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Expatriate Academics' Cross-cultural  
Adjustment and Future Intentions in  
Chinese Transnational Higher Education

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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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May 2024



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I started my doctoral journey in my middle age. This journey that began at this age in life was particularly special, fulfilling, joyful, and unforgettable, accompanied by the encouragement, help and support of many people. I could not express my gratitude to all those who have directly or indirectly helped me, but I still want to mention and thank everyone who helped me achieve my dream along the way.

Firstly, I would like to thank my main supervisor, Professor Martin Lockett, for his valuable guidance throughout my entire journey. His patient and thorough responses to all my questions and our heated discussions that lasted for several hours each time left an unforgettable memory. I would also like to thank my second supervisor, Professor Abby Zhou, for her inspiring and enlightening professionalism and rigor. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to my third supervisor, Professor Jincai Dong, for his selfless support and great trust throughout. The help of my supervisors at every stage of my doctoral journey enabled me to smoothly initiate, pursue, and ultimately achieve my goals. Working with them and learning from them was such a wonderful and beneficial experience.

Secondly, I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee. They spent time and effort providing very valuable guidance and insightful academic advice and criticism during my research, which I am forever grateful for. Sincere thanks to Professor Lei Li, Dr. Xi Chen, Professor Haibo Zhou.

Thirdly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the expatriate academics who participated in my research as well as to the friends who assisted me in data collection. Thank them for generously taking the time to share their ideas, and encouraging their

friends and colleagues to do so. Without their selfless sharing, support, excellent ideas and suggestions, I would not have been able to complete this project.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their love and support, especially my mother Xiangling. She used to be a respected middle school teacher. She always unconditionally supports me and encourages me to persist in pursuing my dreams. Without her support and encouragement, I couldn't have completed this project. Although my father Qusheng has passed away, his educating on me to be a person who strives for excellence has guided me to this day. I would also like to express my gratitude to my child Jiarui for his patience and understanding during the process of completing this project, as I was doing research somewhere away from him and could not fully accompany him during his high school years. In addition, some friends have always supported and encouraged me to strive forward, and have provided me with crucial support and assistance, such as Dr. Ruwen and Dr. Lin. Without their support, this achievement would not have been possible.

## ABSTRACT

With the end of the COVID-19, Chinese Transnational Higher Education (TNE) has gradually returned to a period of continuous development. The demand for expatriate academics from universities and institutions in Chinese TNE has further increased. Due to the important position of expatriate academics in TNE talent strategies, recruiting, motivating, and retaining expatriate academics is a major challenge for human resource management of Chinese TNE. Surprisingly, although there are many studies on expatriates, there is little research on expatriate academics and their cross-cultural adjustment, especially factors related to their intention to quit their current organisation and intention to stay in a host country.

This research is one of the first studies to combine the fields of expatriate, cross-cultural adjustment and information systems research, giving a comprehensive picture of expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions in Chinese TNE. A first qualitative study identifies the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics based on interview data from 31 expatriate academics in Chinese TNE. Through thematic content analysis using NVivo software, a major new finding is that the attitude toward using local mobile Apps is a driving factor of cross-cultural adjustment, with other findings largely confirming the results of previous literature. Then, based on these findings, a second quantitative study was conducted on 297 expatriate academics in Chinese TNE. Applying the Three Dimensions of Cross-cultural Adjustment Theory Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) as the theoretical framework, a new model was developed and empirically tested by linking the attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment, intention to quit their current organisation, and intention to stay in China. The quantitative data were analysed using cross tabulation,

t-tests, and ANOVA. Hypotheses were tested using hierarchical regression and SEM through SPSS and AMOS software. The results of regression analysis indicate that motivations of expatriates are not associated with their cross-cultural adjustment. However, the results of SEM indicate that, as hypothesized, there is 1) a negative correlation between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit current organisation, and 2) a positive correlation between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to stay in China, both mediated by cross-cultural adjustment. This study also identifies the negative interactive effect of expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps and Chinese proficiency as well as the negative interactive effect of attitude toward using local mobile Apps and time in China on cross-cultural adjustment. Chinese proficiency and time in China weaken the positive relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment.

This research gives novel and important insights and raises awareness of the crucial roles of expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps, host country language proficiency, and time in host country on cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions. It not only clarifies the necessity for human resource management of universities and institutions in Chinese TNE to ensure smoother cross-cultural adjustment for expatriate academics, but also helps them provide better support for expatriate academics. Meanwhile, it enables Chinese governmental policy-makers to better understand and meet the needs of expatriate academics in China. In addition, this research provides valuable suggestions for expatriates themselves. Finally, this research encourages researchers to conduct interdisciplinary research with wider geographical generalizability and types of expatriates, better samples, research methodology and content to further explore new solutions to cross-cultural issues.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structure
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CCA	Cross-cultural Adjustment
CFA	Confirmative Factor Analysis
CQ	Cultural Intelligence
EA	Expatriate Academic
HCN	Host Country National
AE	Assigned Expatriate
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SIE	Self-initiated Expatriate
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TNE	Transnational Higher Education

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# **Expatriate Academics' Cross-cultural Adjustment and Future Intentions in Chinese Transnational Higher Education**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In today's world, academia, education and science have become more and more international (Altbach and Lewis, 1996), and the boundaries of academia among different countries have become more and more blurred (Altbach and Lewis, 1996). Transnational Higher Education (TNE) first appeared in the 1990s at scale, and contemporary institutions of higher education are now international enterprises (Welch, 1997; Schuster, 1994; Altbach and Lewis, 1996). Over the past 20 years, the internationalization process of TNE has been complex (Knight, 2018) and the number of TNE projects exported to different regions and countries of the world has greatly increased. The home institutions of TNE are mainly located in developed countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States, and their joint institutions and programmes are mainly located in developing regions such as East Asia, Southeast Asia and the Middle East. China has become one of the most popular markets for TNE (C-BERT, 2020), with more than 135,000 new students enrolled each year and a total of over 540,000 students (EOL, 2020).

In order to gain a favourable global academic reputation (McBurnie and Pollock, 2000; McBurnie and Zигuras, 2006), similar to the operations of multinational subsidiaries, TNE recruits many key employees from outside the host country (Altbach, 2011). Nowadays, as TNE increasingly seeks the best academic candidates with an

international perspective (Silvanto and Ryan, 2014), and the improvement of connections, international travel, and communication between universities enables more and more academics to work overseas (Altbach and Lewis, 1996; Schuster, 1994; Welch, 1997), the policy discourse that places the internationalization of higher education at the core of economic and social development is constantly increasing (Morley *et al.*, 2018).

## **1.1 Research Background**

### **1.1.1 Transnational Higher Education**

As this research focuses on expatriate academics in Chinese transnational higher education, this part introduces the background information of transnational higher education. The term “transnational education” is often used interchangeably with “borderless education”, “cross-border education”, and “offshore education” (Knight, 2008). UNESCO and Council of Europe (2001) define “transnational education” as the higher education learning projects or educational services where students participate in a country which differs from the country of the institution granting degrees. Based on this definition, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA, 2022) defines Transnational Higher Education (TNE), transnational education in an higher education context, as *“the delivery of higher education level awards by recognised UK degree-awarding bodies in a country, or to students, other than where the awarding provider is based”*.

TNE can appear not only in the form of courses studied at overseas institutions, but also in the form of international credit transfer, degree validation, joint or dual degree courses, and distance learning which can be provided in person or online (CBBC, 2022). However, in China, all TNE projects which are approved by the Ministry of Education

of the People’s Republic of China are provided in one of four forms (MOEPRC, 2023) (see Table 1-1).

The TNE typology in this thesis mainly adopts the classification criteria of QAA (2022), but excludes distance education conducted online, as the focus of this study is on expatriate academics’ cross-cultural adjustment in China. In addition, the TNE typology in this thesis is adjusted based on the classification of MOEPRC (2023) according to whether or not they are of independent juristic personality and whether their partners are from foreign countries or Hong Kong. The TNE typology in this thesis is shown in Table 1-1.

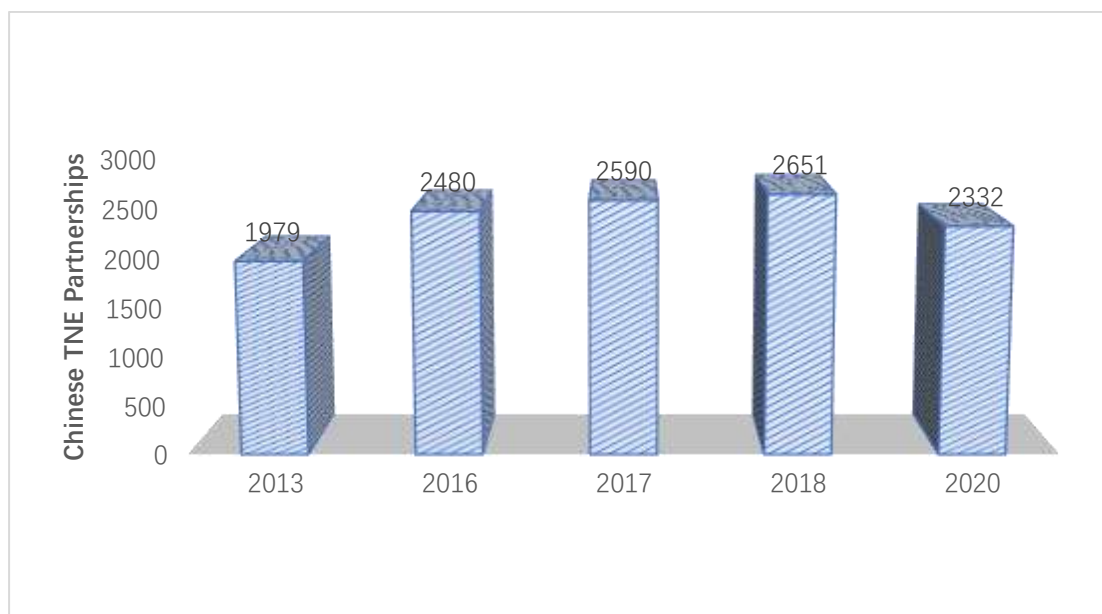
<b>Author &amp; Year</b>	<b>Type</b>
QAA (2022)	1) Distance education
	2) Local cooperation with other organisations
	3) Through home country institutions on their own campus in another country
MOEPRC (2023)	1) Sino-foreign joint institution/university
	2) Sino-foreign joint programme
	3) Mainland China-Hong Kong joint institution/university
	4) Mainland China-Hong Kong joint programme
This Paper	1) Sino-foreign university
	2) Sino-foreign joint institution/programme
	3) Mainland China-Hong Kong joint university/institution/programme

**Table 1-1 Typologies of TNE**

**Sources: MOEPRC (2023) and QAA (2022)**

In the past 20 years, with China introducing various attracting policies to encourage cooperation between overseas universities and Chinese universities, Chinese TNE partnerships grew rapidly as shown in Figure 1-1 (MOEPRC, 2013; MOEPRC, 2017a; MOEPRC, 2017b; MOEPRC, 2018; MOEPRC, 2020) but have declined slightly in recent years due to the China’s Ministry of Education abolishing some institutions and

programmes after quality reviews. Among them, ten universities with independent juristic personality offer degree education (see Table 1-2). Others are institutions or programmes of subsidiary colleges without independent juristic personality located in Chinese universities.



**Figure 1-1 Growth of Chinese TNE Partnerships**

**Sources: MOEPRC (2013), MOEPRC (2017a), MOEPRC (2017b), MOEPRC (2018), and MOEPRC (2020)**

Name of University	City/Province	Partner
University of Nottingham Ningbo China	Ningbo, Zhejiang	U.K.
Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University	Suzhou, Jiangsu	U.K.
Duke Kunshan University	Kunshan, Jiangsu	U.S.
New York University Shanghai	Shanghai	U.S.
Wenzhou-Kean University	Wenzhou, Zhejiang	U.S.
Shenzhen MSU-BIT University	Shenzhen, Guangdong	Russia
Guangdong Technion-Israel Institute	Shantou, Guangdong	Israel
Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen)	Shenzhen, Guangdong	Hong Kong
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou)	Guangzhou, Guangdong	Hong Kong
Beijing Normal University Hong Kong Baptist University Joint International College	Zhuhai, Guangdong	Hong Kong

**Table 1-2 Universities with Independent Juristic Personality**



**Source: MOEPRC (2023)**

TNE can meet economic, social and cultural human needs (Sebastian and Stéphan, 2012). TNE is of great strategic value to higher education providers. TNE helps universities provide a wide range of curriculum, improve their employee experience and promote their career development and cross-cultural skills (Huang, 2006; McBurnie and Ziguras, 2006; Huang, 2003; Yang, 2008), and helps improve their international competitiveness (Lawton and Katsomitros, 2012). TNE also brings great benefits to higher education recipients. For universities, TNE can improve the reputation of domestic universities, and help form strategic alliances with overseas universities; for countries, TNE can prevent currency and brain drain and generate income (Huang, 2003; Huang, 2007; Knight, 2003; Knight, 2006; Marginson and McBurnie, 2004; Yang, 2008); for students, TNE enables students to receive high-quality international education at a relatively low cost (Pyvis and Chapman, 2007). In China, TNE provides lower cost foreign education than studying abroad, although much higher cost than studying in public Chinese universities (EOL, 2020), and effectively introduces foreign advanced teaching methods, educational ideas and educational resources into China (He, 2016).

However, TNE and its development are not without drawbacks. TNE has been criticized as a possible new form of colonialism (Nguyen et al., 2009). In China, the development of TNE is unbalanced. First, most TNE projects have been from native English speaking countries, especially the U.K. and the U.S., and do not cover all countries in the world (Huang, 2011; Zhang, Kinser and Shi, 2014). Second, most TNE projects are established in provinces and cities with a relatively high level of economic and educational development. Third, there is an imbalance in the distribution of disciplines in TNE, with a majority of business programmes (Daily, 2013). In addition, except for

a few TNE universities with independent juristic personality, many TNE institutions/programmes are attached to the second-tier colleges of Chinese universities with admission requirements often lower than of ordinary programmes of the same Chinese universities according to the admission scores of college entrance examination each year, mainly due to its expensive tuition fees (EOL, 2020). However, the gap of the admission scores of college entrance examination between TNE programmes and ordinary programmes in the same universities is gradually narrowing. Taking Zhejiang Province as an example, in 2019, the difference between the minimum admission scores for the 46 TNE programmes enrolled in universities under Zhejiang's "Double First Class" project and for those ordinary programmes was between -30 and 12 points, with 50% of TNE programmes lower only by 10 points. The minimum admission scores of 9 TNE programmes even exceeded the admission scores for ordinary programmes, accounting for 20% of the total (EOL, 2020).

The three reasons why this research focuses on expatriate academics in Chinese TNE are: first, the rapid development of TNE in China; second, the key part of the TNE proposition being the foreign faces in China -- expatriate academics, which is important for parents and students as well as the nature of education; third, in practice, expatriate academics in China being employed primarily in TNE.

### **1.1.2 International Academic Mobility**

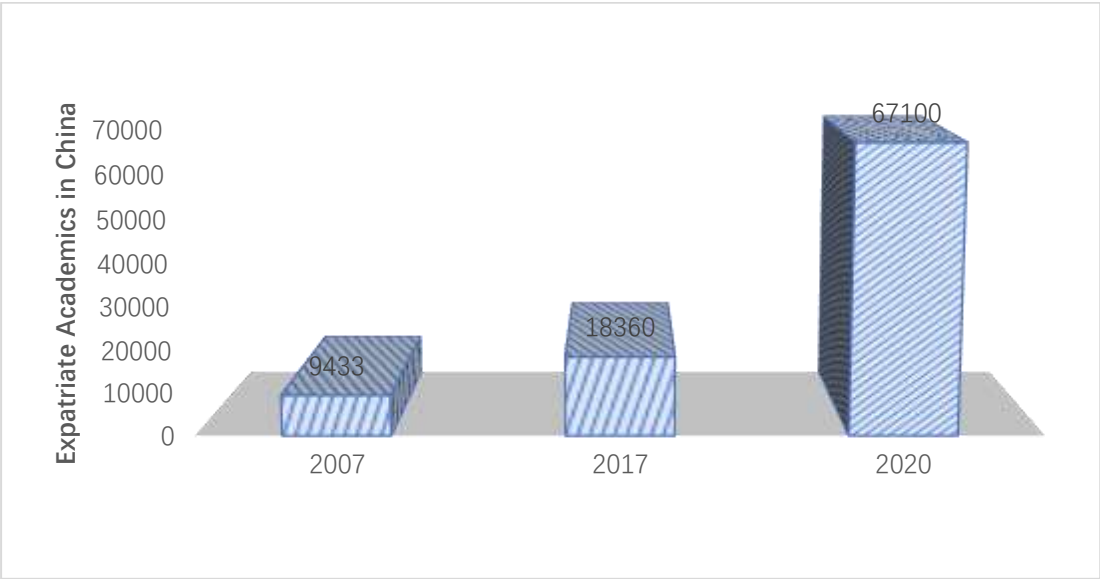
The expatriation of academics is a form of international academic mobility. This part provides the background information of international academic mobility. Higher education internationalization gives academics opportunities to realize international mobility in their career (Netz, Hampel and Aman, 2020). Academics from all over the world, like employees in multinational enterprises, have now become a part of the

international labour market (Mamiseishvili and Rosser, 2010). For many academics, working abroad has become an integral part of their career (Wang et al., 2019). In addition, global talent competition has also become another important reason for the mobility of academics among countries (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013; Silvano and Ryan, 2014). Academics with international teaching and research experience are increasingly recognized and valued by universities (Jepsen et al., 2014). Furthermore, the career development of expatriate academics does not rely on a single employer (Jepsen *et al.*, 2014; Richardson and McKenna, 2002) because academics possess valuable non-homogeneous skills and a large amount of non enterprise specific capital. Such skills and research agenda are scarce, easy to transfer and are urgently needed by modern society (Teece, 2003). Therefore, academics' strong bargaining power relative to their employers exacerbates their mobility (Baruch and Hall, 2004; Coff, 1997; Von Nordenflycht, 2010; Welch, 1997).

In recent years, academic mobility has increased significantly (Selmer, Trembath and Lauring, 2017; Romanowski and Nasser, 2015). In many universities around the world, the proportion of expatriate academics has exceeded 1/4 of those employed (Trembath, 2016). On international campuses, the proportion is even higher (Fielden and Gillard, 2011).

In China, the rapid growth of economy and insufficient domestic supply of education resources have led to a huge demand for TNE (Morgan and Wu, 2011; Chiang, 2012; Helms, 2008). Furthermore, the Chinese Ministry of Education has made TNE part of its medium and long-term development plan (MOEPRC, 2010). More recently, *China's 13th and 14th Five Year Plan* focus on attracting talent, including foreign talent (EURAXESS, 2021). As a result, many expatriate academics have come to work in

China. As shown in Figure 1-2, the number of expatriate academics in China in 2020 was more than seven times that in 2007.



**Figure 1-2 Number of Expatriate Academics in China**

**Sources: BBD (2020) and Liu, Zhong and Hamish (2019)**

However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the attractiveness of China as an investment and talent destination weakened (Lee, 2022). Many expatriate academics were unable to enter China due to border closures and travel restrictions (Mouritzen, Rezaei and Liu, 2020). Even expatriate academics already in Chinese TNE faced great challenges, such as difficulty in obtaining work visas, inability to obtain visas for their elderly parents, partners and children, difficulty and high price in booking home flights, high risk of new rounds of lockdown, fear of being unable to return to China, long periods of quarantine, and reduced infrastructure access (BCOC, 2022; EURAXESS, 2021). As a result, many expatriate academics left China, and one study on European expatriate academics in China even claimed that two-thirds of the population of expatriate academics had left China (EURAXESS, 2021). However, since China reopened its borders more or less

fully, the attractiveness of China as an investment and talent destination has gradually recovered.

For a long time, many scholars have believed that international academic flows are positive and worthy of support (Li and Tang, 2019). First, the process of mobility is considered to promote academic and professional development and provide the possibility of cooperative work, so as to promote organisational and social change within the international community (Suárez-Ortega and Risquez, 2014). Second, international academic mobility can contribute to the development of local academia while maintaining contact with the international community (Wang et al., 2019), due to academics' human and social capital (Welch, 1997). For example, in Singapore, after highly mobile academics moved to a new country, their cooperation with their home countries increased rapidly (Wang et al., 2019). Third, although there is an association between the output of scientific work, the level of international cooperation and the personal characteristics of academics (Jonkers and Tijssen, 2008), international mobility is generally believed to positively influence many aspects of academics' careers, such as their scientific productivity, professional status, scientific impact, capabilities and personality, as well as access to research infrastructure and funding, and scientific knowledge (Netz, Hampel and Aman, 2020; Hoffman, 2009). For example, professional competence can be enhanced in many aspects, including the cultivation of core discipline related competence (such as method skills) and professional self-awareness, problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to apply for produce shared publications, external funds, and create international networks (Pylväs and Nokelainen, 2021).

On the other hand, as a specific professional form, international academic mobility also has a complex and contradictory nature (Richardson and Zikic, 2007), and its dark side

has also attracted the attention of researchers. For example, international academic mobility bring inequalities which go beyond national boundaries (Bilecen and Van Mol, 2017), while academics on international mobility are facing challenges and disadvantages such as transience and risk (Richardson and Zikic, 2007), lack of academic freedom, job security, research support, and opportunities for development and career progress (Wilkins and Annabi, 2021).

It is precisely because international academic talent can bring great advantages to the host country, including international networks and knowledge assets, that many countries have formulated policies to attract and retain international academic talent (Wang et al., 2019). Since the reform and opening up in 1978, China has long recognized the necessity of attracting global talent for national development (Zweig, Fung and Han, 2008). In order to attract global talent to contribute to China's scientific and technological development (Yang, 2020), China has continuously introduced multiple national, provincial, and institutional recruitment policies (see Table 1-3), providing favourable conditions and attractive packages for overseas talent (Li and Xue, 2021; Wu and Huang, 2018), including high salaries, research funds, laboratories, research assistants, flights, free housing or tax-free living allowances, free children's education or tax-free subsidies for children's education, and permanent residence or multiple entry visas as well as social security and insurance for expatriate academics and their families (Li and Tu, 2016; Li, 2020; Yang, 2020). Taking the most eye-catching recruitment project "1000 Talents Plan" for example, in addition to salaries, subsidies, and other related benefits, a one-time subsidy of 1 million yuan is provided to each foreign expert by China's central budget (WHU, 2014).

Policies
111 Project
1000 Talents Plan
1000 Youth Talents Plan
10000 Talents Plan
Introduction Plan of High-End Foreign Experts
“The Belt and Road” Innovative Talents Exchange Foreign Experts Project
Foreign Youth Talent Programme

**Table 1-3 Examples of Policies to Attract and Retain Foreign Talent**

**Sources:** Cai (2012), DOSTGD (2022), Wang et al. (2019), WHU (2014), and Yang (2020)

In addition, China’s rising leadership position in the field of technology and science also has a strong appeal to overseas academics (Basu *et al.*, 2018). As the world’s largest source of scientific articles (Tollefson, 2018), China’s scientific and engineering publications currently rank first in the world in total, second in the top 1% of publications cited (USNSF, 2020) and second in terms of research and development expenditure (UNESCO, 2018).

### **1.1.3 China’s Digital Transformation**

As this research reveals the impact of digital elements on expatriate academics’ cross-cultural adjustment, this part introduces China’s digital transformation, giving the background information of expatriate academics under a highly digitalized environment. Digital transformation, also known as digitization, refers to the integration of digital data and technology into various aspects of operations of organisations to drive business, change or improve business processes, and increase revenue (Kraus et al., 2022).

The world is now becoming digital (Parviainen *et al.*, 2017). The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated digital transformation (Priyono, Moin and Putri, 2020). The remarkable acceleration of digital transformation has not only reformed the working

methods of individuals, operations and infrastructure of a variety of organisations, but also reformed the national economy (Kraus et al., 2022). At the same time, digital transformation has become a major challenge for both companies and the national economy (Švarc, Lažnjak and Dabić, 2021). It is argued that digital transformation has been transformed from an opportunity to use technology to the pure necessity of managing the world's growing population's expectations and needs (Kraus *et al.*, 2021).

