1991, 291 & Downes et al., 2002). Even though we focused on factors in the working environment, several other factors have been indicated to effect expatriate job satisfaction, such as the family's integration process (Tung, 1981, 69-70).

Through our research questions, we automatically created ideas and assumptions about what our results might indicate. We assumed that culture was a significant factor in how it affected working life, and with previous research in mind we thought that for instance cross-cultural training was going to be appreciated and requested. However, as the study progressed, it appeared that the results contradicted not only parts of previous research but also our own assumptions. The results of how Chinese business culture affected the expatriates working life was ambiguous, it turned out to be a question of motivation. Issues that was raised concerned

hierarchy and lack of critical reflection. Positive implications were the pragmatic way of doing business and getting things done quickly. In order to adapt to this the respondents expressed an alteration of management style, communication and in creating personal relationships at work. When moving to China, the greatest supporting factor that facilitated the transition was the administrative support provided by DSC, as well as the social support provided by their co-workers.

We can conclude that the perceived job satisfaction amongst our respondents is high, however, this does not seem to have a direct link to the Chinese business culture. Rather, we would like, in accordance to Naumann (1993, 64), to propose that the job satisfaction experienced by our respondents has to do with their set of personality traits in combination with the overseas assignment. This assignment is for them a representation of a challenge; it is the excitement of a new culture and a new setting, regardless of which new culture it might be. We believe that the Chinese business culture does affect the expatriates to some extent, as will any new contextual setting, however it's not being in China that effects their job satisfaction. China in this case acts as a country with the most career opportunities at this time. Should a similar economic growth take place anywhere else in the world, this would most likely be the place where our respondents would settle. The challenge that working in a new culture presents is something that seems to intrigue our respondents due to their personality. The credentials they were chosen for are mainly a certain set of skills or expertise, and not personality traits, as is the case with many overseas assignments (Black et al., 1990). However they all show a certain similarity in how they express themselves in regards to culture, motivation and determining factors. Our respondents seem to share certain characteristics such as being outgoing, challenge seeking, career-focused and having high self-efficacy. These traits in themselves seem to be the reason that they were interested in working abroad in the first place; hence the motivation for working overseas was already integrated. We believe that these traits are one reason that those offered cross-cultural training declined it, since they partly show a high level of independence and partly was already intrinsically motivated to adapt to a new culture.

6.2 Own role-reflection

We have approached our respondents and the interviews with a constructivist method and have because of this tried to create an understanding of how we ourselves affected the interviews. As Justesen et al. (2011) claims, from this perspective it is of great importance to address the participating individuals in the interviews in regards to gender, age and education. Due to this, we have problematized our own position in relation to our respondents. The basic facts are that we are young, European, women and students. Our respondents, in contrast, are male between the ages of thirty and fifty-five, who are all working in management-positions. Our perception is that our position affected the interview-situation as well as the jargon and us being in a dependency state towards them. Firstly, this dependency is due to us needing the

interviews as material for our thesis - our gatekeepers determined our time schedule and their involvement was crucial to us. In our case, the gatekeepers were very committed in helping us with several aspects of the thesis, which of course is very positive, but at the expense of leaving us with a feeling of being in dept of gratitude towards them.

Secondly, the fact that our gatekeepers contacted our respondents was positive but also problematic. To use gatekeepers was favorable because it gave the study legitimacy (Bryman 2011, 387) even though it was not issued centrally from DSC. It also meant that we got in contact with the right people from the beginning. If we had not used the gatekeepers the study might not have been given the same attention or participation. This in itself could be seen as a problem since the invitation for this study came from another employee, which could make the respondents feel compelled to comply and agree to participate. They might also have felt compelled to give answers that presented DSC in a certain way.

Thirdly, our interview guide was created on topics generated from previous research. In retrospect, we believe that this affected our results and limited our respondents' answers. Should we instead have worked more openly, the emotional aspect that our results indicated might have been greater, and the respondents might have had even more room to discuss these views. Since Locke's definition of job satisfaction (1976) derives from quantitative research this has most probably had an effect when using it in our study. We believe that the use of quantitative material and data in a qualitative study could have the effect of limiting areas such as emotions. It can also limit researchers in the processing of data when using quantitative material in the literature review for a project with a qualitative approach.

Lastly, we believe that our respondents' approach towards us was affected by the fact that we are young women, and this might have influenced their answers. Should we have been men, it is more likely that we would have been treated as a part of their in-group, and our results may have taken another direction. When it became apparent to our respondents that we were women, we noticed a change in the jargon and the communication. During an interview one respondent clearly expressed that he altered his use of language depending on the gender of the person he was speaking with. When we experienced this, it is most likely that we ourselves changed our approach towards the respondents, either consciously or unconsciously. All of these notions are included in the way the constructivist method mean that knowledge is created: as a social interaction, bound by context. By raising this issue we would like to enhance the fact that even small behavioral changes in social interaction can be of importance in the knowledge-creating process. In the process of writing this thesis we have gone from a dependent situation in relation to our respondents, to a situation where we now are in control over the information gained. With the knowledge of this, we have done our utmost to handle this information in an ethically and morally respectable way.