As an important application of digital transformation, mobile applications (Apps), end user software applications that design and extend the functionality of mobile device operating systems (Purcell, 2011) that run on smart devices, provide advanced computing power and extensive functionality through application software (Logan, 2017), and bring convenience and ease of use to contemporary users (Ozturk *et al.*, 2016; Groß, 2016; Zhang, Chen and Lee, 2013). In recent years, mobile applications have surged, including but not limited to various fields such as calendar, email, news, stock market, weather, shopping, translation, life, health, travel, food, etc., spanning multiple categories such as e-books, online games, image/music downloads, social networks, utilities, banking, order tracking, GPS, and location-based services, providing consumers with entertainment, sharing opinions, obtaining information and assisting in purchasing decisions. Mobile Apps are believed to have unique advantages that differ from websites, providing consumers with a more customized and unique experience, including scanning barcodes with camera functionality, providing content at specific locations with GPS functionality, and keeping customers up-to-date with the latest information through push notifications (McLean *et al.*, 2020), and being accessed by consumers anytime and anywhere (Kim, Lin and Sung, 2013; Marriott and Williams, 2018). The widespread use of mobile Apps is regarded to have not only changed consumer behaviour, but also changed business, marketing, and promotion strategies,



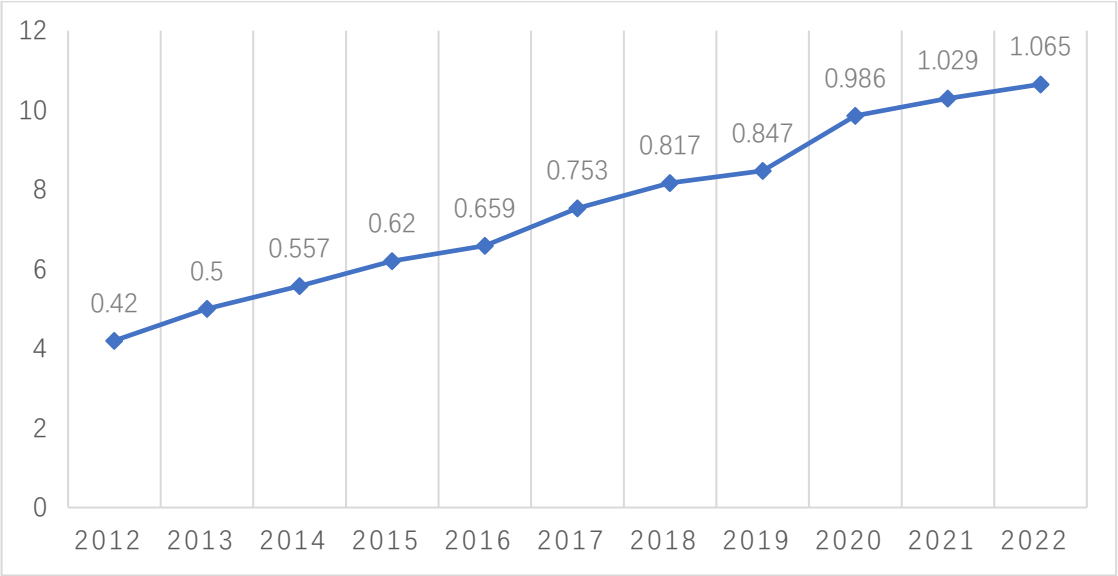
established networks with customers, and attracted potential customers (Cheung and To, 2017).

Since 2010, China has repeatedly emphasized the national policy of becoming a digital powerhouse, hoping to reorganize urban space and change people's life experience by using the extensive application of digital and mobile technology (MacKenzie and Peacock, 2016). Furthermore, *The 14th Five Year Plan* has a strong focus on digital development (CG, 2021).

National policy has supported the growth of a group of Chinese digital giants such as Tencent, Alibaba, Baidu, and Huawei which are regarded as competitors of Apple, Microsoft, Google, Facebook and Amazon, the leaders of the global digital platform economy (Bratton, 2016; Galloway, 2017; Srnicek, 2017). These digital giants have expanded into multiple fields such as AI, financial services, cloud computing, mobile payment, video games, and video on demand services (Plantin and De Seta, 2019). Meanwhile, many mobile applications (Apps) with powerful functions for people's daily life (see Section 2.2.4) have also emerged. For example, WeChat, a large platform developed by Tencent, has currently become an integrated App essential for everyday life in China since its launch in 2011 (Chen, 2018; Plantin and De Seta, 2019; Peng and Wang, 2021), with over 1 billion monthly active users (Hou et al., 2021). To take another example, WeChat Pay and Alipay, two large-scale digital wallet services have made Chinese cities a cashless society (Chen, 2018). During the COVID-19 period, Health Codes available via mobile Apps largely determined whether people could move around their hometowns and elsewhere.

Furthermore, the popularization and huge growth of 4G followed by 5G mobile internet across China and smartphones have promoted the widespread adoption of new mobile

Apps. In the past decade, driven by the proliferation of mobile devices, as shown in Figure 1-3, the number of mobile netizens in China has increased from 0.42 billion in 2012 to 1.065 billion in 2022 (CNNIC, 2023).



**Figure 1-3 Growth of Mobile ‘Netizens’ in China from 2012-2022 (Billion)**

Source: CNNIC (2023)

In China nowadays, digital transformation is widely embedded not only in daily lives of Chinese people but also of expatriates in China. As one of the most popular digital solutions, local mobile Apps have already become increasingly important tools, affecting the relationship between expatriates and their environment and changing their virtual and real worlds during expatriation. Local mobile Apps in this thesis refers to *mobile applications developed by Chinese companies, using Chinese as the main service language, the registration of which usually involves a local phone number and bank account*. The most frequently used local Apps by expatriates in China (Chodroff, 2020) are shown in Table 1-4.

Local App	Area
WeChat	Communication and payments
Alipay	Payments
JD	Shopping
Taobao	
Baidu Maps	Travel
Didi	
Fliggy	
Meituan	Food
DianPing	
JD Food Delivery	

**Table 1-4 Most Frequently Used Local Chinese Apps by Expatriates in China**

Source: Chodroff (2020)

## 1.2 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to address the research gaps in linking expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment with information systems study in China, by providing a comprehensive framework on the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, investigating the relationship between motivations for expatriation and cross-cultural adjustment, examining the moderating role of Chinese proficiency and time in China in the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment, and also elucidating the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment in the association between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China.

The main research questions of the first qualitative study, which aims to establish the factors associated with expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, are as follows.

**Research Question 1:** What factors affect expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE?

- **Research Question 1a:** What are the key factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?
- **Research Question 1b:** What are the demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?
- **Research Question 1c:** What is the relationship between motivations for expatriation and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?

The main research questions of the second quantitative study, which focuses on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps, a newly identified factor in the qualitative study, are as follows.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between Chinese proficiency, time in China, expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment and their future intentions?

- **Research Question 2a:** What are the demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, and intention to quit their current organisation and intention to stay in China?
- **Research Question 2b:** What is the role of Chinese proficiency and time in China on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?
- **Research Question 2c:** What is the role of expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment on their attitude toward using local mobile Apps and their intention to quit their current organisation and intention to stay in China?

This study applies the Three Dimensions of Cross-cultural Adjustment Theory (Black, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1991) as the theoretical framework (see Section 2.1.3).

### 1.3 Research Significance

First, it is becoming more and more important to understand *expatriate academics* (Altbach, 2004) because of their rapid increase (see Figure 1-2) and the insufficient research on this group not only in the past (Richardson, 2000; Welch, 1997) but also in recent years (Selmer, Trembath and Luring, 2017), as shown in Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3. Although as a fast-growing, important group for global mobility, the expatriate academic phenomenon has aroused increasing interest in the academic community, the phenomenon of expatriate academics is not fully understood and remains insufficiently researched (Richardson, 2000; Selmer, Trembath and Luring, 2017; Welch, 1997). Little is known about this group (Froese, 2012; Luring and Selmer, 2014), especially outside the environment of developed countries such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, U.K., and U.S. (Alpaslan Danisman, 2017; Tahir, 2023). Expatriate academics need to be studied separately from other types of expatriates (Wilkins and Neri, 2019).

Second, it is of great importance to study *the expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment* because of the costly consequences of bad cross-cultural adjustment. The process of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment is often full of unexpected risks and setbacks, which may lead to feelings of uncertainty and anxiety (Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013; Bücken, Furrer and Peeters Weem, 2016; Gudykunst, 1998; Sit, Mak and Neill, 2017) and alienation (Adler, 1981), reduced job satisfaction and performance (Naumann, 1993), loss of motivation, control of their work (Black, Gregersen and Mendenhall, 1992b), negative attitudes toward their tasks, less effort inputs, reduced ability to handle tasks correctly, stronger job burnout (Griffeth, Hom and Gaertner, 2000), and even stronger withdraw intention (Griffeth, Hom and Gaertner, 2000; Harzing, 1995). According to statistics, because many expatriates cannot adjust to the

new cultural environment (Garson, 2005), nearly one-third of expatriates cannot fully perform their duties, and nearly a quarter of expatriates have been repatriated before completing their planned overseas tenure (Lublin, 1992). Further, for academic expatriates, different universities in different countries vary in language, student behaviour, teaching load, career ladder and recruitment (Jepsen et al., 2014). As a result, academic expatriates may encounter various problems which result in serious consequences when they adjust to new cultural environment just like other expatriates. As in multinational corporations, the competitive advantage of TNE is no longer only reflected in its wholly-owned foreign subsidiaries, but also in various forms of cross-cultural strategic alliances and cooperative arrangements (Selmer, 2001a). It is crucial to understand the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, to better guide the management of TNE, governmental policy-makers and expatriates themselves in evaluating and taking the necessary preparations for working in culturally distant places, therefore, reducing the costly consequences of poor cross-cultural adjustment.

Third, it is of great importance to study the expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment *in a Chinese context* because of the big challenges of expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in China. Previous studies mostly focused on examining the experiences of American or European expatriates in Europe, United Arab Emirates, Japan, South Korea, Singapore or other countries. Over the past 20 years, a massive amount of foreign capital has been poured into China, which has become one of the destinations which is most attractive for investment from abroad (Selmer, 2005b; UNCTAD, 2019), resulting in a substantial increase in the expatriate population size who work in offices of foreign representative, wholly foreign subsidiaries, Sino-foreign joint ventures and foreign company branches (Selmer, 2002c). However, China 'is seen as the most foreign of all foreign places. Its culture, institutions, and people appear

completely baffling - a matter of absolute difference, not of degree' (Chen, 2001:17), and is regarded as one of the destinations where expatriates face the most challenges (Brookfield, 2016; Luring and Selmer, 2014), such as the obstacles from cultural differences between many countries and China (Chen, 2001; Luring and Selmer, 2014; Makkonen, 2017; Selmer and Luring, 2016) and the language differences between many countries and China (Luring and Selmer, 2014; Selmer and Luring, 2016) as well as the communication difficulty when talking in English with the Chinese hosts because of their comparatively low English proficiency (EF, 2023). Although the literature on expatriates in a Chinese context is growing, this is still relatively small compared with developed countries, and there are still many unsolved mysteries in cross-cultural adjustment (Guo, Rammal and Pereira, 2021). Due to the short history of Chinese TNE, there is even less literature on the expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in a Chinese context.

Fourth, most importantly, it is of great significance to conduct research *combining cross-cultural study with information systems study in China*, a highly digitized country where digital elements have been deeply embedded in expatriates' daily lives (Gera, Chadha and Ahuja, 2020; Hoehle and Venkatesh, 2015). Nowadays, digital transformation plays an important role in expatriates' life and work and the COVID-19 pandemic further highlights the need for additional research on digital solutions for global work (Selmer et al., 2022). However, the research on the impact of digital transformation on expatriates is still very scarce (Bucher and Deller, 2021; Farndale et al., 2017; Zhu et al., 2018), and global mobility management has not been well linked to these digital solutions (Hausberg et al., 2019). It is necessary to gain a more unified understanding of the role of these digital elements in supporting expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Nardon, Aten and Gulanowski, 2015; Pan and Froese, 2023; Selmer

*et al.*, 2022; Vrontis *et al.*, 2022) to reveal the evolving role of digital transformation on cross-cultural adjustment in the context of global mobility.

In summary, the previous studies largely ignore expatriate academics and their cross-cultural adjustment, particularly in a Chinese context. Most importantly, research linking expatriates with digital elements has been widely overlooked. This research is one of the first studies to combine cross-cultural study with information system study on expatriate academics in China.

## **1.4 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the research background, including TNE, international academic mobility, and China's digital transformation. This chapter also identifies the importance of this research, research questions, research ethics, and structure of this research; Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to this study from four perspectives: cross-cultural adjustment models, expatriates, cross-cultural adjustment, and future intention, and expatriates and information system. In addition, this chapter proposes and discusses the theoretical framework of this study based on literature review; Chapter 3 looks at the first part of the research, the qualitative study. This chapter first elaborates on the research design of the qualitative study, including research methods, sample and procedures, analysis technique, and then refers to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 to present the results and analyses of the qualitative study from four dimensions, individual, organisational, social and governmental; Chapter 4 looks at the second part of the research, the quantitative study. This chapter first elaborates the research design of the quantitative study, including hypotheses and conceptual framework, research methods, sample and procedure, measures and analysis technique. And then reports the results and analyses of the quantitative study, including



descriptive statistics and analyses and inferential statistics and analyses; Chapter 5 analyses the research results. This chapter reviews, compares, and discusses the main findings from both qualitative and quantitative studies, and answers the research questions one by one, determining the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE as well as the relationship between expatriate academics' Chinese proficiency, time in China, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment and their future intentions; Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the contributions of this research both for theory and practice. This chapter provides a critical overview on the context, sample, method, and content of this research and also provides suggestions for future research and draws conclusions.

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## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Given that this research is a study which combines the fields of expatriate, cross-cultural adjustment and information systems research, this chapter reviews the relevant literature first on cross-cultural adjustment models, then focuses on expatriates, expatriate academics and cross-cultural adjustment, next on expatriate cross-cultural adjustment and future intention, and finally on expatriates and information systems.

### 2.1 Cross-cultural Adjustment Models

The research on cross-cultural adjustment sees it as a process closely related to the practice of cross-border mobility. Due to the great differences of mobile groups, cross-cultural research has been developed in different fields gradually such as pedagogy, management, medicine and politics, forming an interdisciplinary and multi-dimensional development status in cross-cultural adjustment field (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits, 1936). Current cross-cultural research mainly focuses on three groups (Berry, 1997):

- 1) *Migrants*;
- 2) *Refugees*, both groups are generally considered to be non-local cultural groups who live in a certain social culture for quite a long time;
- 3) *Sojourners*, who stay for a relatively short time.

Based on empirical research, some scholars describe and summarize the regularity of different stages of the overall process of sojourners' cross-cultural adjustment in the new cultural environment, and present the changes of adjustment of sojourners in the new cultural environment in a phased manner, while other scholars devote themselves

to examining the various factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment. Next, the most influential and widely used models will be reviewed.

### **2.1.1 Definition of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

The early definition of cross-cultural adjustment was conceptualized as overcoming culture shock (Oberg, 1960). Subsequently, different scholars have discussed the definition of cross-cultural adjustment from different perspectives, such as the mental health and sociocultural competence (Searle and Ward, 1990), the psychological comfort in the new cultural environment (Black and Gregersen, 1991a), the degree of adjustment between work and socio-cultural environment (Aycan, 1997b), or the overall satisfaction with life in the new cultural environment (Aycan, 1997a; Hippler, 2000).

The terms “cross-cultural adjustment”, “cross-cultural adaptation” and “acculturation” are terms often used interchangeably in previous literature (Searle and Ward, 1990). There is no consensus on whether and how these terms are different (Bierwiazzonek and Waldzus, 2016). Different scholars give different connotations to the terms “adaptation” and “adjustment”. “Adaptation” refers to the process of adjusting to cross-cultural changes, while “adjustment” is the result of this process (Ali, Van der Zee and Sanders, 2003); “adjustment” can be defined as the matching between human and environment, and its dimensions include human emotion, behaviour and cognition (Haslberger, Brewster and Hippler, 2013); “adjustment” refers to coping with small changes in the new situation, while “adaptation” is massive changes and main adjustments after a severe crisis (Patterson, 1988; Patterson, 2002); “adaptation” refers to the behavioural ability, which is more affected by the basic factors of cultural learning and social skill acquisition, while “adjustment” refers to emotional and psychological health, which is widely affected by social support, coping styles, personality and life changes (Ward and

Kennedy, 1999). Another term, “acculturation”, emanating from the study of immigrants, refers to the phenomenon that occurs when groups with different cultures are in constant contact, then the model of original culture of one of two groups changes (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits, 1936). Although there is almost no consensus among scholars on whether and how these terms differ (Bierwiazzonek and Waldzus, 2016), the vast majority of relevant literature sources refer to the core concept of this thesis as “adjustment” rather than “adaptation” (c.f. Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013; Selmer and Luring, 2016; Takeuchi and Chen, 2013; Vromans, van Engen and Mol, 2013; Van Vianen *et al.*, 2004; Wechtler, Koveshnikov and Dejoux, 2015; Ward and Searle, 1991; Zhang, Harzing and Fan, 2017). Therefore, in order to avoid further confusion, the term “cross-cultural adjustment” is used consistently in this thesis. During this research, participants used the terms adjustment/adjust and adaptation/adapt more or less interchangeably. For consistency, the term adjustment/adjust is used in this thesis except for direct quotations from participants, documents and other original sources.

It is believed that there are two independent and interrelated aspects in cross-cultural adjustment, socio-cultural adjustment and psychological adjustment (Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward and Searle, 1991; Ward and Kennedy, 1992). Psychological adjustment mainly involves subjective well-being, inner state, and emotional experiences that affect mental health and life satisfaction, such as depression, anxiety, tension, and fatigue (Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao, 2000a; Selmer, 2000a), while socio-cultural adjustment mainly involves the ability to “integrate” or negotiate the interaction between the host country’s culture and social environment, such as communication and exchange with the host country society (Ward and Kennedy, 1996).

Given that cross-cultural adjustment includes individual social and psychological mechanisms, involving the changes of individual explicit behaviour and implicit characteristics (Berry, 1990), based on Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) and Cuellar, Arnold and Maldonado (1995), in this thesis, cross-cultural adjustment is defined as *people's multidimensional interactive process in order to better navigate their life*. This is more like the “cross-cultural integration” proposed by Berry (1997), the idea that two cultures have absorbed the advantages of both cultures and formed a new culture through infiltration and compromise, rather than the “cross-cultural assimilation” proposed by Berry (1997), the idea that weak culture is forced or willing to give up their original culture, but obey or rely on the dominant culture of the other party.

### **2.1.2 Process Models of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

The process models of cross-cultural adjustment are mainly multi-stage curve models of cross-cultural adjustment, which argue that people go through different stages in their cross-cultural adjustment process. The representative process models are reviewed as follows.

Two very similar early four stage models are the U-curve Model (Lysgaand, 1955) and the Culture Shock Model (Oberg, 1960), proposed five years later, which describe the experience that a person may experience when entering different cultural environments, which may be due to immigration, visiting a new country, migration between social environments, or transition to another way of life. The four stages are:

- 1) *Honeymoon*, during which sojourners are usually attracted by the new environment around them;

- 2) *Regression*, during which sojourners have to face and overcome practical problems in life and may feel frustrated, anxious, and angry;
- 3) *Adjustment*, a process of crisis resolution and cultural learning;
- 4) *Recovery*, a process of being fully restored, reflecting the enjoyment and adjustment to the new environment.

The five stage Transitional Experience Model (Adler, 1975) was developed based on the work of Lysgaand (1955) and Oberg (1960), describing an movement of cultural and self-awareness from a low to a high state (Adler, 1975) and explaining in detail the process and stage sequence of culture shock experience:

- 1) *Contact*, experiencing the excitement and curiosity of tourists, but the basic identity being still rooted in the hometown environment;
- 2) *Disintegration*, being overwhelmed by the requirements of the new culture, feeling lonely and alienated in the comparison of cultural differences;
- 3) *Reintegration*, through contact with new culture suggestions, gradually changing from anger and resentment toward the new culture to gaining self-esteem and self-identity;
- 4) *Autonomy*, gradually realizing autonomy, and enhances self-confidence through increased social skills;
- 5) *Interdependency*, adjusting fluently in both old and new cultures, and being more comfortable in psychological and social life.

The six stage W-curve Model (Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1963) is further developed from the work of Lysgaand (1955) and Oberg (1960). This model links the initial entering culture shock phenomenon with the reverse culture shock by adding two adjustment stages of returning to the original cultural environment:

- 1) *Honeymoon at home;*
- 2) *Reverse culture shock*, after adjusting to the living habits and local culture, the sojourners often have to adjust to the home country culture again and experience a certain “return to culture impact” when going back.

As argued by Adler (1975), while the four stage U-curve Model and the W-curve Model reflect peaks and troughs that adjust over time, they do not take into account the more comprehensive and gradual identity changes that culture shock processes may bring. Different people may have various accumulated experiences in dealing with cultural differences, so subsequent stages in the transitional process are not considered to automatically require the previous stage. Therefore, a big merit of the five stages Transitional Experience Model is that it depicts the gradual depth of experiential learning and does not attempt to attach time series to each stage (Adler, 1975).

However, some defects of the above process models of cross-cultural adjustment are that they focus more on perceived cross-cultural adjustment than real cross-cultural adjustment, and their presumption of implicit and smooth adjustment process may be contradictory with the real situation, because in an irregular and unstable change movement, transition occurs through a series of degradation, crises or regeneration events (Pedersen, 1995). Moreover, with the enhancement of the internal coping ability of visitors, individuals can gradually cope with stress and adjust (Kim, 1988).

The Stress Adaptation Growth Dynamic Model (Kim, 2000) further develops the process of the cross-cultural adjustment model, arguing that cross-cultural adjustment is a dynamic, spiral and back and forth process, in which stress and adjustment interact and promote each other. According to the Stress Adaptation Growth Dynamic Model (Kim, 2000), with the loss of a certain degree of original ideas or behaviours, individuals

will feel uncertainty, confusion and anxiety to some extent and thereafter deal with this change in various ways, including avoidance, denial and withdrawal, and return to their original habits to eliminate discomfort in the new cultural environment. However, each new experience usually activates an individual's defence response and promotes its growth. With the passage of time and some efforts, individuals may begin to adjust to the new cultural environment by changing their behaviour, and gradually grow and develop stronger adaptability and mental health.

In contrast to other process models, this model is generally optimistic on cross-cultural adjustment process, taking the levels of stress from cultural differences during the adjustment process into consideration and highlighting that culture shock not only brings pressure to individuals, but also promotes individuals to change, develop and grow. It also emphasizes the differences of individual cross-cultural learning experience, the countermeasures to face difficulties and the developing path of cross-cultural adjustment.

However, all the above process models were proposed at least 20 years ago, with no model focusing on non-adjustment. Moreover, all the above process models cannot accurately describe and predict the depth, length and even occurrence of culture shock, and do not take into account that cross-cultural adjustment may not appear in order, may repeat, compress or mix, or may not exist at all (La Brack, 2010). In addition, they do not further explain the relative significance of various aspects of culture shock, the sequence in which culture shock events may occur (Furnham, 1988), and which groups are more vulnerable to the stronger impact of one or another culture, or what determines everyone's response, how long culture shock may last, and whether culture shock can



be prevented (Pedersen, 1995). Some scholars even argue that these process models on cross-cultural adjustment should be rejected (Ward *et al.*, 1998).

### **2.1.3 Factor Model of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

Along with the pioneering research on the cross-cultural adjustment process (Lysgaard, 1955; Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1963; Adler, 1975; Oberg, 1960), which views cross-cultural adjustment as a unitary phenomenon, many other researchers have devoted themselves to examining the factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment, regarding cross-cultural adjustment as a multidimensional conceptualization instead of a unitary phenomenon. However, the factors and dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment are very diverse and complex, it is not easy to identify all the relevant factors and dimensions.

The most widely used and influential framework is the model of cross-cultural adjustment of Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) (see Figure 2-1). Based on the frameworks of Black and colleagues (Black, 1988; Black and Gregersen, 1991a; Black and Stephens, 1989), Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) covered factors of anticipatory adjustment such as individual factors (training, previous experience), organisational factors (selection criteria and mechanisms), as well as factors of in-country adjustment, such as individual factors (relational skills, self-efficacy, and perceptual skills), job factors (role discretion, clarity, novelty and conflict), organisational factors (social support, organisation culture novelty, logistical help, socialization content and socialization tactics) and non-work factors (family-spouse adjustment and culture novelty). They conceptualized cross-cultural adjustment in three independent dimensions:

- 1) *General adjustment*, such as health care, housing conditions, food,

transportation, weather and living cost, which reflects the psychological comfort of the expatriates to the cultural environment of the host country;

- 2) *Interaction adjustment*, such as the frequency and degree of social communication, and the feelings of interaction with HCNs in working and non-working environments, which reflects the psychological comfort when communicating with HCNs, and is regarded as the most difficult of the three aspects (Black and Stevens, 1989);
- 3) *Work adjustment*, such as work environment, work values, expectations, standards and work roles, which reflects to the psychological comfort of the expatriates to the cultural environment of the host country.

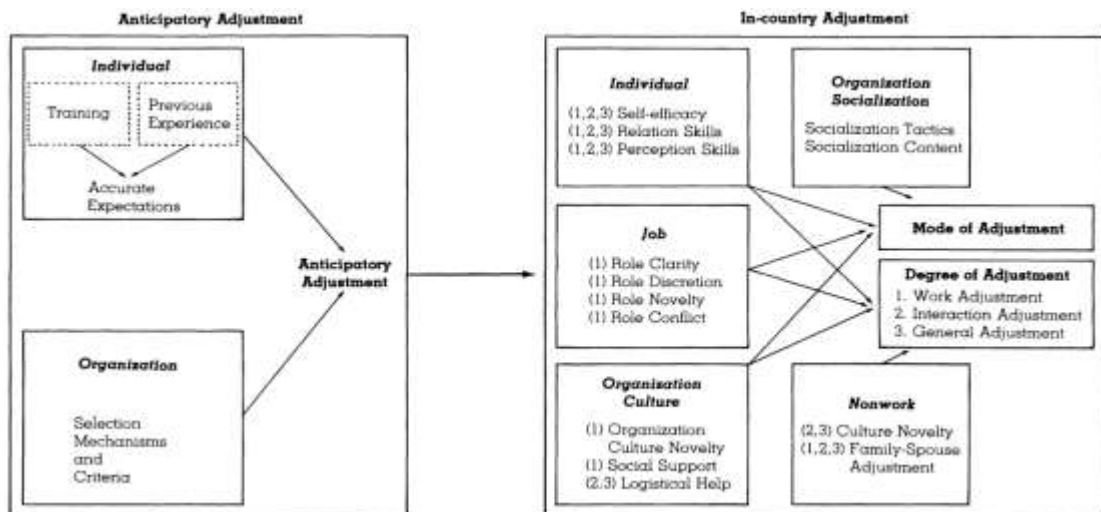


Figure 2-1 Cross-cultural Adjustment Model of Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)

Sources: Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)

Nevertheless, this model only covers the socio-cultural adjustment, but does not include psychological adjustment. It has also raised some criticism, such as being based on a study with only 67 answers and relying on experience rather than theory (Hippler, 2000; Stahl and Caligiuri, 2005), excluding other important aspects of adjustment, such as mechanisms, strategies, and time issues needed to achieve adjustment and the process

of causing impacts (Thomas and Lazarova, 2006), a lot of redundancy in the work and interaction adjustment items (Stahl and Caligiuri, 2005) and unbalanced number of items in general, work and interaction adjustment (Harrison, Shaffer and Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004).

However, the cross-cultural adjustment model by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) is the most comprehensive model of cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates so far which considers not only anticipatory adjustment but also in-country adjustment in three different dimensions, theoretically proposing that the accurate expectations shaped in the home country can promote international adjustment. At present, this model has become a researchers' preferred tool for investigating expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment of different types of expatriates in different contexts. Therefore, this study applies this model as the theoretical basis for the study of the expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE.

Focus	Model	Author and Year	No. of Stage	Dimensions	
Process	U-Curve Model	Lysgaard (1955)	Four	1) Honeymoon	
	Culture Shock	Oberg (1960)		2) Regression	
	Transitional Experience Model		Adler (1975)	Five	3) Adjustment
					4) Recovery
					1) Contact
	W-Curve Model		Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963)	Six	2) Disintegration
3) Reintegration					
4) Autonomy					
5) Interdependency					
1) Honeymoon					
Stress-Adaptation-Growth Dynamic Model		Kim (2000)	N/A	2) Culture shock	
				3) Recovery	
Factor	Three-Dimension Model	Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)	N/A	4) Adjustment	
				5) Honeymoon at home	
				6) Reverse culture shock	
				Dynamic, spiral, back and forth process	
				1) General adjustment	
				2) Interaction adjustment	
				3) Work adjustment	

**Table 2-1 Models of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

**Sources: Adler (1975), Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991), Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963), Kim (2000), Lysgaard (1955), and Oberg (1960)**

In summary, although for expatriate academics, whether and to what extent these models are applicable is to be investigated for they are developed based on sojourners and expatriates, each model has its unique advantages (see Table 2-1) and can provide solid theoretical bases and valuable theoretical insights for the researcher to understand the cultural differences of academic expatriates from diverse cultures and to further identify the factors affecting their cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE in the follow-up research.

The process models highlight the dynamic process of cross-cultural adjustment, with some models taking the fluctuation of the curve as the borderline of different stages and emphasize the transition and gradual change between various stages, while the other

model describes the progressive depth of experiential learning. These models offer the researcher clear understanding of the dynamic changes of cross-cultural adjustment process of expatriate academics.

The factor model by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) explores various factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment, including not only anticipatory adjustment but also in-country adjustment in three different dimensions - general adjustment, interaction adjustment, and work adjustment. This model offers the researcher clear and comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. Since the focus of this research is to examine the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE, this model by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) gives the research a good theoretical foundation and is to be adopted in the following research.

## **2.2 Expatriates, Cross-cultural Adjustment and Future Intentions**

### **2.2.1 Definitions of Expatriates and Expatriate Academics**

#### **Expatriates**

In this thesis, expatriates refer to *individuals who move to another country and engage in legal work abroad while changing their main residence*, such as educated professionals, skilled workers or artists holding positions abroad (Andresen *et al.*, 2014; Castree, Kitchin and Rogers, 2013), normally excluding short-term expatriates (Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007) who take non-standard assignments with relocation time less than one year (Tahvanainen, Welch and Worm, 2005), such as flexible dispatchers

(Mayerhofer et al., 2004), travellers for international business (Welch, Welch and Worm, 2007), frequent visitors (Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007), and virtual global employees working from home (Harvey, Novicevic and Garrison, 2005).

Usually, there are two criteria for categorising the types of expatriates. From the perspective of the *type of role initiating the assignment*, expatriates can be divided into:

- 1) *Assigned expatriates (AE)*, who are managers and professionals dispatched by their organisation as to achieve the organisational objectives of controlling the operation of subsidiaries and managing local operations (Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007; Shaffer *et al.*, 2012; Tharenou, 2015), sponsored by companies in their home/host countries, including compensation and allowances, premiums and insurance, to engage in specific projects (Vijayakumar and Cunningham, 2016);
- 2) *Self-initiated expatriates (SIE)*, who are professionals and managers who, for lifestyle, professional, personal and cultural reasons, pay their own money, actively emigrate abroad and look for jobs in the host countries (Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007; Shaffer *et al.*, 2012; Tharenou, 2015), with self-initiated relocation abroad, normal employment intention, temporary residence intention, and skills/professional qualifications (Cerdin and Selmer, 2014).

In terms of cross-cultural adjustment, SIEs and AEs differ in some ways (Guo, Rammal and Pereira, 2021). AEs know that in most cases they will stay within a predetermined time range (e.g. 1 to 3 years, 3 to 5 years) in a host country (Peltokorpi and Jintae Froese, 2009) and they are usually repatriated to their own country when the specified period ends, (Edstrom and Galbraith, 1977; Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005). Therefore, AEs

have lower motivation to study local language and culture, may not pay attention to establishing and maintaining relationships with HCNs, and may be reluctant to make personal changes to promote cross-cultural adjustment (Berry, 1990). However, the higher motivation of SIEs may motivate them to actively learn the local language and culture and establish social networks with local people, so that they are more capable of adjusting to the environment and tend to work in the host country (Doherty, Dickmann and Mills, 2011; Froese and Peltokorpi, 2013). Previous empirical studies show that SIEs adjust easier than AEs regarding general adjustment (Peltokorpi and Jintae Froese, 2009) and interaction adjustment (Peltokorpi and Jintae Froese, 2009; Peltokorpi, 2008). There is also a different opinion believing the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates to new tasks does not depend on whether they are SIEs or AEs (Wilson and Dutt, 2022).

From the perspective of the *type of organisation initiating the assignment*, expatriates can be divided into:

- 1) *Business expatriates*, who work in corporates
- 2) *Non-business expatriates*, who are employees and volunteers of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government (armed and civil servants), missionaries, military, academic, sports and art expatriates (McNulty, Vance and Fisher, 2017).

## **Expatriate Academics**

Drucker (1989) first put forward the concept of “knowledge workers”, individuals who have knowledge as a powerful resource which is owned by themselves rather than the organization (Horwitz, Heng and Quazi, 2003). According to Richardson and McKenna (2006), academia is a group that has received higher education, is usually good at a

particular field, and has its own special qualities. The early literature using the term “expatriate academic” appeared in the early 21st century (Richardson and McKenna, 2000; Richardson and McKenna, 2002; Richardson and McKenna, 2003). Other similar terms are “foreign academics” and “academic migrants” (Trembath, 2016).

Expatriate academics refer to *members of academia in higher education whose main residence crosses national boundaries and engages in legal, long-term but time limited related work such as teaching or research in the environment of universities* (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013; Andresen *et al.*, 2014; Austin *et al.*, 2014; Richardson and McKenna, 2000; Richardson, 2000; Romanowski and Nasser, 2015; Selmer and Luring, 2009; Trembath, 2016).

In this study, expatriate academics are limited to those in Sino-foreign universities, Sino-foreign joint programmes/institutions, mainland China-Hong Kong universities/institutions, as well as in Chinese universities and institutions. Those short-term expatriate academics are not included, but those who have been relocated for less than a year when participating in the research are also included, as long as their contract period is not less than one year. In addition, non-academic expatriate staff who support the expatriate academics are also included.

### **Uniqueness of Expatriate Academics**

Although expatriate academics and other types of expatriates are similar in some aspects, for example, they need to have communication and work with the HCNs (Chou, 2020), try to manage in the new cultural environment effectively (Richardson and McKenna, 2000; Mendenhall, 1996), have authority over HCNs and are assessed based on



performance (Mendenhall, 1996), as a very special type of expatriates, expatriate academics are unique in many ways as follows.

- 1) *Structure of organisations.* Although academia also has a strict hierarchical structure, the model of academic career is based on a flat structure with very few levels. In the structure of academic career model, level does not necessarily mean a subordinate or superior relationship like in the traditional business organisation environment (Baruch and Hall, 2004).
- 2) *Job activities.* The activities of academics include speaking, research and management, applying for research funding, participating in consulting activities, submitting grant applications, drafting conference abstracts, articles and papers, and mailing them to journals, and completing books for publishing (Barry, Berg and Chandler, 2003).
- 3) *Role discretion.* Academic careers emphasize the characteristics of a high degree of individual autonomy (Baruch and Hall, 2004). Professors, like doctors, engineers and economists, have deep professional knowledge, which gives them a high degree of autonomy, self-motivation and self-guidance (Teece, 2003). Academia is one of the first industries to use telecommuting and flexible working hours, as long as they are present during teaching and office hours (Austin et al., 2014), so academics can write and think in a quiet home office that is not limited by traditional office hours (Baruch and Hall, 2004).
- 4) *Standard of success.* In academia, personal achievement is the most relevant factor. Gaining a global reputation is a key criterion for success and achievable (Baruch and Hall, 2004).
- 5) *Career path.* In academia, up and down mobility is considered acceptable.

People can either take the roles of management responsibility such as department head or dean, or become ordinary teachers, which is not a symbol of failure, but a symbol of success because maybe it is a clear symbol that they are excellent enough to return to what is really important and what they really want (Baruch and Hall, 2004).

- 6) *Promotion system.* Most promotion systems for academics are based on performance rather than working hours, just like traditional bureaucracies such as the Church or the army (Peiperl and Baruch, 1997). Academia pays more attention to results and outcomes instead of attendance than other organisation. The number of papers published, as the academic measure (Baruch and Hall, 2004), is very important for academic activities and recognition (Ramsden, 1994).
- 7) *Salary system.* The salaries of academics are rarely at the top of the salary system, although there are also significant differences in wage structures in different countries (Baruch and Hall, 2004).
- 8) *Holidays.* Academics who demonstrate a sufficient level can get up to several months of vacation, which can be far away from their normal work and let them have time to carry out their own research projects without undertaking routine teaching and management work (Baruch and Hall, 2004).
- 9) *Mobility.* Academics are freelancers with a large amount of non-enterprise valuable non-homogeneous skills and specific capital urgently needed by modern society (Teece, 2003). Therefore, they have a strong bargaining power to their employers and can easily transfer their research agenda and career from one university to another (Coff, 1997; Baruch and Hall, 2004; Von Nordenflycht, 2010; Welch, 1997). The communities to which expatriate

academics belong are enduring and cross organisational boundaries (Tartari, di Lorenzo and Campbell, 2018), and the career model of expatriate academics is borderless (Defillippi and Arthur, 1994). Moreover, a stable and long-term employment relationship (tenure) is also a feature of academic career.

10) *Proportion of SIEs and AEs in TNE*. In TNE, the nature of expatriate academics' teaching and research work determines that the proportion of SIEs far exceeds that of AEs. The reason is that SIEs are regarded more suitable for filling technical and low-level management positions that require general and professional abilities, as well as cross-cultural and host country specific abilities, such as internal management positions in subsidiaries and responses to local environments (Tharenou, 2013), and expert positions rather than leadership positions (Andresen, Biemann and Pattie, 2015; Cerdin and Pargneux, 2010; Froese and Peltokorpi, 2013; Jokinen, Brewster and Suutari, 2008; Suutari and Brewster, 2000). However, AEs are considered more suitable for controlling, transferring, operating, managing, and developing companies (Tharenou, 2013), and typically only valuable senior managers or technical experts are assigned considering the cost of deploying expatriate personnel (Brewster, Suutari and Waxin, 2021).

## **Summary**

To sum up, as a very special type of expatriate, expatriate academics are unique in some aspects compared to other types of expatriates. However, the main focus of most previous studies has been on business expatriates and traditional expatriates. The diversity of categories of expatriate groups determines that different groups may have differences in cross-cultural adjustment. It cannot be assumed that previous research on

cross-cultural adjustment of business expatriates and traditional expatriates is also applicable to expatriate academics. Therefore, previous studies may have biases and more in-depth and separate research is needed on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics to provide deeper and broader insights.

## **2.2.2 Cross-cultural Adjustment of Expatriates**

Since this study focuses on exploring the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, the next section focuses on a detailed literature review on factors affecting expatriates and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, from individual, organisational, social dimensions, and demographic factors respectively. Given the uniqueness of expatriate academics (see Section 2.2.1), in order to avoid confusion about the possible different factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment between expatriates and expatriate academics, the following literature reviews are conducted on these two groups respectively.

### **Expatriate**

#### ***Individual Dimension***

Firstly, the factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates at the individual level are reviewed. On the individual dimension, five factors-- personality traits, cultural intelligence, host country language proficiency, cultural distance, family support and networks-- are widely believed to influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates.

## ***Personality Traits***

The most discussed expatriates' personality traits are the Big Five model (McCrae and Costa, 1987): openness to experience, neuroticism, agreeableness, extraversion and conscientiousness, which is considered to be the most widely accepted classification of personality, providing a fully validated framework to assess the impact of personality traits on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Caligiuri, 2000a; Shaffer *et al.*, 2006; Harari *et al.*, 2018).

- 1) *Openness to experience*, the degree to which an individual has a positive imagination and is very sensitive in aesthetics and aware of his inner feelings (Goldberg, 1993). People defined as open to experience are original, intelligent, open-minded, non - judgmental, curious and imaginative (Mount and Barrick, 1995).

The majority of studies believe the positive association between expatriates' openness to experience and their cross-cultural adjustment, such as, in a new culture, expatriates who are less judgmental, tend to have less evaluation on others' behaviour, and tend to try new things more, and are easier to adjust to their tasks (Black, Gregersen and Mendenhall, 1992a), openness to experience is positively correlated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Bruning, Sonpar and Wang, 2012), there is a positive relationship between open mindedness and interaction adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012), and when people have the personality traits of openness to experience, they would be more likely to contact more with the HCNs, which has a positive relationship with cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri, 2000b). However, one study yields controversial result, arguing that openness of experience is not

one of the most important personality traits (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999).

- 2) *Neuroticism*, the stability of negative emotions, showing the characteristics of nervousness, a nature and moodiness of temperament (Goldberg, 1993). It is related to decreased emotional stability and emotional control (Mount and Barrick, 1995).

A positive relationship between neuroticism of expatriates and their cross-cultural adjustment is also revealed by some studies, such as emotional stability is positively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999; Peltokorpi, 2008), especially general adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012).

- 3) *Agreeableness*, a person's tendency to altruism and cooperation in interpersonal relations (Goldberg, 1993). It is considered as a characteristic of interpersonal relationship, which is related to all aspects of social perception (Barrett and Pietromonaco, 1997).

Many previous studies identify the positive relationship between agreeableness of expatriates and their cross-cultural adjustment, such as, agreeableness is associated with all forms of cross-cultural adjustment (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999; Shaffer *et al.*, 2006), cultural empathy is positively correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment (Peltokorpi, 2008; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmailzadeh, 2017; Han *et al.*, 2022), especially general adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012).

- 4) *Extraversion*, the degree to which a person is sociable, talkative and favour on social gatherings (Goldberg, 1993). It is related to the number of social

interactions and personality traits, such as sociability, assertion, activity and talkativeness (Barrett and Pietromonaco, 1997).

Extraversion of expatriates is also widely believed to be positively correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment (Bruning, Sonpar and Wang, 2012; Shaffer et al., 2006) and sociability is positively associated with adjustment (Caligiuri, 2000b).

- 5) *Conscientiousness*, the degree of an individual's strong will, determination and concentration (Goldberg, 1993). It explains the degree a person demonstrates credibility to others and respects social roles (Mount and Barrick, 1995).

Unlike other four traits, studies on the relationship between conscientiousness of expatriates and their cross-cultural adjustment yield controversial results. Ones and Viswesvaran (1999) believed that conscientiousness was the most significant personality trait for expatriates cross-cultural adjustment, however, Shaffer et al. (2006) believed conscientiousness did not have an obvious influence on cross-cultural adjustment.

In addition, two moderating effects were analysed by Caligiuri (2000b) and Wu *et al.* (2022). Personality traits of openness plays a moderating role in the association between expatriates' contact with host country and their cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri, 2000b), and emotional stability in the association between cultural distance and cross-cultural adjustment (Wu *et al.*, 2022).

Apart from the Big Five Traits, there are few studies on other personality traits except for three studies which highlight the importance of proactive personality on cross-

cultural adjustment of expatriates. Personal initiative, a behavioural syndrome associated with individuals who exhibit a positive, self-initiated work style that exceeds normal work behaviour, is believed to be positively associated with work adjustment (Stroppa and Spieß, 2011). In addition, social initiative, a tendency of expatriates to emerge as the best, establish connections, and be active in different cultures (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000), is believed to be positively associated with work adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmaeilzadeh, 2017).

### ***Cultural Intelligence***

Cultural intelligence (CQ) refers to individuals' ability of managing and operating in different cultural backgrounds effectively (Ang *et al.*, 2007). Following the four-factor model of CQ put forward by Earley and Ang (2003), cultural intelligence (CQ) includes psychological (cognitive and metacognitive), behavioural and motivation components. Four dimensions of CQ further identified by Ang *et al.* (2007) are metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ and behavioural CQ.

- 1) *Metacognitive CQ*, individuals' psychological process to obtain and understand knowledge related to culture (Flavell, 1979), including the planning strategies for adjusting to cultural knowledge when interacting with people from different cultures and mastering the accuracy of cultural knowledge in cross-cultural contexts (Ang *et al.*, 2007), and the control and knowledge of individuals' cultural thinking process (Flavell, 1979);
- 2) *Cognitive CQ*, how individuals understand the differences and similarities between cultures (Ang *et al.*, 2007), namely, the general knowledge and knowledge structure of culture, including knowledge of economic and legal



systems, marriage systems, religious beliefs, crafts and arts, interpersonal systems of other cultures and subcultures, languages of other cultures (Triandis, 1994), and the basic framework on values of cultures (Hofstede, 2001);

- 3) *Motivational CQ*, an individual's tendency to make adjustive behaviour in an unfamiliar cultural environment (Earley and Peterson, 2004), including the confidence in the interaction of cultural diversity, the inherent preference to interact with people from different cultures, and the management of the pressure to adjust to unfamiliar environments (Jyoti and Kour, 2015), the ability to direct energy and attention to learning and operation in the cross-cultural context (Ang *et al.*, 2007). People with high motivation CQ lead their energy and attention to cross-cultural situations according to their internal interests (Deci, 1985) and their confidence in the cross-cultural context (Bandura, 2002). Expatriates of highly motivational CQ are believed to have intrinsic motivation and are motivated by their efficient belief in the ability of interacting with people from different cultures (Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar, 2006);
- 4) *Behaviour CQ*, the ability to display appropriate behaviours in cross-cultural context, including the flexibility of behavioural responses to adjust to various diversity of cultures, and the ability to adjust to nonverbal and verbal behaviours when interacting with people with different cultures (Ang, Van Dyne and Koh, 2006; Ang, Van Dyne and Rockstuhl, 2015).

Many scholars believe that cultural intelligence (CQ) enhances cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013; Han *et al.*, 2022; Reed *et al.*, 2023; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmailzadeh, 2017; Tripathi, Kaurav and

Singh, 2023). The most extensive literature reveals the association between motivational CQ and cross-cultural adjustment: there is a positive association between motivational CQ and cross-cultural adjustment (Ang *et al.*, 2007; Chen, Dong and Portnoy, 2012; Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar, 2006), especially on expatriates' general adjustment and interaction adjustment (Guðmundsdóttir, 2015), and on expatriates' work adjustment (Chen *et al.*, 2010; Jyoti and Kour, 2015), even for SIE women expatriates' (Schreuders-van den Bergh and Du Plessis, 2016). The positive association between behavioural CQ and cross-cultural adjustment is also reported (Ang *et al.*, 2007).

In addition, CQ is reported to play a moderating role in the association between conflict communication behaviours and cross-cultural adjustment (Ayoko, Zhang and Nicoli, 2022), and metacognition CQ, cognitive CQ and motivational CQ are reported to play negative moderating roles in the association between external support practice and cross-cultural adjustment (Wu and Ang, 2011). In addition, CQ is reported to play a mediating role in the association between cross-cultural training and cross-cultural adjustment (Kour and Jyoti, 2022).

### ***Host Country Language Proficiency***

Language proficiency is the degree to which people possess necessary language cognition in a specific communicative environment (Hulstijn, 2011). How host language proficiency affects the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates is another topic of much discussion. The general view is that host country language proficiency is positively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment (Kim and Slocum, 2008; Peltokorpi, 2008; Puck, Kittler and Wright, 2008; Salgado and Bastida, 2017; Takeuchi, Yun and Russell,

2002), even for expatriate doctors in Ireland, language proficiency is reported to affect their work adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022).

Interestingly, Paulus and Muehlfeld (2017) found that although host country language proficiency was positively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment, in an environment where expatriates experienced severe fear, the beneficial impact of host country language proficiency on cross-cultural adjustment would be reduced (Paulus and Muehlfeld, 2017).

In addition, some moderating roles of host country language proficiency on the influence of various antecedents on cross-cultural adjustment have been detected, such as expatriates' certain efforts on cross-cultural adjustment (Bell and Harrison, 1996) and expatriates' role conflict on cross-cultural adjustment (Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999).

### ***Family Support and Networks***

Unlike the above three factors-- personality traits, cultural intelligence, host country language proficiency-- which are more related to individual traits and abilities, family support and networks involve the other parties, such as families rather than just individuals themselves.

Support refers to help, emotional influence and affirmation (Kahn and Quinn, 1976). To be more specific, help is the provision of relevant information and support so as to minimize the pressure of people and help them understand the working environment, emotional influence is the interpersonal attraction based on the source of support and seeking supporters, and affirmation is reaffirming the ability and self-belief to successfully deal with stressful situations (Kraimer, Wayne and Jaworski, 2001). Social

networks refer to the relationships between expatriates and other individuals, such as family members, foreign colleagues, local work partners, or local friends (Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl, 2008). These relationships are channels for social resources, such as support of information, emotions, tools, and evaluation (Adelman, 1988). Social support and networks are widely believed to be positively associated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Caligiuri and Lazarova, 2002; Shen and Kram, 2011; Wang and Nayir, 2006).

Family support is the cohesive force or intimacy between family members (Olson, 2000). How family support and networks affect expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment is an active topic in expatriate literature. Early literature identifies that family, especially the partners of expatriates play a key role in promoting various forms of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment (Nicholson and Imaizumi, 1993; Stroh, Dennis and Cramer, 1994; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998). Many scholars argue that family support helps expatriates adjust to the host country environment and enhances their cross-cultural adjustment (Abdul Malek, Budhwar and Reiche, 2015; Caligiuri, Joshi and Lazarova, 1999; Caligiuri *et al.*, 1998b; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmaeilzadeh, 2017), especially work adjustment (Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999). The reasons are that family support provides love and admiration and affirms expatriates' ability (Brett, 1980), reaffirms and encourages expatriates' beliefs about work-related abilities and successful task completion, and helps expatriates better deal with emotional problems and have greater determination for cross-cultural transition (Adelman, 1988; Caligiuri *et al.*, 1998a), and actively supports and promotes expatriates' direct career by adopting social strategies (Lauring and Selmer, 2010).