6.3 Suggestions for future research

As most research on expatriates have been conducted on men, including our own study, we would like to encourage the future research to focus more on female expatriation. We believe the experiences of female expatriates might be different from the one's of men, both in regards to the specific cultural context, but also in integrating to the workplace. Furthermore, we would like to stress the advantages of conducting qualitative research on the subject of job satisfaction. Cultural adjustment is an emotional adaptation-process, where the individual will experience several different cycles of emotional and cultural understanding, depending on how long the person has been on assignment. To examine this, qualitative research could preferable be done over a longer period of time, making follow-ups from initial impressions to the end of assignment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adelman, M. B. (1988). Cross-cultural adjustment: A theoretical perspective on social support. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 12, 183-204.
- Birkinshaw, J., Brannen, M., & Tung, R. L. (2011). From a distance and generalizable to up close and grounded: Reclaiming a place for qualitative methods in international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 42(5), 573-581.
- Black, J. S., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G. (1991). Towards a comprehensive model of international adjustment: An integration of multiple theoretical perspectives. *Academy of Management Review*, 16, 291-317.
- Black, J.S., Mendenhall, M. (1990) Cross-cultural training effectiveness: A review and theoretical framework for future research. *Academy of Management Review*, 15, 113-136.
- Brisco, D. R., Schuler, R.S, & Tarique, I. (2012). *International Human Resource Management: Policies and Practices for multinational enterprises (4th edition)*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Bryman, A. (2011). *Samhällsvetenskapliga metoder, 2:a upplagan*. Malmö: Liber AB.
- Caligiuri, P., Phillips, J., Lazarova, M., Tarique, I., & Burgi, P. (2001). The theory of met expectations applied to expatriate adjustment: the role of cross-cultural training. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(3), 357-372. doi: 10.1080/09585190121711
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). The general causality orientations scale: self-determination in personality. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 19, 109–134.
- Deci, E. I., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Facilitating optimal motivation and psychological well-being across life's domains. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(1), 14-23. Doi: 10.1037/0708-5591-49.1.14
- Dey, I. (2004). Grounded Theory. In Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J.F., & Silverman, D. (Ed.) *Qualitative Research practice* (s. 80-93). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Downes, M., Thomas, A.S., & Singley, R.B. (2002). Predicting expatriate job satisfaction: the role of firm internationalization. *Career Development International*, 7(1), 24–36. doi: 10.1108/13620430210414847

- Fang, T., Zhao, S., & Worm, V. (2008). The changing Chinese culture and business behavior. *International business Review*, 17, 141-145. Doi: 10.1016/j.ibusrev.2008.02.010
- Feldman, D.C., & Bolino, M.C. (1999). The impact of on-site mentoring on expatriate socialization: a structural equation modeling approach. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 10(1), 54-71. doi: 10.1080/095851999340639
- Forster, N. (2000). Expatriates and the impact of cross-cultural training. *Human recourse management Journal*, 10 (3), 63-78.
- Froese, F. J., & Peltokorpi, V. (2011). Cultural distance and expatriate job satisfaction, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(1), 49-60. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.10.002
- Gagné, M., & Deci, E. I. (2005). Self-determination theory and work motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(4), 331-362. doi:10.1002/job.322
- Gagné, M., & Forest, J. (2008). The study of compensation systems through the lens of self-determination theory: reconciling 35 years of debate. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(3), 225-232. doi: 10.1037/a0012757
- Justesen, L. & Mik-Meyer, N. (2011). *Kvalitativa metoder: från vetenskapsteori till praktik*. (Andersson, S. Trans.) Lund: Studentlitteratur
- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In Dunnette, M.D. (Ed), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* . Chicago, Rand McNally, 1297-1349.
- Leung, K. (2008). Chinese culture, modernization, and international business. *International Business Review*, 17, 184-187. doi: 10.1016/j.ibusrev.2008.02.009
- Mahajan, A., & De Silva, S. R. (2012). Unmet role expectations of expatriates, host-country national support, and expatriate adjustment. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 12(3), 349-360. doi: 10.1177/1470595812440153
- Moore, S. (1999). Understanding and managing diversity among groups at work: key issues for organizational training and development. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 23(4/5), 208-217. doi: 10.1177/1059601110390997
- Nagy Hesse-Biber, S., & Leavy, P. (2011) *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. San

Francisco: Sage Publications

Naumann, E. (1993) Organizational Predictors of Expatriate Job Satisfaction. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 24(1), 61-80.

Ooi, C. (2007) Up-packing packaged cultures: Chinese-ness in International Business. *East Asia*, 24(2), 111-128.