Furthermore, a study on Japanese expatriates and their spouses by Takeuchi, Yun and Tesluk (2002) strongly supported the spillover effects and crossover effects between expatriates and their spouses' cross-cultural adjustment. Spillover effect refers to the impact of expatriates' attitudes in specific areas such as work on those in other areas such as non-work, while crossover effect refers to the influence of attitudes of expatriates and their spouses on each other.

Surprisingly, contrary to the mainstream view, some scholars believed that spousal support had nothing to do with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Kraimer, Wayne and Jaworski, 2001). This unique result raises concerns that spousal support and spousal cross-cultural adjustment may have an interactive impact on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Kraimer, Wayne and Jaworski, 2001), and perhaps only when the spouses adjust well on their own, spousal support is important for expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Aycan, 1997a).

### ***Cultural Distance***

In addition to the above factors, cultural distance is a factor that leads to very contradictory results in the previous literature. Cultural distance (Hofstede, 1980), evolving from the concept of psychological distance (Johanson and Vahlne, 1977), describes the differences between two countries including education, development level, cultural values, the degree of connection and business and daily language between these countries (Froese and Peltokorpi, 2011). Scholars also call cultural distance "cultural novelty" (Black, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1991), "cultural barrier" (Torbiörn, 1982) or "cultural resilience" (Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985).

Previous studies on the relationship of cultural distance on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment generally support the view that the bigger the distance of culture between host and home country, the more expatriates need to adjust and the more difficult (or longer) the cross-cultural adjustment process is (Black and Gregersen, 1991a; Harrison, Shaffer and Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004; Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002). More empirical studies show that the apparent differences of culture between home and host countries is closely related to general adjustment (Van Vianen *et al.*, 2004), culture of origin directly correlates to interaction adjustment (Waxin, 2004) and perceived cultural distance and objective cultural distance directly predict the difficulty of expatriates in adjusting to their first assignment (Jenkins and Mockaitis, 2010). Interestingly, a new study by Wu *et al.* (2022) reported a curvilinear association between cultural distance and cross-cultural adjustment.

However, in contrast to the above studies on the positive association between culture and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, Selmer (2007) reported that although American business expatriates in Germany and Canada had significant differences in cultural distance, they had no significant differences in general adjustment, interaction adjustment, work adjustment and psychological adjustment. Nolan and Liang (2022) also argued that cultural distance had no effect on the cross-cultural adjustment of self-initiated expatriate doctors in Ireland.

Interestingly, Hemmasi and Downes (2013) even reported an asymmetric hypothesis that going from an individualist society to a more collectivist society led to better cross-cultural adjustment than the reverse. This asymmetric hypothesis was also supported by Selmer, Chiu and Shenkar (2007), who compared the socio-cultural and psychological adjustment of American expatriates in Germany as well as German expatriates in the

US, and reported that German expatriates in the US had better social, cultural and psychological adjustment than American expatriates in Germany.

In addition, some counter-intuitive results are reported that adjusting to a country with similar cultures is not necessarily easier than adjusting to a country with different cultures, and sometimes even more difficult. Hemmasi and Downes (2013) revealed that greater differences in individualism between home culture and host culture contributed to work adjustment. Vromans, van Engen and Mol (2013) argued that the lower expectations of cultural similarity and cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of Dutch expatriates in Belgium than those of Dutch expatriates in China resulted in a negative impact on their affective cross-cultural adjustment.

Several moderating effects of culture on adjustment have also been examined. Origin culture moderates the association between the antecedents of interaction adjustment on the effectiveness of interaction adjustment (Waxin, 2004), and cultural distance moderates the association between the effectiveness of problem-centred coping strategies and adjustment (Stahl and Caligiuri, 2005), between cross-cultural training and cross-cultural adjustment (Waxin and Panaccio, 2005), between motivational cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment (Setti, Sommovigo and Argentero, 2020), and between cultural empathy, cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment (Han et al., 2022).

### ***Motivation for Expatriation***

Unlike the above main factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, motivation for expatriation is not widely regarded as a major influence and has only

been discussed by few researchers. There is still a great deal of research space to explore whether the motivation for expatriation is associated with cross-cultural adjustment.

Motivation is a driving force for meeting human physiological and psychological needs (Berkman, Lindquist and Sirgy, 1997), as well as an internal state that inspires and guides human decision-making, including physical, emotional, social and cognitive motivation, which is often used to describe why a person does something (Moutinho, 1987).

Most previous literature explores the different motivations for expatriation. Hippler (2009) described five types of motivations for pursuing or accepting an assignment abroad.

- 1) *From the transferee or his/her situation;*
- 2) *From the location and/or country or their characteristics;*
- 3) *From the position or new task or their characteristics;*
- 4) *From the task or previous position or their characteristics;*
- 5) *Other motives.*

Thorn (2009) argued that the priority of each motivation differs according to location, gender and life stage, resulting in different motivations. In terms of importance, motivations for expatriation are:

- 1) *Travel and adventure opportunities;*
- 2) *Development of career;*
- 3) *Economics (financial benefits and costs of working and living abroad);*
- 4) *Relations (family, partner or friends);*
- 5) *Life quality (factors to improve lifestyle);*



- 6) *Political environment* (factors related to the politics of the host country or home country).

In addition, as reviewed above, differences between motivations of AEs and SIEs were also detected. Doherty, Dickmann and Mills (2011) revealed eight dimensions of motivation for expatriation:

- 1) *Location* (perception of the individual adaptability and host country's location);
- 2) *Occupation* (career and work prospects);
- 3) *Desire of getting foreign experience* (risks, challenges, opportunities to work and travel abroad);
- 4) *Reputation of host country*;
- 5) *Welfare for families working abroad*;
- 6) *Relationship between the host and the guest and opportunity to establish the network*;
- 7) *Personal relationships* (including social, family and partnership);
- 8) *Push factors* (motivation for leaving home country).

However, only two studies were found to have analysed the relationship between motivations for expatriation and cross-cultural adjustment. Vijayakumar and Cunningham (2016) revealed that explorer motivation was positively associated with all dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment while mercenary motivation was negatively associated with interaction and work adjustment. Another recent study by Wilson and Dutt (2022) reported that expatriates who wished to earn more income or improve their careers had better cross-cultural adjustment than those who escaped from poor domestic conditions.

Three moderating effects in relation to motivations for expatriation have been identified. Expatriate types (SIE vs AE) play a weak but notable moderating role in the association between expatriates' motivation and their cross-cultural adjustment (Vijayakumar and Cunningham, 2016), international strategic orientation moderates the relationship between motivation antecedents and cross-cultural adjustment (Ratiu, Lvina and Berte, 2011), and intrinsic motivation moderates the association between cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adjustment, both psychologically and social-culturally (Presbitero, 2017).

## ***Organisational Dimension***

### ***Organizational Support***

Secondly, the factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates at the organisational level are reviewed. Organizational support is the main factor reported to influence the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in the organizational dimension. Organisational support refers to organisations' care about expatriates' well-being, importance attached by the organisation to their contribution, and the amount of resources and benefits provided by the organisation to expatriates (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

As one of the most studied topics in the previous literature, organisational support such as support from supervisors and colleagues (Stroppa and Spieß, 2011) is generally believed to help expatriates adjust to the new cultural environment and positively correlated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Abdul Malek, Budhwar and Reiche, 2015; Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005; Caligiuri, Joshi and Lazarova, 1999;

Salgado and Bastida, 2017; Sarfraz, Nisar and Raza, 2023; Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999; Wu, Fan and Dabasia, 2022; Wu and Ang, 2011).

The main specific forms of support organisations provide for expatriates are as follows:

- 1) *Providing support for daily routine*, such as tax advice, storage of furniture, temporary residence, housing sales assistance, immigration paperwork and other fields of practical support (Mercer, 2006), and monetary subsidies in the form of transfer and travel allowance, housing relocation assistance, housing allowance and education allowance, which is believed to help to maintain the lifestyle at the level expatriates used to, allowing them to obtain mental health and a certain degree of comfort in the new cultural environment, thereby contribute to cross-cultural adjustment in the long run (Guzzo, Noonan and Elron, 1994).
- 2) *Providing induction, training on language and culture*, such as briefings to mitigate the process of transition (Black, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1991; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2001), mentoring in subsidiaries (Florkowski and Fogel, 1999), language courses (Mercer, 2006). A systematic review by Sousa *et al.* (2017) revealed that cross cultural training and language training have positive impacts on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. Waxin and Panaccio (2005) highlighted the significance of information offered in cross-cultural training to expatriates on their cross-cultural adjustment. An interesting study on the comparison of impacts on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates between home tutors and host tutors by Zhuang, Wu and Wen (2013) reported that the psychosocial and role-playing functions of home tutors have a bigger impact on the general adjustment and interaction adjustment of expatriates

than those of host tutors, while the career development function of host country tutors plays a greater role in the work adjustment of expatriates than that of home country tutors.

Nevertheless, as for predeparture cross-cultural training, Puck, Kittler and Wright (2008) hold a different view arguing that it had little impact on the general, interaction or work adjustment of expatriates. Lo and Nguyen (2023) believed that training did not affect cross-cultural adjustment. Similarly, Guo, Rammal and Pereira (2021) even argued that the traditional approach to cross-cultural training was redundant because different patterns of expatriates understand local cultures and social values differently.

- 3) *Caring for children and spouse*, such as help for family daily life, cross-cultural training for spouses, and assistance in finding a good school for children, help spouses find jobs (Guzzo, Noonan and Elron, 1993; Guzzo, Noonan and Elron, 1994), as well as retraining and tuition reimbursement, work permit assistance, access to various social and sports clubs, and information and access to spouse groups (Cole and Nesbeth, 2014).

Family related organisational support is believed to help to prevent spill-over effects (Takeuchi, Yun and Tesluk, 2002) and concerns about family maladjustment in international missions (Black and Stephens, 1989). The serious consequences from lack of organisational support for expatriate families are also studied, such as marital problems, mental health problems, homesickness, family medical crisis (such as the diagnosis of children's autism), children's difficulties in school (bullying) and tension with local people (Cole and Nesbeth, 2014).

- 4) *Facilitating interaction with HCNs.* Toh and Srinivas (2012) argued that perceived organisational support would strengthen the association between perceived task cohesion and HCNs' willingness of sharing expatriates information. Pustovit (2020) urged managers to take measures to use social network analysis to determine the central HCNs and recommend expatriates to highly centralized HCNs to help improve the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates.
- 5) *Reducing role ambiguity.* Role ambiguity is believed to be one predictor of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment (Black, 1988) and work adjustment (Aryee and Stone, 1996).

### ***Role Discretion***

In addition to organizational support, role discretion, a factor related to job is believed to affect the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. Role discretion, also known as job freedom or job autonomy, is the leeway given to people when performing their job duties, or their decision-making freedom and authority in their work (Andreason, 2003; Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005; Karasek, 1979), that is, the degree of substantive freedom and independence for individuals to arrange work and determine the procedures used to perform work (Hackman and Oldham, 1976).

Previous studies yield equivocal results on the relationship between role discretion and expatriate cross-cultural adjustment. The meta-analysis by Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.* (2005) showed that due to spillover effect, role discretion had a positive impact on all three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment. This conclusion is also supported by Takeuchi, Shay and Jiatao (2008) and Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen (2003), who argued that expatriates who had greater role discretion believed that they had greater

ability to interact with local people and understand the local environment. Regarding the three specific aspects of cross-cultural adjustment respectively, some scholars believe that role discretion and work adjustment are positively correlated (Anderzén and Arnetz, 1999; Aryee and Stone, 1996; Black, 1988; Black and Gregersen, 1991a; Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999; Taylor and Napier, 1996). In addition, Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison (1999) found an obvious positive association between role discretion and interaction adjustment.

Nevertheless, neither Gregersen and Black (1992) nor Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison (1999) found a significant association between role discretion and general adjustment. Moreover, a study of administrators of US Department of Defense in US embassies worldwide revealed that there was no positive relationship between role discretion and work adjustment (Selmer and Fenner Jr, 2009). Similar, Black and Gregersen (1991a) found that there was no association between role discretion and interaction adjustment.

### ***Social Dimension***

Thirdly, the factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates at the social level are reviewed. HCN-expatriate interaction is the main factor reported to affect cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in social dimension. According to Toh and DeNisi (2007), Host Country National (HCN) refers to the local colleague of an expatriate - who may hold a peer, subordinate or supervisor position related to an expatriate in an organisation. As an important stakeholder in expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, HCNs are believed to play an important role in promoting the effectiveness of the whole multinational organisation (Takeuchi, 2010). In this study, the definition of HCN is extended to include both local colleague of an expatriate and local Chinese people who are not the colleagues of an expatriate.

The early studies which expanded the previous research focusing on expatriate dispatch, and the call to incorporate HCN perspective into expatriate research began in the early 1990s. One is the study on the preparation and training of host country staff (HCW) for new assignment management tasks (Vance and Paderon, 1993), and another one is the call for the training of host country labour force (HCW) to reduce the uncertainty related to the overall expatriate management, so as to improve the work efficiency of expatriates (Vance and Ring, 1994). These calls begin to balance the attention of expatriates, not as the only factor determining the success of expatriates, and lead to more and more literature on the interaction between expatriates and locals.

The research on association between HCN-expatriate interaction and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates is summarized as follows.

- 1) *HCN-expatriate relationships*

Black (1988) highlighted the relationships with HCNs affected general adjustment of expatriates. Later, Johnson et al. (2003) further addressed the total number and breadth of their relationships have association with all three types of cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. In recent years, the successful interaction between HCNs and expatriates is considered by more scholars to have important strategic significance to their cross-cultural adjustment (Van Bakel, 2019; Kang and Shen, 2018; Wang and Varma, 2018), the relationship quality is highlighted to be positively correlated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Jannesari and Sullivan, 2021).

In contrast to the above studies highlighting the importance of relationship between HCNs and expatriates, a recent study by Langinier and Froehlicher

(2018) argued that the current emphasis on the significance of the relationship with HCNs and the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates varies according to context, identifying that in a more international context, the relationship with local people might not be so important by investigating the expatriates in Luxembourg. Another narrative study by Siljanen and Lämsä (2009) through investigating expatriates of non-profit organisations in Israel-Palestine, also revealed that cross-cultural adjustment did not necessarily need in-depth participation or communication with the society in the host country.

## 2) *Attitude and behaviour toward each other*

From the perspective of HCNs, the attitude and behaviour of HCNs toward expatriates are reported to be significantly positively correlated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Kang and Shen, 2018), such as the social behaviours that HCNs may show or refuse to expatriates will affect the adjustment of expatriates (Toh and DeNisi, 2007).

From the perspective of expatriates, Farh et al. (2010) believed that the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates depends on their ability and motivation of seeking support relationships with appropriate actors in the host country, and whether they could successfully persuade the actors they contact to provide support for them. Van Bakel (2019) argued that expatriates who were willing to learn and seek support from others were more likely to connect with HCNs and benefit more from it, and Mahajan and Toh (2014) reported that those who sought HCNs' advice had higher work and interaction adjustment.

## 3) *HCNs' support*



The various kinds of support HCNs offer to expatriates such as information support, social companionship, emotional support and instrumental support (Van Bakel, Van Oudenhoven and Gerritsen, 2017) are also believed to positively affect the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Wang, 2002; Van Bakel, 2019). More specifically, at work, HCNs are believed to be able to offer role information as a necessary condition providing learning opportunities for expatriates to become significant organisational members (Varma, Pichler and Budhwar, 2011), and help expatriates better understand workplace requirements and workplace norms by sharing role information, so as to improve work adjustment (Pustovit, 2020; Guo, Rammal and Pereira, 2021); outside of work, HCNs are believed to be able to provide expatriates with valuable social information, which helps understanding and abiding by social standards (Arman and Aycan, 2013), and offer practical support such as helping establish and function various facilities like telephone service, Internet, etc., so as to reduce “daily trouble” and the resulting great pressure (DeLongis, Folkman and Lazarus, 1988). Furthermore, HCNs are believed to be able to integrate expatriates into their own social networks and provide emotional and moral help to expatriates to make them feel connected in the new cultural environment (Varma, Pichler and Budhwar, 2011), and gain important advantages and opportunities in host country (Davies, Kraeh and Froese, 2015). HCNs’ support is believed to become more useful and could reduce the negative impact of expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment when expatriates do not meet their role expectations (Mahajan and De Silva, 2012).

## ***Demographic Factors***

Then, several demographic factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates are reviewed. Demographic factors include inherent demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and race, and acquired demographic characteristics, which are achieved through individual initiative and effort, or through selection, such as marital status, nationality, and previous experience (Quazi, 2003).

### ***Age***

Conflicting views were found on age. Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen (2003) argued that age had a positive influence on work adjustment while a negative impact on general and interaction adjustment. However, Wechtler, Koveshnikov and Dejoux (2015) argued that age positively impacts on all three aspects of cross-cultural adjustment, and age acted as moderating roles on the relationship between regulation of emotions and general adjustment and interaction adjustment. On the contrary, some scholars reported age was not associated with cross-cultural adjustment (Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Nolan and Liang, 2022).

### ***Gender***

Contradictory views were found on gender. Haslberger (2010) reported that females tended to adjust better than males, especially in the important fields of establishing and maintaining relations. More evidence showed that females adjusted better on general adjustment (Florkowski and Fogel, 1999; Nolan and Liang, 2022; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998), work adjustment (Florkowski and Fogel, 1999; Selmer and Luring, 2011c; Salamin and Davoine, 2015) and interaction adjustment (Salamin and Davoine, 2015; Selmer and Luring, 2011c). However, Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao (2000b) found

that males adjusted better than females, especially on work adjustment (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998). Different from both of these viewpoints, Fisher and Härtel (2003) argued that gender was not a decisive factor of successful cross-cultural adjustment. Other scholars even argued that there was no statistical difference between females and males in their cross-cultural adjustment (Eze and Awolusi, 2018; Luring and Selmer, 2015; Parker and McEvoy, 1993), especially regarding general adjustment (Salamin and Davoine, 2015).

### ***Time***

It is generally believed that the more time expatriates spend in the host country culture, the more they learn, the better they adjust (Luring and Selmer, 2018). However, a recent study in which its sample was from a special category of expatriate groups, medical doctors working in Ireland, did not support the association between time and cross-cultural adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022).

### ***Marital Status***

Previous studies on marital status also yield contradictory results. The major view is that married status is positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri, Joshi and Lazarova, 1999; Florkowski and Fogel, 1999; Thomas, 1998). However, another view argues that marital status has nothing to do with cross-cultural adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022).

### ***Nationality***

Previous studies on nationality are also conflicting. An early study reported American nationality was positively associated with general adjustment but negatively associated

with interaction adjustment (Parker and McEvoy, 1993). However, another following study found that expatriates from U.K., U.S. and Germany adjusted better in interaction adjustment than those from France (Selmer, 2001a).

### ***Previous Experience***

*Previous experience* includes both previous international experience and previous experience in the host country.

- 1) *Previous international experience.* International experience refers to the direct observing or participating of events related to cultures, or the state affected by such observing or participating, including the experience gained by a person when living, working, studying and/or traveling abroad (but not necessarily limited to) (Takeuchi and Chen, 2013), which is believed to affect personal attitudes, values, knowledge base and behaviours (Takeuchi *et al.*, 2005).

Previous studies on the association of previous international experience on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment yield conflicting results. As for *previous international work experience*, a majority of scholars believe its positive association with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Black, 1988; Liu and Shaffer, 2005; Mezas and Scandura, 2005; Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999), especially with work adjustment (Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005) and interaction adjustment (Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999). Although an opposite view did not support the association between previous international work experience in terms of quantity and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, it did support the association in terms of degree of satisfaction (Black and

Gregersen, 1991b). Another study in which its sample was from a special category of expatriate groups, medical doctors working in Ireland, did not support the association between previous international work experience and cross-cultural adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022). As for *previous international living experience*, there is no controversy about its impact on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment. Some scholars reported a positive association between previous international living experience on general adjustment (Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Tsang, 2001) and interaction adjustment (Tsang, 2001).

2) *Previous experience in the host country*. In regard to previous experience in the host country, previous studies also yield controversial results. Caligiuri *et al.* (1998b) reported there was no relationship between previous experience in the host country and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, however, this is not supported by Kim and Slocum (2008), who reveals the positive association between previous experience of Korean expatriates in the U.S. and their interaction and work adjustment.

In addition, three moderating effects have been identified. Different degrees of expatriate experience moderate the association between the work, non-work, organisational and personal antecedents and cross-cultural adjustment (Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999); previous international experience moderates the association between cross-cultural training and cross-cultural adjustment (Waxin and Panaccio, 2005); previous international work and travel experience moderates the association between cultural intelligence and adjustment (Lee and Sukoco, 2010).

### *Expatriate Population Size of a Region*

Early studies reported that expatriate population size of a region was an important factor of cross-cultural adjustment (Black, 1990; Brewster and Pickard, 1994; Tung, 1982).

No recent literature on expatriate population size of a region was found.

Demographics		Expatriates		
		Related to CCA		Not related to CCA
		Positively	Negatively	
Age		√	√	√
Gender		√		√
Time		√		√
Marital status		√		√
Nationality		√		
Previous experience	International	√		√
	In the host country	√		
Expatriate population size of a region		√		

Note: “√” indicates the conclusion drawn from the extant literature

**Table 2-2 Demographics Affecting Expatriates’ Cross-cultural Adjustment**

It can be seen from the above (see Table 2-2) that there are significant controversies in the existing literature regarding whether demographic variables such as previous experience, time, age, gender, and marital status have a significant influence on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. Among them, the factors of age and gender have caused the greatest controversy. Even in the literature that suggests that age and gender have an impact on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, there are completely different perspectives on whether the older or the younger, and whether male or female is correlated with cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. These studies with different conclusions suggest that perhaps for different samples from different categories of expatriate groups in different contexts, especially for expatriate groups with special characteristics, such as doctors, the impacts of these demographics on their cross-cultural adjustment may vary greatly.

## ***Other Factors***

Finally, other studies each identifying several factors affecting expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment are reviewed. At the individual level, factors positively associated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment are: *managerial resourcefulness, acculturation attitudes, coping strategies* (Aycan, 1997b), *learning orientation, self-efficacy* (Palthe, 2004), *willingness to communicate* (Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002), *predeparture knowledge* (Black, 1988; Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002), *achievement* (Salgado and Bastida, 2017), *personal expatriate intention, difficulty in changing from expatriate career to domestic occupation* (Selmer, 1998), *self-transcendence* (Cole and McNulty, 2011; Van Vianen *et al.*, 2004), *perceived expatriate-local difference in self-transcendence* (Cole and McNulty, 2011), *achieving career goals within the company* (Selmer, 1999a), *emotional intelligence* (Han *et al.*, 2022), *expatriate identity and cultural identity* (Peltokorpi and Zhang, 2020), *dimensions of person-environment fit* (Nolan and Morley, 2014), *orientation conflict communication behaviour* (Ayoko, Zhang and Nicoli, 2022) and *political skill* (Koveshnikov *et al.*, 2022). Factor negatively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment is *fear of terror* (Paulus and Muehlfeld, 2017), *task conflict* and *relationship conflict* (Ayoko, Zhang and Nicoli, 2022) and *risk propensity* (Sarfraz, Nisar and Raza, 2023). At the organisational level, factors positively associated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment are: *role ambiguity* (Black, 1988), *role clarity* (Armon, Steelman and Jensen, 2023), *unfair treatment in the host culture* (Nolan and Liang, 2022), *international structure, value orientation, organisational life cycle, strategic planning* (Aycan, 1997b), *socialization* (Palthe, 2004; Aycan, 1997b), *subordinate ethnocentrism* (Templer, 2010), *recruitment channel* (Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao, 2000b) and *organisational culture (clan culture)* (Kumpikaitė-Valiūnienė *et al.*, 2022).

Moreover, cross-cultural adjustment itself is identified to function as a moderator or mediator, mainly focusing on the role in the relationship between its antecedents and performance, such as a full moderating role (Jyoti and Kour, 2015) and a partial moderating role on the association between CQ and performance (Setti, Sommovigo and Argentero, 2020), a mediating role on the association between CQ and performance (Jyoti and Kour, 2017; Lee and Sukoco, 2010), a mediating role on the association between cross-cultural motivation and job performance (Chen *et al.*, 2010), a mediating role on the association between Big Five personality traits and job performance (Bhatti *et al.*, 2014), mediating roles on the relationship between perceived organisational support and risk propensity and performance (Sarfraz, Nisar and Raza, 2023), and the mediating roles of work adjustment on the association between role clarity and performance (Singh *et al.*, 2022).

In addition, the spillover effects between cross-cultural adjustment dimensions are examined showing the result that general adjustment results in work adjustment, which in turn affects interaction adjustment (Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002), however, in public sector like US Department of Defence, the general adjustment and interaction adjustment of expatriates have no positive relationship with their work adjustment (Selmer and Fenner, 2009).

### ***Summary***

In summary, for expatriates, many main factors have been identified to be closely associated with their cross-cultural adjustment, including personality traits, cultural intelligence, host country language proficiency, cultural distance, family support and networks, organisational support, role discretion, HCN-expatriate interaction, and demographic factors such as age, gender, time, marital status, nationality, previous



experience, expatriate population size of a region. Since expatriate academics are a category of expatriates, the factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates may also apply to expatriate academics. However, expatriate academics are a special category of expatriates with unique characteristics. It remains to be further discovered which factors are applicable to and which factors are not applicable to expatriate academics. In addition, whether there are factors that have no impact on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment do have an impact on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment needs further investigation. Therefore, these findings provide insights for further research on the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, prompting the researcher to make deeper reflections on further research.

## **Expatriate Academics**

Despite the growth of TNE, there is relatively little literature on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment. The most relevant factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics are reviewed in the next section covering individual, dimension and demographic factors.

### ***Individual Dimension***

Firstly, the factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics at the individual level are reviewed. On the individual dimension, host country language proficiency and cultural distance are widely believed to influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.

### ***Host Country Language Proficiency***

Three studies on host country language proficiency show conflicting results. A study in Singapore reported the positive correlation of host country language proficiency with general and interaction adjustment (Tsang, 2001). Another study in two European countries confirmed the positive correlation between host country language proficiency and cross-cultural adjustment (Selmer and Luring, 2015). However, the association between host country language proficiency and cross-cultural adjustment was not supported by the study in the United Arab Emirates (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013).

Furthermore, a moderating effect of the language difficulty on the association between host country language proficiency and cross-cultural adjustment has been revealed. It is believed that host country language proficiency has a stronger positive association with cross-cultural adjustment in a host country with a difficult language than with an easy language (Selmer and Luring, 2015).

### ***Cultural Distance***

As for cultural distance, three studies yield different results. Adrienne and Forseth Whitman (2013) held that cultural distance was negatively related to the cross-cultural adjustment. However, Selmer and Luring (2009) argued that although the perceived cultural distances from different countries were different, there was no difference in cross-cultural adjustment. Fenech, Baguant and Abdelwahed (2022) even supported the paradox of cultural distance, suggesting that those from cultures different from the host country adjusted better than those from cultures similar to the host country.

## *Motivation for Expatriation*

When deciding whether to become expatriate academics, many people are affected by both push and pull factors (Wilkins and Neri, 2019). The push factor is considered to be a person's psychosocial need of going abroad, while pull factors attract people to specific destinations (Jang et al., 2009). For example, many people in western countries lack suitable employment opportunities and face the situation of "being squeezed out", while host countries have better resources, social status, working facilities and living conditions than their own countries, attracting people to work abroad (Kim, 2015).

Osland (1995) first described the experience of academic expatriation as similar to a heroic journey. Based on this classic metaphor, Richardson and McKenna (2000) developed four metaphors describing the motivation of self-initiated expatriate academics:

- 1) *Explorers*, who want to experience a new cultural and professional environment;
- 2) *Refugees*, who want to avoid personal problems, such as economic problems, divorce, climate, boring and unsatisfactory occupations, etc.;
- 3) *Mercenaries*, who want to go abroad for reasons related to the maximization of remuneration, such as lifestyle, money, status and welfare;
- 4) *Architects*, who move to establish professional structure independent of the organisational structure.

Later, *missionaries*, who wish doing good, improve others, add value, as well as spread knowledge, skills and progress to the world, were suggested as another kind of expatriates (McKenna and Richardson, 2007; Richardson and McKenna, 2002).

Another similar five types of motivation for academic expatriates proposed by Chapmana *et al.* (2014) are:

- 1) *Adventure seekers*, who pursue adventure in the host country;
- 2) *Root seekers*, who take advantage of employment opportunities in the host country to maximize people with different interests;
- 3) *Redemption seekers*, who did not succeed in some aspects of life before and come to another country to seek opportunities and make a new start;
- 4) *Comfort seekers*, who feel that the host country has a more comfortable environment, where it is easier to live and raise a family than in their own country;
- 5) *Nation builders*, usually who have obtained advanced degrees and are committed to building a national higher education system in the host country.

Several subsequent empirical studies further explore the motivations of academics to different countries. The motivations for academics to South Korea were access to international experience, attractive working conditions, family relationships and poor domestic labour market, proximity, and closeness or advantages in the local area (Froese, 2012); the motivations for academics to Turkey were education, work experience and career, opportunities (work and education), personal contacts with local people such as spouse, family member or friends, and learning Turkish language, culture or Islam (Alpaslan Danisman, 2017); the motivations for academics to Malaysia were job opportunities provided by universities where academics have just completed their doctorates, good research/working environment and proximity and immersion in their research area (Richardson and Wong, 2018); the motivations for academics to South Africa were personal preference, economic collapse and political conditions

(Chinyamurindi, Harry and Dodd, 2017); the motivations for academics to Poland were personal relationships, lack of other opportunities and unique research topics (Kurek-Ochmańska and Luczaj, 2021); the motivations for academics to UAE were attractive working conditions, high salaries, international experience, and lack of job opportunities in the home country (Tahir, 2023). In addition to the four motivations previously identified by Richardson and McKenna (2000), another motivation for academics to northern Europe was family (Selmer and Luring, 2011a).

Although these empirical studies provide comprehensive insights into academics' motivations for expatriation, they do not identify the association between different motivations and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics except for only two studies. Based on push/pull factors (Altbach, 2004), Froese (2012) put forward a primary framework based on a qualitative study: regional interest was positively correlated with the three aspects of cross-cultural adjustment, job market was negatively associated with the three aspects of cross-cultural adjustment, and family was positively correlated with general adjustment and interaction adjustment. Selmer and Luring (2013a) argued that refugee reasons had an obvious negative influence on work adjustment. However, explorer reasons, mercenary reasons or architect reasons seemed to have no impact on the degree of expatriate academics' adjustment to overseas work.

### ***Demographic Factors***

Secondly, several demographic factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics are reviewed, including both acquired demographic factors and inherent demographic factors.

### ***Age***

As for age, a study in Northern Europe by Selmer and Luring (2013b) found that senior expatriate academics had better work adjustment.

### ***Gender***

In terms of gender, Adrienne and Forseth Whitman (2013) reported that gender had no influence on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.

### ***Time***

Studies on the impact of time on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics generally show consistence with each other. A study in the United Arab Emirates argued that the length of employment had an influence on the sociocultural experiences of expatriate academics (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013). Another study in Japan, China and South Korea by Davies, Kraeh and Froese (2015) further revealed that the differences of expatriate academics in adjustment resulted from the interaction between nationality of spouse and residence time in the host country. As time passes, expatriate academics with spouses of host country nationality could best adjust to cross culture, followed by expatriate academics with spouses of third country nationality, while expatriate academics with spouses of home country nationality could not adjust well.

### ***Marital Status***

Consistent with most expatriate literature, a study in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan by Selmer and Luring (2011c) reported that married expatriate academics with their spouses had greater satisfaction with their lives in the host country and healthier physically and mentally than unmarried or separated ones.

### ***Nationality***

Regarding nationality, Adrienne and Forseth Whitman (2013) believed that nationality had no influence on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.

### ***Nationality of Spouse***

As reviewed above, it is believed that the differences of expatriate academics in cross-cultural adjustment result from the interaction between nationality of spouse and residence time in the host country (Davies, Kraeh and Froese, 2015).

### ***Previous Experience***

Consistent with most expatriate literature, a study by Adrienne and Forseth Whitman (2013) in the United Arab Emirates revealed that previous international work experience of expatriate academics had a positive association with their general and work adjustment.

### ***Location by City***

Rarely, specific location by city is reported to have some impact on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in the United Arab Emirates (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013).

Demographics	Expatriate Academics		
	Related to CCA		Not related to CCA
	Positively	Negatively	
Age	√		
Gender			√
Time	√		
Marital status	√		
Nationality			√
Nationality of spouse	√		
Previous international experience	√		
Location by city	√		

Note: “√” indicates the conclusion drawn from the extant literature

**Table 2-3 Demographics Affecting Expatriate Academics’ Cross-cultural Adjustment**

It can be seen from the above (see Table 2-3) that studies of the impacts of demographics on the cross-cultural adjustment of the same category of expatriate groups, expatriate academics, show good consistency.

### ***Other Factors***

Finally, other studies each identifying several factors affecting expatriate academics’ cross-cultural adjustment are reviewed. At the individual level, *predeparture knowledge*, *self-efficacy*, some personality traits such as *extraversion* are found to have impacts on general and interaction adjustment (Tsang, 2001). At the organisational level, *role discretion* is identified to have a positive correlation with work adjustment (Selmer and Lauring, 2011b). In addition, *role clarity* is reported to positively associated with work adjustment (Selmer and Lauring, 2011b). At the social level, *HCN-Expatriate interaction and social support* are also found to have impacts on general and interaction adjustment (Tsang, 2001).

Moreover, as for cross-cultural adjustment itself, it can function as a moderator and a mediator. Maharjan, Stoermer and Froese (2021) argued that as an important personal resource for living and working abroad, cross-cultural adjustment can moderate the



relationship of number of doctoral students to research efficiency and service load to research efficiency.

### *Summary*

In summary, for expatriate academics, there is much less literature than for business expatriates (see Table 2-4). The main factors identified to be associated with their cross-cultural adjustment are host country language proficiency and cultural distance. Apart from other demographic factors consistent with the demographic factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, two demographic factors, nationality of spouse and location by city, are newly found to be closely associated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. These findings provide insights for further research on the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, prompting the researcher to make deeper reflections on further research in a Chinese context.

Country	Author and Year	Methodology	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Relationship
Singapore	Tsang (2001)	QT	Previous	General CCA Interaction CCA	Not supported
			Predeparture		Positive
			Host country		
			Self-efficacy		
			Extraversion		
			Local contact		
			Social support		
United Arab Emirates	A. Isakovic and Forseth Whitman (2013)	QT	Cultural distance	CCA	Negative
			Previous overseas		Positive
			Language		Not supported
United Arab Emirates	Fenech, Baguant and Abdelwahed (2022)	QT	Cultural distance	CCA	Positive
Two European countries	Selmer and Lauring (2015)	QT	Language proficiency	CCA	Positive
Japan, South Korea, Singapore	Davies, Kraeh and Froese (2015)	QT	Interaction between spouse nationality and residence time	CCA	Positive
Nordic countries, Netherland	Selmer and Lauring (2011)	QT	Role clarity	Work CCA	Positive
			Role discretion		
Multiple countries	Selmer and Lauring (2009)	QT	Cultural distance	CCA	Not supported
Multiple countries	Selmer and Lauring (2013a)	QT	Refugee reason	Work CCA	Negative
			Explorer reason		Not supported
			Mercenary reason		
			Architect reason		
Multiple countries	Selmer and Lauring (2013b)	QT	Age	Work CCA	Positive
Multiple countries	Maharjan, Stoermer and Froese (2021)	QT	No. of doctoral	Research productivity	Positive
			Teaching load		Negative
			Service load		Negative

**Table 2-4 Literature on Expatriate Academics' Cross-cultural Adjustment**

**Sources: Adrienne and Forseth Whitman (2013), Davies, Kraeh and Froese (2015), Fenech, Baguant and Abdelwahed (2020), Lauring and Selmer (2015), Maharjan, Stoermer and Froese (2021); Selmer and Lauring (2009), Selmer and Lauring (2011b), Selmer and Lauring (2013a), Selmer and Lauring (2013b), and Tsang (2001)**

### **2.2.3 Cross-cultural Adjustment of Expatriates in China**

In this part, a detailed review of the literature on factors affecting expatriates and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in China is conducted, from dimensions of individual, organisational, social and demographic factors respectively. Consistent with the previous review, literature on expatriates and expatriate academics in China are reviewed separately.

#### **Expatriate**

##### ***Individual Dimension***

Firstly, the factors that affect cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in China at the individual level are reviewed. On the individual dimension, five factors-- personality traits, Chinese proficiency, psychological barriers, coping strategies, and cultural distance-- are widely believed to influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in China.

##### ***Personality Traits***

Research using theory of personality traits is consistent with the previous studies on personality traits of expatriates. A study on American expatriates in Taiwan by Huang, Chi and Lawler (2005) confirmed that openness to experience and extraversion were positively correlated with general adjustment, openness to experience was positively correlated with work adjustment, and agreeableness and extraversion were positively correlated with interaction adjustment. Another recent study in Taiwan by Lo and Nguyen (2023) also agreed that flexibility, open mindedness, cultural empathy, and social initiative were positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment.

### ***Chinese Proficiency***

Although more and more scholars highlight that in China the use of Chinese is becoming more and more important (Zhang, Harzing and Fan, 2017), most literature on Chinese proficiency focuses on the relationship of Chinese proficiency with HCNs (Zhang and Harzing, 2016; Zhang, Harzing and Fan, 2017), with very little literature focusing on the association between Chinese proficiency and cross-cultural adjustment, perhaps because scholars have assumed a positive correlation between Chinese proficiency and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment. Only an early study by Selmer (2006b) reported that the Chinese proficiency of Western business expatriates in China was positively correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment, among which interaction adjustment was believed to be the strongest and work adjustment the weakest.

In addition, there is little literature investing the relationship between Chinese dialects and cross-cultural adjustment, although the significance of Chinese dialect proficiency has been emphasized in previous literature, such as in many parts of China, dialects were regarded as the preferred medium of daily communication (Selmer, 1998), especially as the preferred choice in daily interactions with HCNs (Selmer, 2005c), and Western expatriates in Hong Kong had worse interaction adjustment due to the difficulty in learning Cantonese, a Chinese dialect (Selmer, 1998).

### ***Psychological Barriers***

Cultural barrier is one factor that is considered closely related to expatriate cross-cultural adjustment in the Chinese context, which has hardly been revealed in other contexts. Cultural barriers were first defined as psychological restrictions on the willingness or ability to understand, accept or adopt foreign cultural norms (Torbiorn,

1988). Later, in order to emphasize that the psychological barriers are usually related to negative reactions in the cross-cultural environment, as noted by Torbiorn (1988), some scholars used the terms of inability to adjust and unwillingness to adjust (Selmer, 2004; Selmer, 2001d; Selmer, 2000b).

However, only one study by Selmer (2004) was found to have examined the association between psychological barriers and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. Selmer (2004) argued that only for newcomers, perceived inability to adjust was negatively correlated with general and interaction adjustment, and unwillingness to adjust was negatively correlated with general adjustment.

### ***Coping Strategies***

Coping strategies is another factor that is considered closely related to expatriate cross-cultural adjustment in the Chinese context, which has hardly been revealed in other contexts. The coping strategies of expatriates to China's working environment have also been examined, which has seldom been identified in other countries. As two ways psychologists usually use to distinguish between coping with stress, symptom centred strategies are used to reduce emotional distress, interference, subjective pain by focusing on expression and behaviours; while problem centred coping strategies are efforts taking constructive actions to change stressful situations (Folkman and Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Therefore, problem centred coping strategies are used to solve problems and change situations, while symptom cantered strategies are used to minimize anxiety and pain (Folkman *et al.*, 1986).

A survey of Western expatriates in mainland China found that expatriates using problem-centred coping strategies were more adjusted than those using symptom-

centred strategies (Selmer, 1999b). Another survey of Western expatriates in Hong Kong also confirmed that problem-centred coping Strategies were significantly positively correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment, while symptom-centred coping Strategies were negatively correlated with two cross-cultural adjustment dimensions (Selmer, 2001b). Surprisingly, a further study by Selmer and Leung (2007) found that there was no correlation between problem-centred coping strategies and socio-cultural adjustment, however, symptom-centred coping strategies were negatively correlated with socio-cultural adjustment but no correlation with psychological adjustment.

### ***Cultural Distance***

Several studies challenge the traditional assumption that the more novel the culture of the host country, the more difficult for expatriates to adjust, arguing that adjusting to very similar cultures is as difficult as adjusting to very different cultures. In mainland China, the common Chinese culture is believed to worsen the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates from Hong Kong rather than promote their cross-cultural adjustment (Selmer and Shiu, 1999). Overseas Chinese expatriates are believed to have encountered significant cross-cultural adjustment problems, and their cross-cultural adjustment usually not as good as that of Western expatriates, especially in work adjustment (Selmer, 2002a). Similarly, in Hong Kong, expatriates from mainland China is also reported to be generally worse than that of Western expatriates (Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao, 2000a). Later, another study by Selmer (2006a) revealed that there was no significant correlation between cultural distance and cross-cultural adjustment.

### ***Organisational Dimension***

Secondly, the factors that affect cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in China at the organisational level are reviewed. In the Chinese context, the main factor in organisational dimension affecting expatriate cross-cultural adjustment is also organisational support, with the focus mainly on the cross-cultural training provided by the organisation. A recent study by Shah *et al.* (2022) confirmed that organisational support had a positive influence on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, their spouses, and children. Selmer (2002a) revealed that expatriates who had received training such as guidance, mentoring programmes during the international missions adjusted faster than those who had not received any training. However, whether cross-cultural training is helpful for expatriates in other types of organisations rather than joint ventures is still unclear because a survey shows that training is only weakly positively correlated with the work adjustment of expatriates in joint ventures, but not with the work adjustment of Western expatriates in other forms of organisations (Selmer, 2005a).

### ***Social Dimension***

Thirdly, the factors that affect cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in China at the social level are reviewed. In China, the research in social dimension is very limited, with some research being done on the factor of HCN-expatriate interaction. However, as suggested by Guo, Rammal and Pereira (2021), there are still many unsolved questions on the role of HCNs in expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment. Consistent with the previous literature, Chiu *et al.* (2009) agreed that the expressive and instrumental connections between HCNs and expatriates were of great significance to the expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment. However, another study by Bruning, Sonpar and Wang (2012)

proposed a counter-intuitive view arguing that establishing a better network with HCN colleagues was negatively correlated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment.

### ***Demographic Factors***

Fourthly, several demographic factors that influence cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics are reviewed, including both acquired demographic factors and inherent demographic factors.

#### ***Gender***

Regarding gender, differences between males and females in three different dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment were reported. A study in Hong Kong by Selmer and Leung (2003) revealed that there was no gender difference in the general adjustment between females and males, however, females were adjusted better than males in interaction and work adjustment, and males experienced better psychological adjustment than females.

#### ***Age***

As for age, a study in Hong Kong by Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao (2000b) supported the view that younger expatriates were better adjusted than others.

#### ***Time***

Counter-intuitively, a study by Selmer (2002b) revealed that length of assignment was only weakly related to cross-cultural adjustment. Another study by Shi and Franklin (2014) also supported the view that length of assignment had little relationship with cross-cultural adjustment.



### ***Accompanying Family***

Different from the previous studies on the support and networks from expatriate families, the literature in the Chinese context places greater emphasis on accompanying family. A survey reported that expatriates who had partners or family member companions showed greater cross-cultural adjustment (Shi and Franklin, 2014). Another study also agreed that expatriates accompanied by their spouses adjusted better in Hong Kong than others (Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao, 2000b).

### ***Marital Status***

In regard to marital status, two studies showed consistent results with most expatriate literature. Married status of expatriates in Hong Kong was believed to be positively associated with work adjustment (Selmer, 2001c), and the cross-cultural adjustment of married expatriates in Taiwan was also believed to be higher than that of single or separated ones (Van Oudenhoven, Mol and Van der Zee, 2003).

### ***Previous Experience***

Conflicting views were found on previous international work experience. Shi and Franklin (2014) argued that previous international work experience was unrelated to cross-cultural adjustment. Selmer (2002b) did not examine previous international experience or previous experience in the host country, instead, he distinguished previous experience in other Asian countries and non-Asian countries, reporting that previous experience in other Asian countries had no impact on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in Hong Kong. But for newly arrived expatriates, there was a positive effect on their work adjustment, while previous work experience in non-Asian countries had no impact on cross-cultural adjustment.

### ***Population Size of a Region***

Rarely, Selmer (2005c) reported that the population size of a region in China was positively correlated with both general and work adjustment of Western expatriates.

### ***Location by Region***

The different locations by region in China also receive attention. Selmer (2000a) revealed that expatriates from Western Europe and North America had better cross-cultural adjustment in Hong Kong than in mainland China.

Demographics	Expatriates in China		
	Related to CCA		Not related to CCA
	Positively	Negatively	
Age		√	
Gender	√		
Time			√
Marital status	√		
Accompanying family	√		
Previous international experience	√ ( <i>Only for newcomers</i> )		√
Population size of a region	√		
Location by region	√		

Note: “√” indicates the conclusion drawn from the extant literature

**Table 2-5 Demographics Affecting Expatriates’ Cross-cultural Adjustment in China**

It can be seen from the above (see Table 2-5) that studies of the impacts of demographics on the cross-cultural adjustment of the same category of expatriate groups in the same context, business expatriates in China, basically show good consistency.

### ***Other Factors***

Finally, other studies each identifying several factors affecting expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment in China are reviewed. At the individual level, *perceptions of local ethnocentrism* has a negative influence on work adjustment (Florkowski and Fogel,

1999) and *coping self-efficacy* has a positive influence on work adjustment (Agrawal, 2023). At the organisational level, *role conflict* is significantly negatively associated with work adjustment, while *role discretion and role ambiguity* are significantly positively associated with work adjustment (Aryee and Stone, 1996). At the social level, *colleague support* (Aryee and Stone, 1996), *interpersonal commitment* and *relative dependence* (Lin, 2004) are positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment, *depth of relationship* is positively associated with interaction adjustment and *HCN interpersonal skills* is positively associated with general adjustment and work adjustment (Liu and Shaffer, 2005).

In addition, a recent study in Taiwan by Lo and Nguyen (2023) reported that cross-cultural adjustment mediated the association between personality traits and job performance of expatriates.

### ***Summary***

In summary, for expatriates in China, some main factors have been identified to be closely associated with their cross-cultural adjustment, such as personality traits, Chinese proficiency, coping Strategies, psychological barrier, cultural distance, organisational support, HCN-expatriate interaction and demographic factors such as age, gender, time, accompanying family, marital status, previous experience, population size of a region, and location by region. Among them, coping strategies, psychological barrier, accompanying family, population size of a region, and location by region, are five newly identified factors in a Chinese context which have not been identified in other countries. These findings provide insights for further research on the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, prompting the researcher to make deeper reflections on further research in a Chinese context.

## Expatriate Academics

The very few studies on the expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in China are reviewed in the next section.

Region	Author and Year	Method	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Relationship
Mainland China	Jonasson et al. (2017)	QT	Teacher student relations	Job satisfaction	Positive
Mainland China, Macau, Taiwan, HK, Singapore	Lauring and Selmer (2014)	QT	Global mobility orientation	Work CCA	Positive
Mainland China, Taiwan	Selmer et al. (2015)	QT	General CCA (foreign organisation)	Work CCA	Positive
			Interaction CCA (local organisation)	Work CCA	Positive
Mainland China, HK, Macau, Taiwan, Singapore	Selmer and Lauring (2016)	QT	Work engagement (vigour)	CCA	Positive
			Work engagement (dedication)	Work CCA	Positive
			Work engagement (absorption)	Work CCA	Negative

**Table 2-6 Literature on Expatriate Academics' Cross-cultural Adjustment in China**

**Sources: Jonasson et al. (2017), Lauring and Selmer (2014), Selmer et al. (2015), and Selmer and Lauring (2016)**

Only four quantitative studies (see Table 2-6) focus on expatriate academics' work adjustment in China, among which, only one focuses on mainland China. However, the presumed moderating effect of work adjustment on relation of teacher-student to job satisfaction was not supported (Jonasson *et al.*, 2017). The other three examine expatriate academics not only in mainland China but also in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, even in Singapore. Global mobility orientation is revealed to be positively correlated with work adjustment, and especially for individuals with less successful demographics, such as young males, the relationship between global mobility orientation and work adjustment was stronger (Lauring and Selmer, 2014). Selmer et al. (2015) reported that

in foreign organisations, general adjustment was positively associated with work adjustment, while in local organisations, interaction adjustment was positively correlated with work adjustment, and compared with expatriate academics in foreign organisations, those in local organisations had better general and interaction adjustment. A following study by Selmer and Luring (2016) found that different dimensions of work engagement had different influences on cross-cultural adjustment. Among them, vigour had a strong positive correlation with all three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment, dedication had a strong positive correlation with work adjustment, while absorption was negatively correlated with work adjustment.