Qin, C., & Baruch, Y. (2010). The impact of cross-cultural training for expatriates in a Chinese firm. *Career Development International*, 15(3), 296-318. doi: 10.1108/13620431011053758

Renjun, Q., & Zigang, Z. (2005). Work group emotions in Chinese culture settings. *Singapore Management Review*, 27(1), 69-86.

Shay, J., & Tracey, B. J. (1997). Expatriate Managers: Reasons for Failure and Implications for Training. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 38(1), 30-35.

Scholte, J. A. (2005). *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*. London: Macmillan.

Swedish Council of Research (2002). *Forskningsetiska principer inom humanistisk-samhällsvetenskaplig forskning*. Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet.

Tung, R (1981). Selecting and Training of Personnel for Overseas Assignments. *Columbia Journal of World Business* 16(1) 68-78.

Varma, A., Budhwar, P., & Pichler, S. (2011). Chinese Host Country Nationals' Willingness to Help Expatriates: The Role of Social Categorization. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 53(3), 353- 364. doi: 10.1002/tie.20413

APPENDIX- Interview guide

How does Chinese business culture affect western expatriates job satisfaction?

The information that we collect from this interview will be treated with confidentiality. In our report we might use some quotes from different interviews, but while doing so we will also do our utmost to make sure that these quotes are not traceable. In other words, you will be anonymous, so we encourage you to answer freely to our questions.

Is there anything you would like to ask us before we start the actual interview?

You are of course more than welcome to ask us questions during the interview if you have any questions or if the question is in some way unclear to you.

If there is any question that you feel hesitant to answer, just tell us so and we will in that case we will skip that question.

Interview questions:

Individual- and background

1. How old are you?
2. Where are you from?
3. How long have you worked at DHL?
4. How long have you been in China?
5. What kind of educational background do you have?
 - a. Degrees, university, in what?
6. Where have you obtained your education?
7. Did you actively seek a position here in China or where offered by your company to go to China?
 - a. On what grounds were you selected?
8. What were the determining factors for you working in China?
 - a. Family, position, salary, relocation package, career, social network.
9. What were your expectations of your transition to China?
 - a. live up to, exceed, did not live up to etc.
10. Do you speak Mandarin?
 - a. How did you learn it?
 - b. Did DHL in any way give support your mandarin studies (financial aid or time at work)
 - c. If not, would you like to learn it?
 - d. If not, does it hinder you in your work?
11. What are your general impressions of Chinese culture in regard to your work environment?
 - a. Where these your first impressions? Differences in work, environment, social support, organization
 - b. Did these impressions change over time?

Organization

12. Could you describe your work and what your assignments are in China?
13. Did this position correspond to the expectations you had?
 - a. So you found that you were fully prepared for the position?
14. Do you work in teams or individually?
15. Who do you report to?
16. Could you describe your relationship to your supervisor?
 - a. Is he/she local or foreign?
 - b. Do you think this affect your relationship? (Closer, communication)
17. Do you have personnel responsibilities/ do people report to you?
18. Is there a difference between your work here and your home country?
 - a. In that case, how?
 - b. Do you have to adjust your leadership-style while working here?
19. Do you find the hierarchy to be different from where you worked before?
 - a. If so, how?
20. Have you had previous assignments abroad?
 - a. Where, when, how long, how did you perceive that?

21. What type of contract do you have for your assignment in China?
 - a. Is it a fixed time position or are you here in definitely?
22. How is it to work for DHL as a company?
 - a. Why is it good/bad?
23. Do you see opportunities to grow within DHL?
 - a. Do you see you future carrier within this company?
24. Do you see you career in China or in some other country?
25. How would you describe DHL as an organization?
 - a. Values?

Support

26. Did you receive support from DHL when you moved to China?
 - a. How do you perceive the support from DHL (relocation package, mentor, housing, help for the spouse with work etc.)?
 - b. Why was it good/bad? Would you have wished for something different/more/less?
27. Did you have any cross cultural-training?
 - a. Before or after the move?
 - b. What did it entail?
28. Would you have liked / liked more/less cross cultural training?
29. Could DHL have done anything else in facilitating your culture adjustment?
30. Could DHL have done anything else in facilitating your move to china?
31. Had you ever been to China before moving here?
32. Do you have any contact or support form you home organization?
 - a. What kind? Why not?
33. What nationalities would you say represent your working network here in China?
 - a. Do you think there is a reason for this?
34. Have you experienced any grouping between HCNs and western expatriates?
 - a. If no, so you find that you and HCNs socialize on the same terms as HCNs?
 - b. Do you find that you work on the same terms?
35. Do you have a/ any mentors/mentors?
 - a. If not , do you think you would have benefited form it?
 - b. If you had one, how did it work or how does it work?
 - c. Was this mentor a HCN or another foreigner?
36. If you could ask anything from DHL as a company to improve your job satisfaction and/or your working life, what would that be? If could be more than one thing.