Four descriptive qualitative studies examine motivations of academics to mainland China. The motivations identified were: last choice, career development, exploring, security issues, research prospects, and partnerships (Kim, 2015); excitement, avoidance, personal and professional aspirations, and a certain exotic and novel feeling toward the new situation (Cai and Hall, 2016); professional or academic reasons, love for Chinese culture and life; difficulties in finding jobs in one's own country, better living conditions than in the home country, political reasons, family reasons, and opportunities (Wu and Huang, 2018); and job security and career prospects, research focus related to China and existing research connections with China, the "Chinese Century" factor, and the connection between industry and government in applied science, with a large proportion having family relationships such as Chinese partners (Marini and Xu, 2021).

## **2.2.4 Cross-cultural Adjustment of Expatriates and Future Intentions**

The withdrawal of expatriates refers to leaving overseas assignments prematurely before the end of international contracts (Black and Stephens, 1989; Lueke and Svyantek, 2000). Withdrawal intention includes different independent dimensions: intention to quit a job, intention to quit a current organisation and intention to quit a profession (Blau, 2000; Carmeli, 2005), or even intention to quit a host country. As suggested by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), people' intention of future actions guides their behaviours today. Premature withdrawal intention is prerequisite for actual withdrawal behaviour and actual resignation (Carmeli, 2005; Steel and Ovalle, 1984). In this thesis, intention to quit refers to *the plan to quit current organisation* and intention to stay refers to *the plan to stay in host country*. Several studies reveal the associations between different dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment with withdraw intention.

The costs of withdrawal of expatriates have always been a major issue for multinational corporations (Black and Stephens, 1989; Lueke and Svyantek, 2000), including not only direct costs to organisations such as wages and expatriate allowances (Black, Gregersen and Mendenhall, 1992b) and costs of selection, training, and relocation (Birdseye and Hill, 1995; Lueke and Svyantek, 2000; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985), but also indirect costs such as damaged relationships with clients in the host country, loss of business opportunities (Shen, 2005), lack of effective knowledge transfer and retention of professional knowledge (Bender and Fish, 2000), reduced efficiency and loss of competitiveness due to key expatriates joining competitors (Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2005; Zheng and Lamond, 2010). In addition to these losses, the

loss of expatriates may also have negative psychological effects on human resource management personnel in overseas branches, such as developing an inferiority complex and reducing motivation to support future expatriates (Takeuchi *et al.*, 2005).

### **Intention to Quit**

Being unable to adjust to living and working abroad is widely considered as an antecedent of intention to quit a job in the organisation (Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005; Siers, 2007), especially general and work adjustment (Akhil and Liu, 2019), and when the sense of procedural fairness is low (Siers, 2007). Moreover, a direct negative correlation is reported to exist between general adjustment (Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso and Werther, 2012; Siers, 2007; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2005), work adjustment (Takeuchi *et al.*, 2005), and premature intention to return home. However, a completely opposite view suggests that work adjustment does not predict intention to quit a job in the organisation (Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso and Werther, 2012), nor is it a direct negative predictor of premature intention to return home (Goede, 2020), even interaction adjustment (Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso and Werther, 2012; Siers, 2007).

### **Intention to Stay**

The general and interaction adjustment are considered positive predictors of the intention to stay abroad (Black and Gregersen, 1991a). However, a few completely opposite views suggest that cross-cultural adjustment is not a positive predictor of their premature intention to stay abroad (Caligiuri, 1997), even work adjustment (Black and Gregersen, 1991a; Black and Stephens, 1989).

The previous literature has also shown some evidence in the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment in the relationship between some factors and expatriates' withdrawal

intention, such as the Five Factor Model (FFM) (Harari et al., 2018), motivational CQ (Akhal and Liu, 2019), and protean career attitude (Cao, Hirschi and Deller, 2013), and the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment in the relationship between resilience and expatriates' intention to stay in the host country (Davies, Stoermer and Froese, 2019).

To sum up, as reviewed above, the previous literature of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment and their future intentions is limited in only business expatriates and yields very contradictory results. These studies with different conclusions suggest that perhaps for different samples from different categories of expatriate groups in different contexts, the impacts of cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions may vary greatly. Moreover, the impacts of different dimensions of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions may vary greatly. Furthermore, most literature does not distinguish the dimensions of withdrawal, and there is no specific distinction between intention to quit a job, intention to quit a current organisation, intention to quit a profession, or intention to quit a host country. Most importantly, no study is found to have focused on the impact of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions in the Chinese context. Therefore, expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions in Chinese TNE needs to be further studied and verified for deeper insights.

The review of the above literature gives the researcher a clearer and more realistic comprehension on the different antecedents and importance of cross-cultural adjustment, as well as on the association between cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions of expatriates and expatriate academics in various contexts, provides the researcher more comprehensive evidences, and lays a solid theoretical and empirical foundation for the



follow-up study of the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE.

It can be seen that overall, although expatriate academics have their uniqueness (see Section 2.2.1), when it comes to factors affecting their cross-cultural adjustment, expatriate academics actually do not show much differences from other types of expatriates. Some literature (c.f. Luring and Selmer, 2014) even does not highlight expatriate academics as a specific type of expatriates, the results and discussions of which are applied to expatriates even the samples are academic expatriates. Moreover, most of the above literature basically only examines a single factor in the antecedents of cross-cultural adjustment in each study. The only two studies considering several factors are conducted in the United Arab Emirates (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013) and in Singapore (Tsang, 2001), while the study in Singapore by Tsang (2001) does not distinguish between expatriate academics and international students. In addition, few studies adopt mixed methods, combining both qualitative and quantitative research. Furthermore, many conclusions drawn from these studies are even contradictory. In a Chinese context, when it comes to the factors affecting expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, they are basically consistent with those factors affecting expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in other countries. However, only two studies examine the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in China, one of which only examines the impact on work adjustment. Moreover, although these studies are conducted in the Chinese context, most of these data were collected years ago, with main focus on Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and Singapore rather than mainland China. However, although these regions share Chinese culture, there is still a certain degree of cultural heterogeneity in these regions (Selmer, Luring and Feng, 2009), and even life and work in mainland China are different from that Hong Kong in

many aspects (Selmer and Shiu, 1999). In addition, the samples in some studies are not pure enough, for example, the study by Shi and Franklin (2014) not only includes non Chinese business expatriates carrying out assignments in China, but also Chinese expatriates who have finished overseas assignments or are currently in overseas assignments. Most importantly, none of the studies have explored the association between digital elements of informational technology and cross-cultural adjustment, nor examined the interactive effect of other factors with digital elements on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.

In addition, previous literature of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment and their future intentions is also limited in only business expatriates and yields very contradictory results, with no study in the Chinese context.

Therefore, there is a serious lack of research on the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics as well as on the influence of cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions in Chinese TNE and it is unclear whether the research results drawn from the previous few studies are applicable to expatriate academics in the Chinese context. The factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment and the influence of cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions in Chinese TNE need to be further studied and verified.

Dimensions	Factors	Multiple Countries		China	
		Expatriates	EAs	Expatriates	EAs
Individual dimension	Personality traits	√	√	√	○
	Cultural intelligence	√	○	○	○
	Cultural distance	√	√	√	○
	Host country language proficiency	√	√	√	○
	Family Support and Networks	√	○	○	○
	Motivation for expatriation	√	√	○	○
	Time	√	√	√	○
	Previous experience	√	√	√	○
	Gender	√	√	√	○
	Age	√	√	√	○
	Nationality	√	○	○	○
	Nationality of spouse	○	√	○	○
	Marital status	√	√	√	○
	Expatriate population size of a region	√	○	○	○
	Location by city	○	√	○	○
	Population size of a region	○	○	√	○
	Location by region	○	○	√	○
	Managerial resourcefulness	√	○	○	○
	Acculturation attitude	√	○	○	○
	Learning orientation	√	○	○	○
	Willingness to communicate	√	○	○	○
	Predeparture knowledge	√	√	○	○
	Self-efficacy	√	√	○	○
	Personal intention	√	○	○	○
	Difficulty in changing from expatriate to domestic career	√	○	○	○
	Self-transcendence	√	○	○	○
	Achieving career goals	√	○	○	○
	Value orientation	√	○	○	○
	Emotional intelligence	√	○	○	○
	Expatriate identity	√	○	○	○
	Cultural identity	√	○	○	○
	Dimensions of person–environment fit	√	○	○	○
	Fear of terror	√	○	○	○
	Coping strategies	√	○	√	○
	Orientation conflict communication behaviour	√	○	○	○
	Conflict (task, relationship)	√	○	○	○
	Political skill	√	○	○	○
	Risk propensity	√	○	○	○
	Psychological barriers	○	○	√	○
	Accompanying family	○	√	○	○
Perceptions of local ethnocentrism	○	○	√	○	
Perceived inability to adjust	○	○	√	○	
Unwillingness to adjust	○	○	√	○	

	Coping self-efficacy	○	○	√	○
	Work engagement (vigour, dedication, absorption)	○	○	○	√
	Global mobility orientation	○	○	○	√
Organisational dimension	Organisational support	√	√	√	○
	Unfair treatment in host culture	√	○	○	○
	International structure	√	○	○	○
	Organisational life cycle	√	○	○	○
	Strategic planning	√	○	○	○
	Socialization	√	○	○	○
	Subordinate ethnocentrism	√	○	○	○
	Recruitment channel	√	○	○	○
	Role ambiguity	√	○	√	○
	Role discretion	√	√	√	○
	Role conflict	○	○	√	○
	Role clarity	√	√	○	○
	Organisational culture (clan culture)	√	○	○	○
Social dimension	HCN-expatriate interaction	√	√	√	○
	Interpersonal commitment	○	○	√	○
	Relative dependence	○	○	√	○
	Colleague support	○	○	√	○
	Depth of relationship	○	○	√	○
	HCN interpersonal skills	○	○	√	○

Note: “√” indicates factors which have been studied in the extant literature, and “○” indicates factors which have not been studied in the extant literature

**Table 2-7 Summary of Factors Affecting Cross-cultural Adjustment in Extant Literature**

## 2.3 Expatriates and Information Systems

### 2.3.1 Attitude Toward Information Technology

Attitude is defined as an evaluative response to antecedent stimuli or attitude objects (McGuire, 1968). Based on this definition, Ajzen (1989) later emphasizes the concept of evaluation, defining attitude as a tendency to respond favourably or negatively to objects, people, events, institutions, or other identifiable aspects of the personal world. Attitude consists of three parts: cognition, emotion, and behaviour. Cognitive reactions can affect emotional reactions, which in turn shape behavioural reactions. Cognitive reactions refer to a person’s belief in executing a target behaviour. Behavioural reactions

measure the intensity of their intention to execute a specific behaviour (Huang, Estrader and Song, 2022). Emotional reactions include attitude and satisfaction (Al-Gahtani and King, 1999).

In the past few decades, numerous studies on people's attitudes toward information technology focus on the role of application attributes, factors on individuals (cognitive, emotional, behavioural, motivational, and personality) and peripherals (social and marketing) to explain consumers' attitude, acceptance, intention to use, actual purchase and use, and sustained use of in various contexts (cf. Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977; Gera, Chadha and Ahuja, 2020; Hoehle, Zhang and Venkatesh, 2015; Hsiao, Chang and Tang, 2016; Hatamifar, Ghaderi and Nikjoo, 2021; Musa *et al.*, 2016; Tang, 2019).

### **2.3.2 Expatriates and Information Technology**

The research on the impact of digital elements on expatriates and their expatriation has only been around for two decades and there are surprisingly few papers dealing with expatriation and digital elements, although it has recently attracted the attention of some scholars. At present, the literature on the expatriation and information system mainly focuses on the following three aspects.

#### **Role of Information Technology in Supporting Expatriates**

The first big focus of a large amount of literature is on the unique and useful mechanisms provided by online social media for expatriates to access and maintain organisational and personal social networks to gain social support. Crowne, Goeke and Shoemaker (2015) developed a model using network theory and technology to demonstrate how

online supportive social networks and information society networks increase the well-being and knowledge transfer of expatriates, which in turn have a positive influence on their cross-cultural adjustment. Canhilal, Canboy and Bakici (2022) explored the role that internet-based expatriate platforms can play in creating complementary interaction opportunities, thereby providing information, emotional, and tool support for expatriates in host countries. Several other studies reveal that some specific social media platforms, such as InterNations, Facebook or Meetup platforms create a supportive environment for social and professional networks for expatriates (Vaiman and Haslberger, 2013); Twitter provides information value interaction for expatriates using information and communication technology to interact with community members (Hyduk and Worrall, 2016), and Blogs provide online social support resources and cross-cultural adjustment support resources for expatriates in Canada to address their uncertainty, ambiguity, and anxiety experiences (Nardon, Aten and Gulanowski, 2015). In addition, Bohm, Wolf and Krcmar (2010) extensively described environmental and social issues related to situational factors affecting the information needs of expatriates in contacting with German government, based on general model of Wilson (2006) on information seeking behaviour. Scholars have also investigated the use of social media and computer media communication to develop virtual proximity on cultural integration through using information and communication technologies, and maintain professional relationships globally to reduce stress and the impact of innovation processes (Coughlan, Fogarty and Fogarty, 2019).

## **Impact of Information Technology on Global Mobility**

The impact of information technology on global mobility is another emerging research field, most relevant to which is virtual expatriation. Virtual expatriation, as another form

of international expatriation, refers to the situation of employees managing international responsibilities from home countries without actually relocating to the host country (Welch, Worm and Fenwick, 2003; Selmer *et al.*, 2022; Wicht and Holtbrügge, 2023). Virtual work and virtual teams are achieved through the use of digital ways such as information exchange technology and tools for digital project management (Lauring and Jonasson, 2018; Leonardi, 2021; Nordbäck and Espinosa, 2019; Lauring, Drogendijk and Kubovcikova, 2022). Since the late 1990s, due to the development of the Internet and other communication technologies, the trend of virtual work and virtual teams has accelerated (Hertel, Geister and Konradt, 2005), and the COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated the digitalization of the workplace, resulting in an emerge in long-distance work based on digital means for expatriates (Koveshnikov, Lehtonen and Wechtler, 2022; Lazarova and Ipek, 2020; Sahakiants and Dorner, 2021).

Welch, Worm and Fenwick (2003) investigated the feasibility of replacing traditional expatriate assignments with virtual assignments, proposed a model to illustrate the elements of the work relationship of virtual assignee, and pointed out that although some multinational companies are adopting advanced information and communication technology for virtual management, it was unlikely to replace traditional expatriate assignments, which is also supported by Collings, Scullion and Morley (2007) and Suutari *et al.* (2013). Selmer *et al.* (2022) believed that virtual global mobility activities will continue to evolve due to the rapid and continuous development of coordination and communication technologies.

A series of advantages and challenges provided by virtual expatriate missions based on digital means are also discussed. Advantages include improving the compatibility of continuity of children's education, couples of dual careers, significant cost savings, and

easier repatriation (Holtbrügge *et al.*, 2011). Especially during the pandemic, digital means can improve teamwork and communication of virtual assignees, thereby alleviating the problem of geographical isolation (Rudolph *et al.*, 2021). However, challenges include virtual tasks providing fewer opportunities to establish a common foundation for collaboration (Wicht and Holtbrügge, 2023), which may lead to trust problems, their applicability in specific professions or environments, and their impact on organisational commitment and team cohesion for posing significant obstacles to understanding the local colleague culture and potentially leading to misunderstandings (Holtbrügge and Schillo, 2008). It is suggested that cross-cultural training is crucial in virtual tasks and may be a solution to overcome these cross-cultural challenges (Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007; Holtbrügge and Schillo, 2008).

### **Use of Information Technology in Expatriate Management**

The use of digital solutions for expatriate management has also attracted the attention of scholars. Traber, Franchi and Nash (2017) revealed the use of digital technology in different areas of expatriate management, including different types of expatriate compensation, such as taxation, calculation of living expenses, determination of social security contributions, or consideration of fluctuations of exchange rate, recruitment, relocation and support for cross-cultural adjustment, and repatriation. Sahakiant and Dorner (2021) highlighted the benefits of using online collaboration and social media technologies in expatriate management, such as the selection and recruitment of expatriates, cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates and their families in host countries, and the need of digitization related issues when providing support to expatriates and their families in pre, during, and post expatriate assignments.



Furthermore, the challenges faced by the application of information technology in expatriation and expatriate management have also received attention from many scholars, such as a lack of face-to-face contact yet which is essential in some cases (Hertel, Geister and Konradt, 2005; Ryugen, 2020), data protection and privacy issues (Bonache, Brewster and Froese, 2020; Deliri and Albanese, 2015), and information and communication overload (Karr-Wisniewski and Lu, 2010; Matthes *et al.*, 2020; Saunders *et al.*, 2017).

In summary, the above literature provides valuable insights into the expatriation and digital elements of informational technology in today's era, offering some preliminary support for subsequent research reasoning.

However, research linking expatriates' attitude toward information technology, especially expatriates' attitude toward using local mobile Apps and their cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions is still blank.

## **2.4 Summary**

The extant literature on cross-cultural adjustment models provides a solid theoretical foundation and valuable insights for the researcher to understand the cultural differences of expatriate academics from different cultures, and enables the researcher to have a clearer understanding of the dynamic changes in the cross-cultural adjustment process of expatriate academics and the factors affecting their cross-cultural adjustment. The three-dimensional model of Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) (see section 2.1.4) is applied in subsequent research. Moreover, the literature on expatriate academics, cross-cultural adjustment, and future intentions not only further supports empirically, but also theoretically expands the expatriate cross-cultural adjustment model based on Black,

Mendenhall and Oddou (1991). It provides the researcher with a clearer and more realistic understanding of the different antecedents and importance of cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates and expatriate academics in different contexts and lays a solid theoretical and empirical foundation for subsequent research on the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics and the impact of cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions in Chinese TNE, as well as shows evidence supporting that differences may exist in cross-cultural adjustment among different categories of expatriate groups. Furthermore, the literature on expatriates and information systems also provides valuable insights into the digital elements of information technology in today's era, as well as provides some preliminary support for the reasoning in the subsequent research.

However, the extant literature on factors affecting expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (see Table 2-7) and on the impact of cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions still largely focuses on business expatriates in other countries such as European countries, the United Arab Emirates, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. There is a serious lack of research on the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in the Chinese context. Furthermore, for research on the impact of cross-cultural adjustment on future intentions, no study is found to have examined the impact of expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions in the Chinese context. Even for the impact of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions in different countries, the extant literature yields very contradictory results without fully explaining the problem. Most importantly, none of the previous studies have done research on the association between digital elements of informational technology with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions, nor examined the interactive effect of any factor with digital elements on expatriate

academics' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions. There is a huge gap in the research linking expatriates' attitude toward information technology, especially expatriates' attitude toward using local mobile Apps with host country language proficiency, time in host country, and cross-cultural adjustment and their future intentions.

Therefore, it is both very significant and necessary to identify and verify the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment and the influence of cross-cultural adjustment on their future intentions in Chinese TNE.

The subsequent research on factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE mainly addresses three key aspects identified from the literature review: first, some main factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates; second, factors yielding conflicting results on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates; and third, factors being previously overlooked on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. These factors include cultural distance, host country language proficiency, family support and networks, organisational support, HCN-expatriate interaction, and demographic factors such as previous experience, time, age, gender, marital status, nationality, expatriate population size and location of the organisation, nationality of spouse, and accompanying spouse.

For some previously identified factors on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, such as host country language proficiency, family support and networks, organizational support, and HCN expatriate interaction, the first qualitative study further examines their applicability to expatriate academics in Chinese context. For some factors which previously yield controversial results on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, such as cultural distance and some demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status,

and nationality of spouses, the first qualitative study also determines whether they have an impact on the cross-cultural adjustments of expatriate academics in Chinese context. In addition, for some previously overlooked factors on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, it is expected that the first qualitative study can identify what they are and whether they are crucial for the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese context.

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### **3. QUALITATIVE STUDY**

This chapter looks at the first part of the empirical research, the qualitative study. It first elaborates on the research design of the qualitative study, including research methods, sample and procedures, analysis technique, and then reports the results and analyses of the qualitative study from four dimensions, individual, organisational, social and governmental, to provide a comprehensive framework on the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.

#### **3.1 Research Design and Methodology**

##### **3.1.1 Research Ethics**

This research was conducted using the *Research Conduct and Research Ethics Guidelines of the University of Nottingham Ningbo China*.

Prior to collecting data from participants, ethical approval at the University of Nottingham Ningbo China was obtained. During the process of collecting data, the researcher strictly adhered to the *Research Conduct and Research Ethics Guidelines*, predicting potential ethical considerations that may occur during or after the study, and protecting the privacy and confidentiality of participants (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018). All respondents signed an informed consent form (see Appendices I and III) before participating in the interviews and questionnaire survey. Participants were informed of the purpose and structure of the study and can withdraw at any time without any consequences. All interviews were conducted one-on-one at the location chosen by the participants. The researcher ensured that this information was only used for research purposes, emphasizing and ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. The questions were

not sensitive and did not link the answer to participants' organisations, and the answers did not reveal their identities. Very importantly, they were not forced to participate in this research. In addition, this study did not provide money or any other type of gift or reward. Participants were generally satisfied with participation, although two withdrew from the interview during the qualitative stage. After the data collecting was completed, for confidentiality purposes, all records were stored in the researcher's personal hardware and secure university systems, and could only be accessed by the researcher and the supervisors. Audio data were transcribed into text, and the original data were saved as archives. All analyses focused on text that was not linked to an individuals' names or voices. For example, online interview data were converted into text before analysis and then subjected to anonymous analysis. The online survey questionnaire data were also displayed on text that was not linked to individuals' names. In addition, the researcher did not publicly report any information that could identify participants or disclose any information about the participants.

### **3.1.2 Research Methods**

The two main branches of social science research are on the reality that is constructed subjectively by people (constructivism), and on the objective reality that is gauged by people (positivism), and these two branches are often integrated in the research that needs to adopt mixed methods (Morgan, 2007), which provide greater adaptability and flexibility in research design (Wisdom and Creswell, 2013).

This research adopts mixed methods, combining both deductive and inductive methods, with both qualitative and quantitative research techniques (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). More specifically, this research consists of a qualitative study (semi-structured interview) based on the interpretivism paradigm to sort out, summarize, analyse the

interview results and to interpret reality, and then a quantitative study (questionnaire survey) based on the positivism paradigm to analyse the survey results, to verify the hypotheses and to further construct the reality. The adoption of both qualitative and quantitative research methods is in line with the diversity of research objects in this research, making up for the limitations of qualitative and quantitative methods and enabling the researcher understand the research phenomenon more widely and comprehensively (Creswell and Clark, 2017).

A qualitative study, which involves exploring real-world problems and providing deeper insights, can capture experiences, attitudes and behaviours that may be difficult to quantify accurately, allow participants to explain their experiences, reasons, and how they experience certain period of time or event, as well as explain those human behavioural processes and patterns which are hard to be gauged by quantity (Creswell, 2009; Tenny, Brannan and Brannan, 2022). It can not only reveal new concepts, but also create convincing new theories (Gioia and Pitre, 1990).

However, the process of qualitative research is labour-intensive, such as recording and classification (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008), and researchers with different personal characteristics may draw different conclusions based on the same information (Maxwell, 2005). However, due to the general insufficiency of understanding of the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in China, it is difficult to apply quantitative methods such as questionnaire surveys (Yin, 2014) in the beginning stage.

As one of the qualitative methods, in-depth interviews enable researchers to engage in guided conversations with the aim of obtaining inspiring and detailed materials from the interviewees (Rossman and Rallis, 1998). Detailed text description is used to reveal the "truth" hidden in the interviewees' discourse and narration, which not only helps

respondents express their real feelings according to their own experience in cross-cultural adjustment in China, but also enables the researcher to objectively examine the factors affecting the expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.

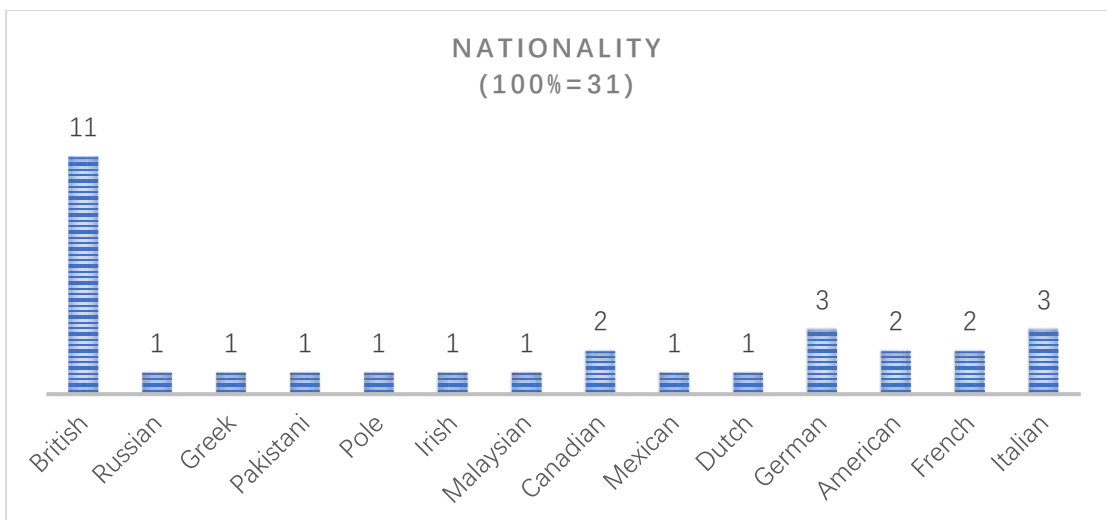
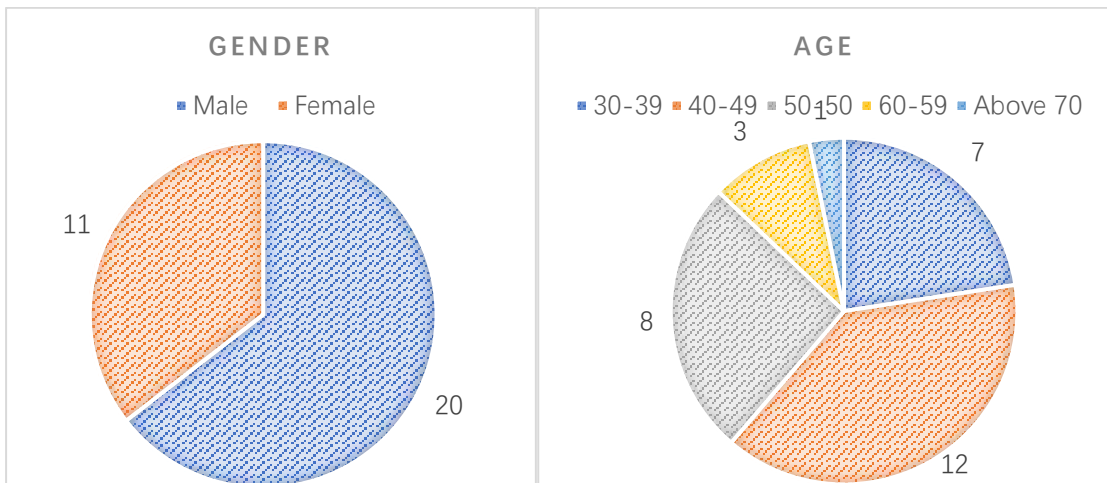
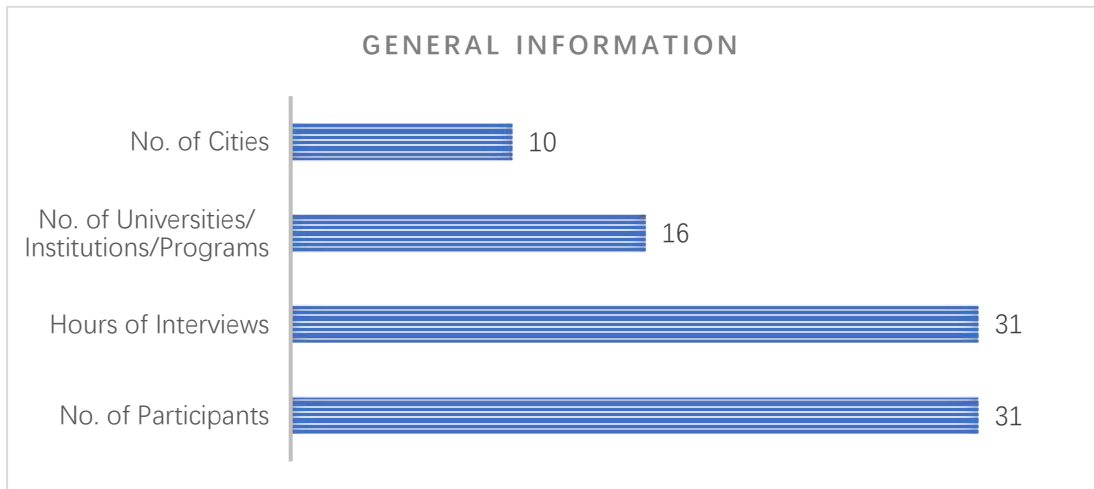
### **3.1.3 Sample and Procedure**

To make participants more suitable, diverse and inclusive, this study adopts a purposive sampling method (c.f. Creswell and Clark, 2017; Palinkas *et al.*, 2015; Patton, 1990), which is especially effective in investigating “information rich cases” (Patton, 1990). The researcher directly judged and carefully selected each individual based on the definition of expatriate academics in this thesis (see Section 2.2.1), purposively including participants of different genders, ages, nationalities, disciplines, academic titles, and marital statuses, participants who are in China for different lengths of time, and participants with spouses or partners of different nationalities, and invited these participants through personal contacts. All interviews were conducted face-face by the researcher or through online visual/vocal communication tools, such as Skype and WeChat. After 25 interviews, similar findings repeatedly appeared in the data, and there were basically no more new findings, indicating that the theoretical saturation was reached, which is the standard for determining the cessation of sampling (Glaser, 1967). Altogether 31 interviews were conducted.

The 31 interviewees (see Table 3-1) were from 16 universities/institutions /programmes including Sino-foreign universities, Sino-foreign joint programmes/institutions and Chinese universities and institutions, located in 10 different cities in 5 provinces/municipalities in China: Shanghai, Beijing, Suzhou, Ningbo, Kunshan, Hangzhou, Zhuhai, Chongqing, Chengdu, and Dalian (see Figure 3-1). The overall



audio data of the qualitative study were around 31 hours with about 270,000 words after being transcribed into text.



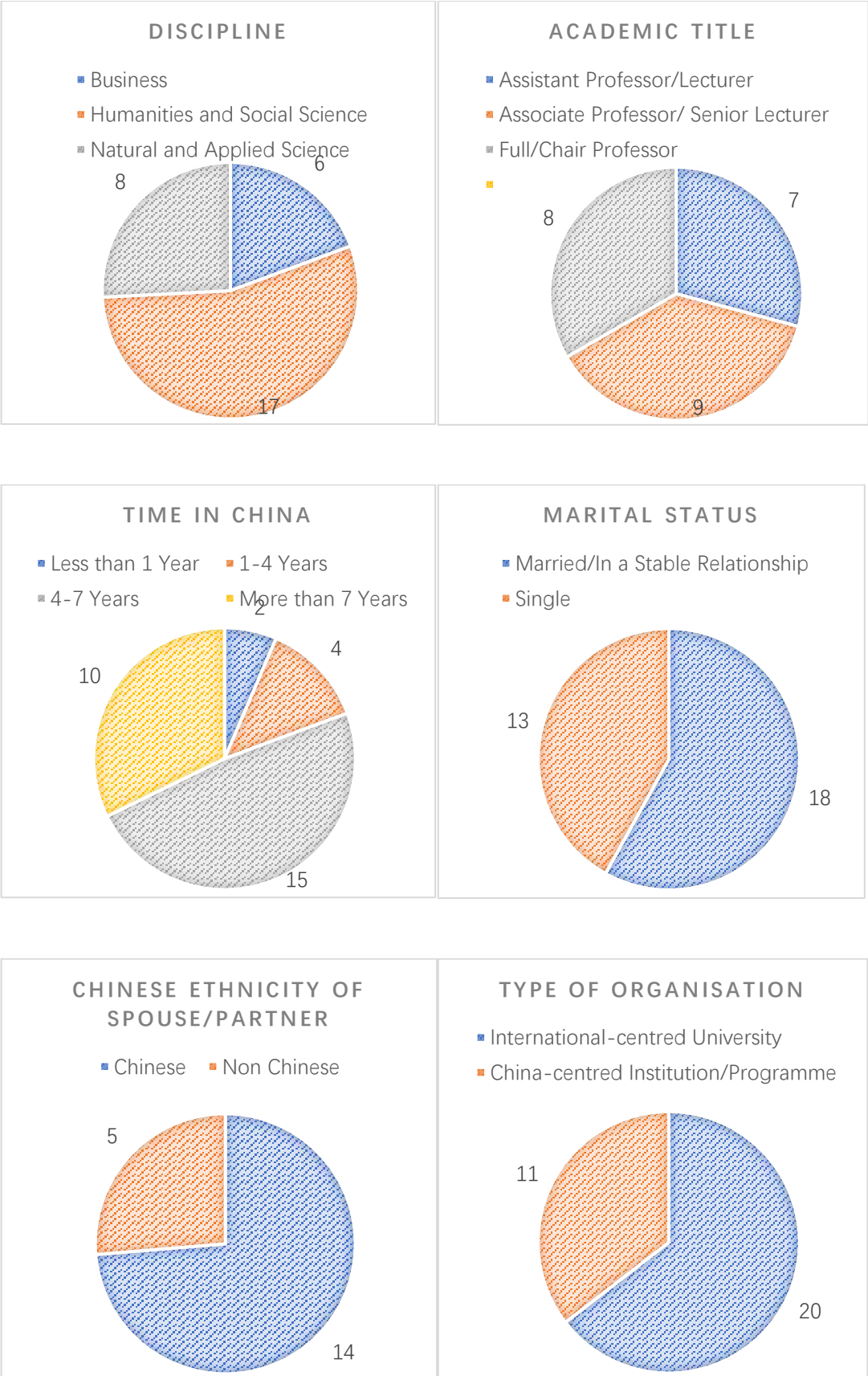


Figure 3-1 Interview Data Information

No.	Gender	Age	Nationality	Discipline	Academic Title	Time in China	Marriage Status	Ethnicity of Spouse/ Partner
A1	Male	68	British	Business	Professor (former dean)	5 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
A2	Male	40	Irish	Humanities and social science	Teaching fellow	5 years	Single	N/A
A3	Male	49	Malaysian (ethnic Chinese)	Natural and applied science	Associate professor/senior lecturer	3 months	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
A4	Male	32	British	Natural and applied science	Assistant professor/lecturer	7 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
A5	Male	55	British	Business	Associate professor/senior lecturer	16 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
A6	Male	38	British	Humanities and social science	Teaching fellow	9 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
A7	Female	68	British	Humanities and social science	Professor	14 years	Single	N/A
A8	Male	52	British	Humanities and social science	Professor (dean)	6 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
A9	Female	48	Mexican	Humanities and social science	Teaching fellow	15 years	Single	N/A
A10	Female	40	British	Humanities and social science	Associate professors/senior lecturer	5 years	Single	N/A
A11	Male	58	Dutch	Business	Professor	13 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
A12	Male	58	British	Humanities and social science	Professor (principal)	10 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
A13	Female	57	British	Natural and applied science	Professor	5 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
A14	Female	38	British	Humanities and social science	Assistant professor/lecturer	8 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
A15	Male	48	German	Natural and applied science	Associate professor/senior lecturer	7 years	Single	N/A
A16	Male	42	US	Humanities and social science	Associate professor/senior lecturer	1 years	Single	N/A
A17	Male	53	US	Natural and applied science	Professor	1.5 years	Single	N/A

A18	Female	35	French	Humanities and social science	Assistant professor/lecturer	5 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
A19	Male	42	Italy	Humanities and social science	Assistant professor/lecturer	7 months	Single	N/A
A20	Female	47	Greek	Natural and applied science	Associate professor/senior lecturers	5.5 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
B1	Male	47	German	Humanities and social science	Associate professors/senior lecturers	6 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
B2	Male	55	Italian	Business	Associate professor/senior lecturer	14 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
B3	Male	41	Polish	Humanities and social science	Assistant professor/lecturer	3 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
B4	Female	58	British	Humanities and social science	Senior teaching fellow	6.5 years	Single	N/A
B5	Male	35	Pakistan	Business	Assistant professor/lecturer	8 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
B6	Female	40	Russian	Business	Teaching fellow	5 years	Single	N/A
B7	Male	34	French	Humanities and social science	Lecturer	5 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
C1	Male	75	Canadian	Natural and applied science	Professor/senior scientist	4 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
C2	Male	32	Italian	Humanities and social science	Assistant professor/lecturer	11 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Chinese
C3	Female	65	Canadian	Humanities and social science	Teaching fellow	5 years	Married/in a stable relationship	Non-Chinese
C4	Female	45	German	Humanities and social science	Associate professor/senior lecturer	5 years	Single	N/A

Note: A from Sino-foreign universities; B from Sino-foreign joint programmes/institutions; C from Chinese universities and institutions

**Table 3-1 Profiles of Interviewees**

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All interview questions were written in English and all the interviews were conducted in English in the offices of expatriate academics or in quiet rooms in the university library. The length of time of each was around 60 minutes.

Three pilot interviews were conducted before formal interviews. During the pilot interviews, the interview content and framework were supplemented and some modifications were made to the grammar structure and order of the questions based on the replies and suggestions of the respondents and the researcher's self-reflection.

At the beginning of the formal interviews, the interviewees were informed of the interview content and recording of the interview process and gave approval in advance, and then questions within the prepared interview framework were mainly asked. To be specific, firstly, the interviewees were guided to give their general background information, and secondly to reflect on their experiences of cross-cultural adjustment in their life, in their interaction with local people and in their work, and lastly to show their feelings on their performance and intention to stay. In the final part of the interview, follow up questions were asked according to the answers of the respondents.

In order to ensure the effectiveness, two different kinds of recording equipment were used to record all the information of the interviews. After the interviews, all audio files were transcribed and proofread word by word and sentence by sentence, in particular to avoid misreading of the text caused by the interviewees' accents. For a small amount of key interview information that could not be recognized due to accent and expression problems and was easy to cause obstacles for understanding, reconfirmations were conducted with relevant interviewees by e-mail or via WeChat. For the missing information that did not affect semantic understanding, the researcher chose to ignore it to ensure the research progress.

### **3.1.4 Analysis Techniques**

This research adopted the Gioia methodology (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013). Although the Gioia methodology (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013) has some methodological limitations, such as being criticized that it is rooted in naturalism and that its naturalistic hypotheses have not been completely examined (Mees-Buss, Welch and Piekkari, 2022), the Gioia method enables effectively construct experiences and theorize these experiences (Gehman et al., 2018), and develop new concepts (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013), providing clear guidance for a more unified analysis of data (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013).

This study adopted four steps to ensure that there was no significant bias caused by interpretation and categorization in data analysis. The first step was to prepare the data, ensuring that all cases were recorded fully, and then imported into the software NVivo for encoding, analysing, and extracting relevant information of the qualitative data. The second step was to decide how to code and which content to code by defining paragraphs as contextual units and themes as analytical units. The third stage was to use a hierarchical coding structure to categorise data, which was categorised as three standard data structures: first order, second order, and aggregation dimensions (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013). Categorization included both thematic categories derived from literature and newly established thematic categories from iterative reading which identifies similar patterns and concepts. All raw data were coded by grouping thematic text units into corresponding categories through NVivo and the structure of hierarchical categories originates from the compilation of all texts related to the themes, as well as the merging of some subcategories into more meaningful and larger categories. In order to conduct a comprehensive and unbiased exploration of data, categorization followed

objectivity, correlation, homogeneity, and productivity as suggested by White and Marsh (2006). The final step was to interpret the results in both qualitative and quantitative approaches using NVivo. Through an iterative process of analysing and reviewing, the data were structured into analysis themes and patterns, and finally quantified according to occurring frequency. Based on the results of qualitative interviews, the researcher constantly refined concepts, developed hypotheses, and then conducted quantitative study in the next stage.

### 3.2 Results and Analyses

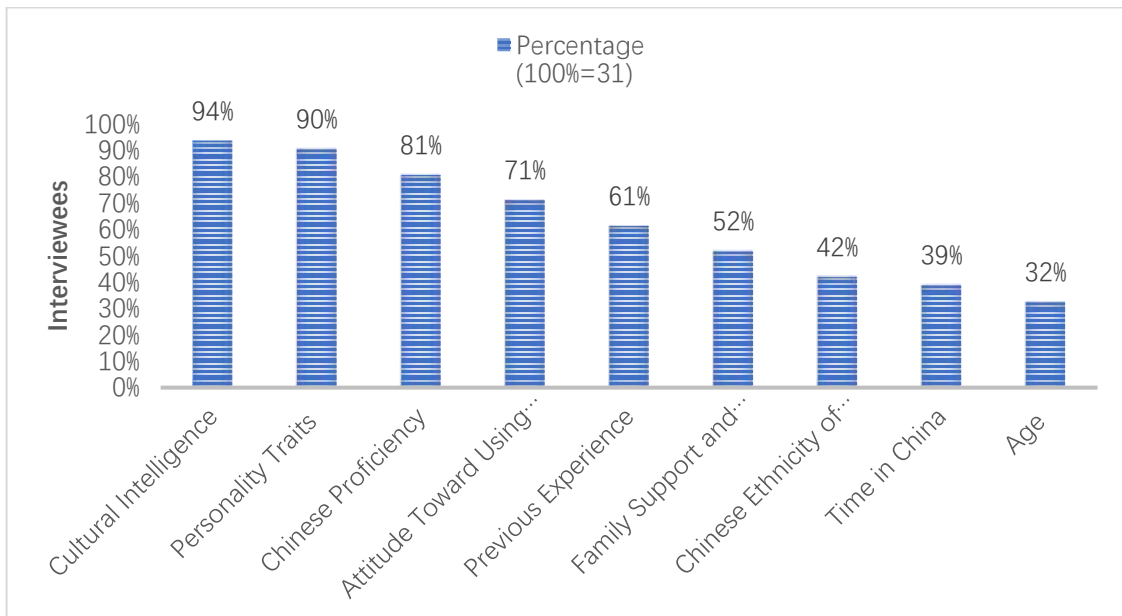
The qualitative study has identified 17 factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in four different dimensions - individual, organisational, social and governmental (see Figure 3-2). These factors are based on the cross-cultural adjustment model by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) (see Section 2.1.3) and the subsequent research (as discussed in Section 2.2.2).

Individual Dimension	Organisational Dimension	Social Dimension	Governmental Dimension
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Intelligence</li> <li>• Personality Traits</li> <li>• Chinese Proficiency</li> <li>• Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps</li> <li>• Previous Experience</li> <li>• Family Support and Networks</li> <li>• Chinese Ethnicity of Spouse/Partner</li> <li>• Time in China</li> <li>• Age</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational Support</li> <li>• Type of Organisation</li> <li>• Expatriate Population Size of the Organisation</li> <li>• Location of the Organisation by Level of Internationalisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expatriate-HCN Interaction</li> <li>• Community Support and Networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro Governmental Support</li> <li>• Macro Policy Toward TNE and EA</li> </ul>

**Figure 3-2 Main Factors Affecting Cross-cultural Adjustment**

### 3.2.1 Individual Dimension

In the individual dimension, nine factors were identified which had close relationships with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Among them, six factors were highlighted by more than half of the participants: cultural intelligence (29 out of 31), personality trait (28 out of 31), Chinese proficiency (25 out of 31), attitude toward using local mobile Apps (22 out of 31), previous experience (19 out of 31) and family support and networks (16 out of 31) (see Figure 3-3).



**Figure 3-3 Main Factors in Individual Dimension**

Based on the analysis technique (see 3.1.3), the following main themes in individual dimension were identified (see Table 3-2).

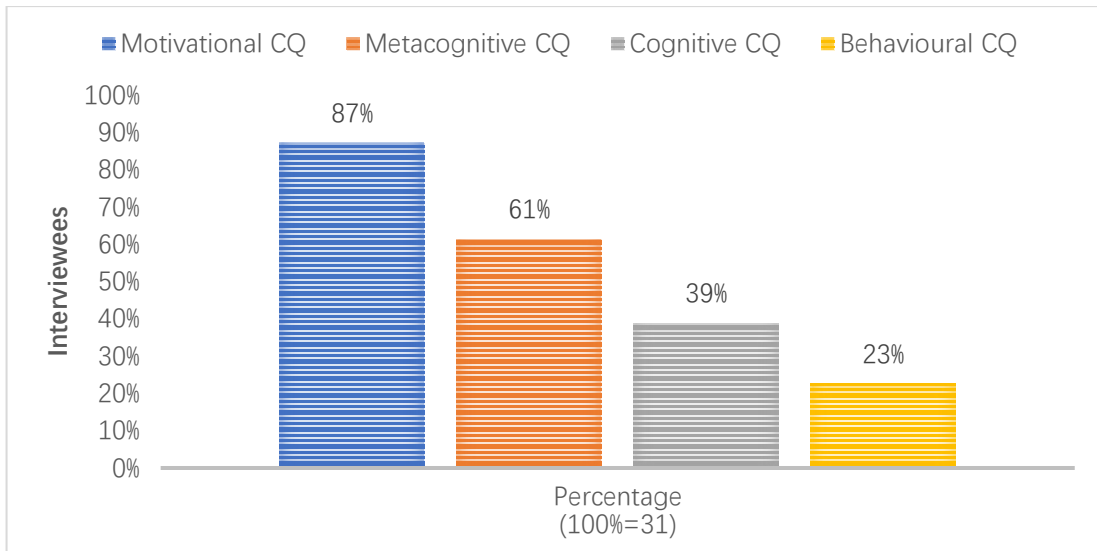


First Order themes	Second Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions
See the detailed references	Motivational CQ	Cultural intelligence
	Metacognitive CQ	
	Cognitive CQ	
	Behavioural CQ	
	Openness to experience	Personality traits
	Neuroticism	
	Agreeableness	
	Extraversion	
	Conscientiousness	
	Proactivity	
	Realism	
	Independence	
	Patience	
	Chinese mandarin proficiency	
	Chinese dialect proficiency	
	Interaction with HCNs	
	Difficulty in learning	
	Communication and payment	Attitude toward using local mobile Apps
	Translation	
	Travel	
	Shopping	
	Food and delivery	
	Internet access	
	Apartment searching	
	Previous international experience	Previous experience
	Previous experience in China	
	Family support	Family support and networks
	Family networks	
	Spillover effect	
	Chinese spouse/partner	Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner
Non-Chinese spouse/partner		
Actual time in China	Time	
Planned time in China		
Age upon expatriation	Age	
Age of exposure to multiple cultural		

**Table 3-2 Main Themes in Individual Dimension**

## Cultural Intelligence

This study identified that four dimensions of cultural intelligence, especially motivational CQ (27 out of 31) were important factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics (see Figure 3-4).



**Figure 3-4 Sub-factors of Cultural Intelligence**

The results are consistent with the views in the previous literature that cultural intelligence (Han *et al.*, 2022; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmailzadeh, 2017; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013), respectively, metacognitive CQ (Guðmundsdóttir, 2015; Ang *et al.*, 2007), cognitive CQ (Ang *et al.*, 2007), motivational CQ (Ang *et al.*, 2007; Chen, Dong and Portnoy, 2012; Chen *et al.*, 2010; Guðmundsdóttir, 2015; Jyoti and Kour, 2015; Schreuders-van den Bergh and Du Plessis, 2016; Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar, 2006) and behavioural CQ (Ang *et al.*, 2007) has a strong positive impact on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates.

## ***Motivational CQ***

### ***Cultural Intrinsic Motivation***

#### ***Willingness to Adjust***

Willingness to adjust, also called adjustment motivation, refers to a person's will or willingness to participate in and adapt to the host environment functionally, including

the internal quarrel between the self-command of individual behaviour and his or her resistance to behaviour (Kim, 2000).

Nevertheless, there is not much academic research on willingness to adjust, because it seems to be an implicit assumption in the cross-cultural adjustment literature that accepting a foreign task reveals a willingness to adjust to the international environment, which may not always be the case (Selmer, 2001d; Selmer, 2004).

In the cultural intelligence literature, willingness to adjust is embodied in one sub-dimension of motivational CQ - cultural intrinsic motivation. Cultural intrinsic motivation (the individual's inherent interest in other cultures) and cultural self-efficacy (the individual's belief in its ability to be effective in the context of cultural diversity) are collectively referred as "cross-cultural motivation" by some scholars (Ang *et al.*, 2007; Chen *et al.*, 2010). However, as all the cultural intelligence literature has done research on cross-cultural motivation regarding the cross-cultural intrinsic motivation and cross-cultural self-efficacy as a whole, the direct relationship between willingness to adjust of expatriate academics and their cross-cultural adjustment has rarely been studied, especially in a Chinese context.

The results are partially consistent with the view in the study that only for newcomers rather than long stayers, unwillingness to adjust influence some aspects of socio-cultural adjustment, but will not affect the psychological adjustment of expatriates (Selmer, 2004).

*[You must be] willing to mix around with the local. willingness to join the society, those like foreigners then trusting. Try to speak their words language, try to may try to be part of them and talk like them, wear like them. Attitude, willingness to try, try the food, willing to talk to the local, to get another local. <A3>*

*It's not really helping if you're not willing to adapt yourself, you can just live in a French way just in another country kind of like Shanghai, Shanghai, a lot of French people like*

*this, and never been to Shanghai, but I don't really want to go. Don't really want to like being a bubble. <B7>*

### ***Willingness to Interact with People from Different Cultures***

*I don't care. Honestly, it doesn't matter whether someone is local or just look at this is an interesting person. It's something to discuss with, can we? And then sometimes you can develop a relationship, friendship or whatever. <A11>*

*I love to meet international people who want to work international level. I have multiple friends of other cultures. I'm interested in other cultures. I love other design. I love other and interested in other histories. And art and design history are always similar, but so much different answers. Very nice for me to exchange ideas and to work internationally. <C4>*

### ***Genuine Interest***

*I think if you're genuinely interested in the place, it helps you to adapt because you start doing things in Chinese way in my home, for example. I don't wear shoes and I don't like people coming in with shoes on. I pick up local customs easily. I was using chopsticks for years and years and years before I came to China. So, I think if you want to if you want to adapt to the country that helps a willingness to learn into adapt, I think it helps. <A7>*

*I think you need to be interested in the culture. I think you interested in the people. I think that's important. The language and you need to be interested in the country, in the culture, in the people. I think you need to be interested in cultures and to have an understanding of different cultures. I think that's really important. <B4>*

### ***Self-efficacy***

*I think a little bit deep already in a cultivation. I eat Chinese food even I don't know all the Apps that my colleagues use because I speak Chinese so I use the same as the Chinese people. <A18>*

*I know the Chinese taste, because I know every culture every kind of you can say society have their own taste, their own way of judging things. So, for findings, grands and research things, I know what Chinese way is. So, I think I have recorded that, and I'm doing well so far, because my almost all applications were successful. <B5>*

### ***Metacognitive CQ***

*You need to have some understanding and sensitivity to different cultures. You need to realize Chinese way of doing things. You need to think from the different perspective. The Chinese perspective is different than my perspective. You need to have some sense about that, I think. In a way, you need to be able to change your way of doing things. <A11>*

*What I mean here by, for example, of respecting each other's philosophies. Give you a really good example. My wife's pregnant. I have to listen to all of this rubbish about being pregnant. In my mind, it's rubbish. About in the first month you get to lie down. You can't make move. It's ridiculous. But like an echo 16 times. It's not the first time I've seen a child, I know what happened. But I have to but I adapt to respecting something that you think is actually not sensible. <A12>*

## **Cognitive CQ**

*One of my cats is called 杨过 [a figure in Romance of the Three Kingdoms] and the other one is a white cat who should have been 小龙女, but it turns out he's a boy. So, he's called 赵子龙 [a figure in Romance of the Three Kingdoms] from 三国演义 [a novel, Romance of the Three Kingdoms]. I know a lot about China and I know a lot about Chinese culture and Chinese literature. I've read all the major literature and everything. <A7>*

*I know the Chinese taste, because I know every culture every kind of you can say society have their own taste, their own way of judging things. <B5>*

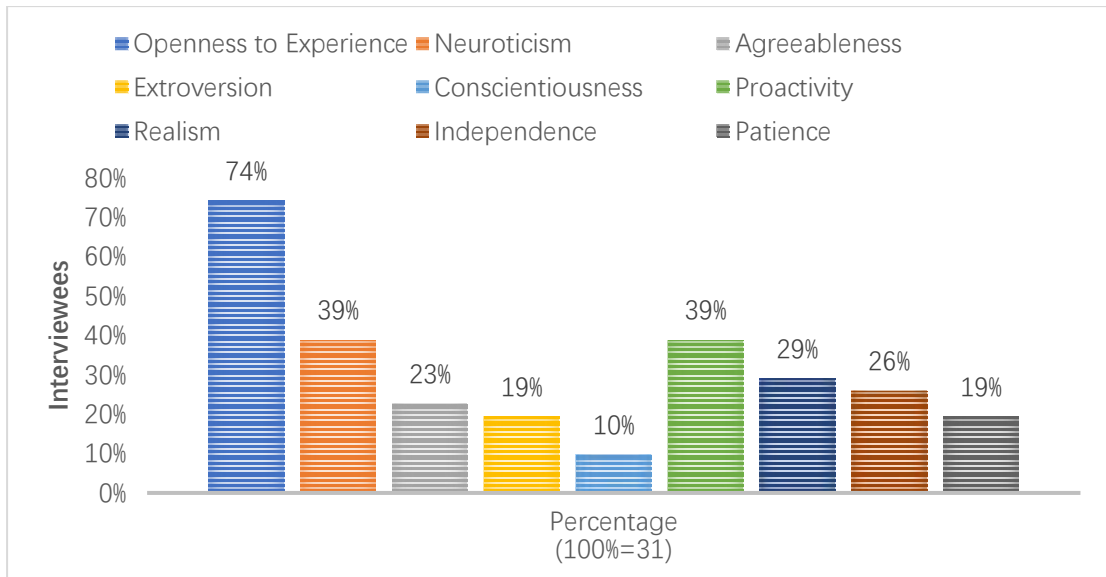
## **Behavioural CQ**

*As if you smile, they'll smile back. The first thing people should learn to say is 对不起 (I am sorry), 我的中文说得不好 [My Chinese is not good], if they say that, people would go, "No, don't worry". <A7>*

*So, I just like I give my passport and I ask if you need to help, you ask me. I can help you and if not, just relax stay on my phone just no need to hurry. I know it's always like this in China. They are for example bank hospital, if they don't know how to use passports every time. There. If you are lucky, you have one who knows we had a friend before, she knows how to do this. Always most of the time, I tell them they as, they asked me, I said this is my name, this is my number. And I go behind the computer and I do it for them. Usually it's like this, and it goes very fast. <B7>*

## **Personality Traits**

This study identified that personality traits of expatriate academics were one of the most crucial factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, among the sub-traits of which, the first five traits were categorized as the Big Five personality traits, and open to experience was the only one emphasized by more than half of the people (23 out of 31) (see Figure 3-5).



**Figure 3-5 Sub-factors of Personality Traits**

The results are consistent with the view in the previous study that Big Five personality traits play an important role in the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Han *et al.*, 2022). The details on the Big Five personality traits are as follows.

### ***Openness to Experience***

The most relevant sub-traits relating to Big Five personality traits identified were being open-minded, flexible and curious. The results are consistent with the views that openness to experience is positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Bruning, Sonpar and Wang, 2012; Caligiuri, 2000b), especially interaction adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012), general adjustment and work adjustment for American expatriates in Taiwan (Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005), and in a new culture, expatriates who are less judgmental, are less likely to evaluate others' behaviour, are more willing to try new things, and are easier to adjust to their tasks (Black, Gregersen and Mendenhall, 1992a), however, inconsistent with the view that openness of

experience is not one of the most important personality trait for cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999).

### ***Open Minded and Flexible***

*I can figure that stuff because I'm not particularly sort of one of the stereotype British expats, who are quite famously quite trying to mold their environment to them rather than the other way around. <A4>*

*I think my character trait of openness is quite good. I think I'm an open and very adaptive and not too judgmental person. I think that helps when you come to any foreign country, if you are open, not too judgmental and take people as they are and try to have a normal. <B1>*

### ***Curious***

*Curiosity about people's way of life. I think that always makes people more comfortable if you're genuinely interested and how their life is and what things are like in China for them, how's the school system here, like how do things work here and also curiosity about the language. <A16>*

*Curiosity. So, it's your personality. If you're not curious you cannot make it. <B6>*

### ***Neuroticism***

The most relevant sub-traits relating to neuroticism identified were being positive and stable in emotion. The results are consistent with the view of previous studies that emotional stability is positively correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment (Peltokorpi, 2008; Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999), especially general adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012). However, the correlation of another trait of being positive to the cross-cultural adjustment has not specifically been studied in the previous literature.

### ***Emotionally Stable***

*But even when I felt challenged and frustrated, I thought to myself, it's all part of the adventure. So, I had a lot of colleagues who became angry, very easily, very frustrated,*

*very irritated with people. And I just say, don't, this is a different country, different culture. Chinese people are just interested in you. They're not being hostile. It's just that they're interested. So, when you would walk down the street in those days, you would have parents and grandparents who would get their children. They would point you don't need many foreigners at that. There was no harm to it, but some of my colleagues got very angry about this. I just smile and say hello 中國人 [Chinese people] and it was fine. <A8>*

*I think I just take it as a job. I do not consider myself special or different from others. I think that's the best approach to, if I think it's in the best way to leave it as a normal job is just to take you as a normal person. And I think my skill just I don't know, maybe I take it easy. <C2>*

### ***Positive***

*Maybe I'm just a very good adapter who doesn't see too much of a problem with things. I think that's an overall thing. There are people who only see problems, and there are people who see solutions. If you're somebody who sees problems everywhere, then you should probably revise that. <B1>*

*If there are things that I don't like or I don't get through, I don't criticize them. It's the way they are. If there I say I like them and I think is the best way to live in a foreign country exactly. <C2>*

### ***Agreeableness***

The most relevant sub-traits relating to agreeableness identified were empathetic, being a good listener and easy-going. The results are consistent with the views in the previous studies that agreeableness is associated with all forms of cross-cultural adjustment (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999; Shaffer *et al.*, 2006), especially interaction adjustment for American expatriates in Taiwan (Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005), and cultural empathy is positively correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment (Han *et al.*, 2022; Peltokorpi, 2008; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmaeilzadeh, 2017), especially general adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012).

### ***Empathetic***

*They have the same problems that you have. They are scared as you are scared. They have the same fears, they have the same concerns, they can help you, they can understand you, you can understand them. <A9>*



*I think I have empathy, a lot of empathy. So, I can feel what the other person feeling. That is really good skill for teaching as well. You need to have empathy for groups, for feelings.* <C4>

### ***Being Good Listener***

*Listen, be a good listener. Because by listening, you comprehend people. Many expats come here with the idea that they must be the talker, and the Chinese must be the listener. But if you come here and, you then I to listen to Chinese people, but not because they know better than you, but because the Chinese people one thing that they like is to communicate with the foreigners, they like to know you.* <B2>

*It's listening, I would say is keep listening to those who know Chinese, because even after 5 years, I keep doing mistakes related to differences in culture. So, it's still maybe the source of trauma. I shouldn't say that shouldn't do that. I shouldn't have done that if these things are designed.* <B6>

### ***Easy-going***

*You have to be very easy-going.* <A10>

### ***Extraversion***

The most relevant sub-traits relating to extraversion identified were being sociable and assertive. The results are consistent with the views that extraversion is positively correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment (Bruning, Sonpar and Wang, 2012; Shaffer *et al.*, 2006), especially the general adjustment and interaction adjustment for American expatriates in Taiwan (Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005); sociability (Caligiuri, 2000b) is positively correlated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, especially the general and interaction adjustment for expatriate academics (Tsang, 2001); for the relationship with HCNs, extraversion is of great significance for expatriates to develop expressive and instrumental relations with HCNs (Chiu *et al.*, 2009), however, inconsistent with the view which denies the positive correlation between extraversion and the number of contacts with HCNs (Johnson *et al.*, 2003).

### ***Sociable***

*For me, why have I've been doing reasonably well because I'm someone who has been able to connect to a lot of people. And there had happened. They were interest. They would be happy to work with me sometimes in their role, but also sometimes like this is we can try to do something together. <A11>*

*I'm not shy. It's a little bit of the personality. I think if you're a shy person and fly to China, you can be lost. <C4>*

### ***Assertive***

*I think I am very assertive. I'm very straightforward. I can recognize I'm very good at readings. People's communication, for example, if someone is not comfortable with me, it doesn't matter which culture they are, I already know because I managed to read that kind of nonverbal communication. So, I think the fact that I am assertive and I can read nonverbal communication, and I can distinguish some elements, a cultural trait that helped me to adapt to this environment. <A9>*

### ***Conscientiousness***

Conscientiousness seemed not to be so relevant to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Only one trait, being persistent, was identified to be a relevant sub-trait relating to conscientiousness, which had not specifically studied in any previous literature. These results are basically consistent with the view that conscientiousness does not have a significant impact on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Shaffer et al., 2006), but inconsistent with the view that conscientiousness is the most important personality trait for expatriates cross-cultural adjustment (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999), especially when assessing the possibility of expatriates establishing a good relationship with HCNs (Ones and Viswesvaran, 1999).

### ***Persistent***

*Maybe being willing to keep telling people about my research. I just kept telling people what I was doing and, be persistent. <A7>*

*Persistence, or whatever, or because I know people who are fluent Chinese who are brilliant. Because I can't make it anymore. I've been up with love with something that I miss much my country, my family. So, your inner persistence. And what happens? I have to keep exploring. There is exploration. <B6>*

## ***Proactivity***

Apart from the Big Five personality traits, this study also identified that some other traits closely associated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, among which, the most relevant one was proactivity. The results are consistent with the rare literature arguing that personal initiative, especially social initiative (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmaeilzadeh, 2017) is closely related to successful cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Stroppa and Spieß, 2011).

*I spent a lot of time learning the cultural codes. I watched a lot of Chinese TV series, learn the expectations for the family expectations, how women or men are supposed to be lived with each other and how much I want to take in and how much I want to oppose, know the obligation to be married. <A18>*

*I have been very active trying to meet local people. For example, if I go, I am in a local group, we rescue dogs and like this being part of this kind of groups help me to make new friends and connect with people, because I have said a good cause. So, we have been able to connect because of this. I think kind I have been consciously and trying to make this connection. I think also because I have been very active. <A9>*

## ***Realism***

Realism was identified to be relevant to expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment. However, there is little previous literature which has studied the relationship between being realistic and cross-cultural adjustment, with one exception that argues realistic work preview is related to work adjustment, and realistic living condition preview is related to general adjustment (Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar, 2006).

*I think a realistic evaluation. There might be things that you really don't want, but how is this compensating, have a clear idea of why you're there. If you're only there to for the salary, then that's fine and don't get upset about other things, just live your own life*

*and do as good a job as you can be honest with yourself. If you're there for career, then focus on career. <A7>*

*I think you need to not be a perfectionist. I think you need sometimes to be to lower your maybe not lower your standards, but be realistic, be realistic. <B4>*

## ***Independence***

Independence was identified to be relevant to expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, which had not been studied by any previous literature.

*I mean a family might help you, might facilitate your integration, but it's always depended on yourself or your personal approach. <B2>*

*There is a saying that is the person who it's easier to help a person who helps himself. So, I tried to help myself first. <C2>*

## ***Patience***

Patience was identified to be relevant to expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, which had not been studied by any previous literature, neither.

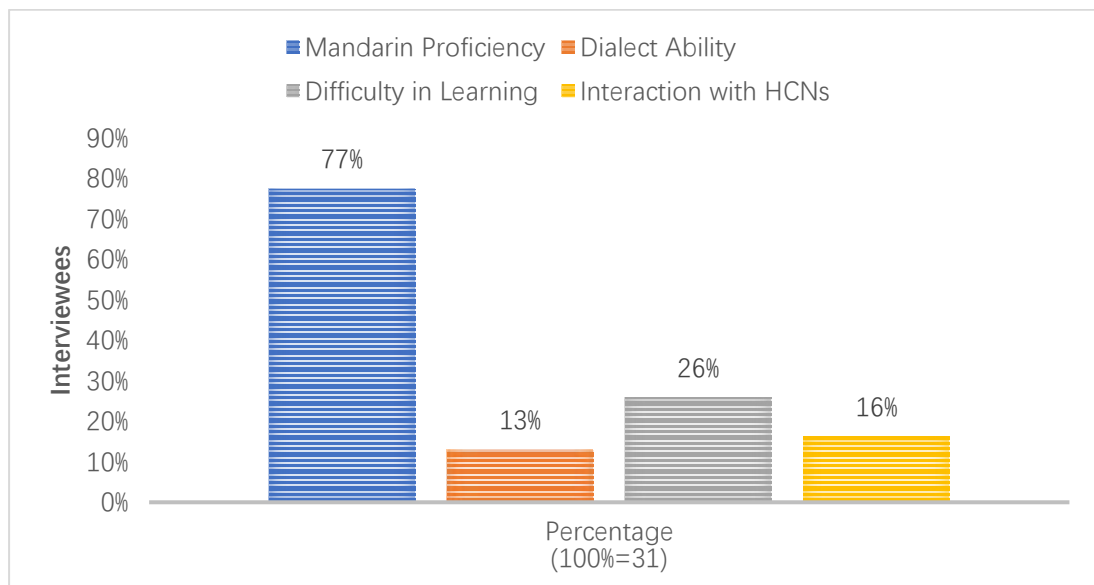
*I think very important is patience because things work differently. And so, they maybe work more slowly than you imagine. And you have to have patience where things are not going the way you want. Then you have to have patience. <A7>*

*I think patience and being able to accept. Because like I know, for example, when I go to a bank, always like so often they are as people be hunting like go faster and stuff, but we never have seen a passport before, for example people work in the bank. Or if I go to the hospital and I show them my passport and they are like, what's this? I got used to it now. I just tell them, do you mind if I go behind the computer and I help you to write and type it, so they say, okay, and we just go behind, I help them and now it's much better. But I think if I was losing my patience, it would be bad for me would be bad for her and, would be bad for everyone. <B7>*

## Chinese Proficiency

### *Chinese Mandarin Proficiency*

Chinese proficiency, especially Mandarin proficiency, was identified as another important factor affecting the cross-cultural adjustment expatriate academics by the majority of the participants (24 out of 31) (see Figure 3-6).



**Figure 3-6 Sub-factors of Chinese Proficiency**

The results show consistency with previous studies that the language proficiency of the host country can predict the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Nolan and Liang, 2022; Peltokorpi, 2008; Puck, Kittler and Wright, 2008; Salgado and Bastida, 2017; Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002), and in China, Chinese [Mandarin] proficiency can promote their socio-cultural adjustment (Selmer, 2006b; Tsang, 2001; Selmer and Lauring, 2015).

*We need to get a mobile account card or so we went to Wanda Plaza. I remember with a taxi to Wanda, which already was a little bit complicated. We arrived at Wanda. It's in 2009. We try to get to telecom shop already fairly difficult. We were in that shop yard. It was complex, we couldn't explain anything. So, the language problem was so huge. My goodness and we went back. Because they couldn't explain what we want. <A11>*

*If I go outside of campus, nobody speaks English. Therefore, I don't go outside of campus. So, when I go out, only with somebody, Chinese, my colleague or students accompany with me. It's the language barrier. <C1>*

## ***Chinese Dialect Proficiency***

Still several participants put special emphasis on the importance of Chinese dialect proficiency rather than Mandarin proficiency. However, what has been highlighted in the previous literature is Mandarin proficiency and little literature has attached any importance to the Chinese dialect proficiency of expatriates on their cross-cultural adjustment.

*One of the things that you realize is the role of local dialect. So, for example in Shanghai and there's something in Ningbo, then speaking local dialect shows that you're a local person, not from elsewhere in China, you are a foreigner is fairly obvious. But again, there's things like that. You realize more about that. When do people use 普通话 [Mandarin], when do they use Ningbo dialect, Shanghai dialect. Many of the taxi drivers will mostly speak Ningbo dialect. It's local dialect first. <A1>*

*My mother-in-law doesn't speak Mandarin, she speaks dialects, so it's not a very different dialect, but still sometimes I need to ask her to repeat several times. My sisters in law, they speak Mandarin Putonghua very with me. So, then it's no problem. But when they are within among the family members, they do speak their dialects. So, in that case, I have to I have to accept that I understand only maybe 25 or 30 %. And that's okay with me. When my husband is with me, with my French family, he doesn't speak a word of French, so it's even more challenging for me. It's like that, but I wish it was more fluent and that I could share more of myself. So, I'm quieter. Perhaps when I'm there with them than I'm usually because of the language. Expressing yourself is more challenging. <A18>*

## ***Interaction with HCNs***

A few participants highlighted the lack of Chinese language proficiency had become a serious obstacle to their communication and interaction with local Chinese people. These results are consistent with the views in the previous studies that the lack of language skills can become some obstacles to interaction development (Ljubica *et al.*,

2019), and the expatriates' host language level has multiple impacts on HCN - expatriate interaction, social network related work, and non work support and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Zhang and Harzing, 2016), especially the interaction adjustment (Selmer, 2006b).

*Sometimes I choose not to go out with them, not to interact. And the reason I choose not to interact is to make it easier for communication so that people don't try to have to think they have to speak English. I'm quite happy with people speaking Chinese around me. Just fine. I don't get upset. I don't think everybody should I'm a strange one, why should they speak my language. I should try theirs. But sometimes it's easier I choose not to. So, it makes my wife's life easier as well, because it is tiring speaking for two people sometimes. <A12>*

*I don't really know local people very well, partly because of the language barrier, I think, but how would I get to know some like a neighbour? So, they don't know me. I don't know them. I can't really ask them for support. The neighbours, I don't know them. I go to my apartment. I can't communicate with them unless I speak Chinese. The main issue is the language barrier, I think, but also how would I make friends with local Chinese people unless they spoke really good English. It's just very difficult. There are no opportunities for it because of the language barrier. <A16>*

### ***Difficulty in Learning***

Some participants emphasized that learning Chinese was more difficult than learning European languages. These results are inconsistent with the previous study of Selmer and Luring (2015) that expatriate academics have a comparative advantage when using difficult languages.

*You need to adapt to the fact the language difficulties, especially at a basic level just talking to people. The other day, I was at home. And I only had a shirt on because it was very hot and the man was banging at the door and I went to answer the door. And usually it was actually, well, he kept talking about strawberries. That's what I heard. And I thought I don't want to buy any strawberries. Why? And then finally, it's unusual because usually when people come to the door, I can understand enough to figure out what they need. And I can say to them are finally I had to get a colleague, a Chinese colleague who's a great friend and helps out to ask him what he wanted. He wasn't saying 草莓 [strawberry]. He was saying 交煤气 [please pay the gas bill]. I thought because usually it is a young man who comes around to do that and I know what he wants and even if I don't, he says I hear the word 气 [gas] and I said come in, but this guy's accent was so I just kept hearing strawberries. And that's after 14 years here. This is a problem because it's stressful all the time you're faced with stressful situations. <A7>*

*I think if I would start learning to speak Chinese, and already at sufficient level Chinese, but learning Chinese literacy and Chinese writing characters I think it's a difficult. A point, Chinese language is very, very difficult to what I see to speak. Chinese language is simple more or less like a sound, but grammar Chinese is simple. You don't have for past and present time. future time. We do not have for single plurals. So, it's a very simple, only some sounds unusual, but so it's more with but with the reading and writing, it's difficult. For people of my age, it's very difficult. It should be, I don't do for writing. <C1>*

### ***Basic Chinese Ability***

Some participants believed that it was enough for expatriate academics to have only basic Chinese language skills, which is consistent with the previous view (Zhang, Harzing and Fan, 2017) that only a certain understanding of the language of the host country is required.

*I think getting some language really, really helps. I may not be proficient in Chinese, but I can make myself understood and I can get around. I can ask the things even if I can't always understand the answers and I think that has been really important for me wherever I've been abroad. <B4>*

*I think you don't even need to speak Chinese unless you really want to like ask a question to the shop or you want to know something very specific. For example, now, I buy my water, buy milk, just like I type milk, I know how to write milk so, I type milk, I get the one I want, I buy and understand. For example, when I receive my 快递 [express], I never answer a phone. I don't really like to answer the phone because we just say your 快递 [express] is where. I get the message, so usually I don't answer the phone. So, I don't even need to speak to them. I just received a message. <B7>*

### ***Insignificance of Chinese Proficiency***

Although the vast majority of participants believed that Mandarin proficiency, dialect proficiency or only basic Chinese language proficiency were very important, a few participants still believed that Chinese language proficiency was not so important for their cross-cultural adjustment. These results are consistent with one previous study in the United Arab Emirates which does not support language skills (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013).



*I've long held a thesis that ignorance in terms of language can sometimes be beneficial. I don't know this is something that I've got. A sort of academic and opinions for this, but I find when I go back to the U.K., it becomes very frustrated with a lot of the background chatter that I hear. So, people complain in about just small things day to day life like in public areas. In China, I have none of that because I can switch off the language completely. <A4>*

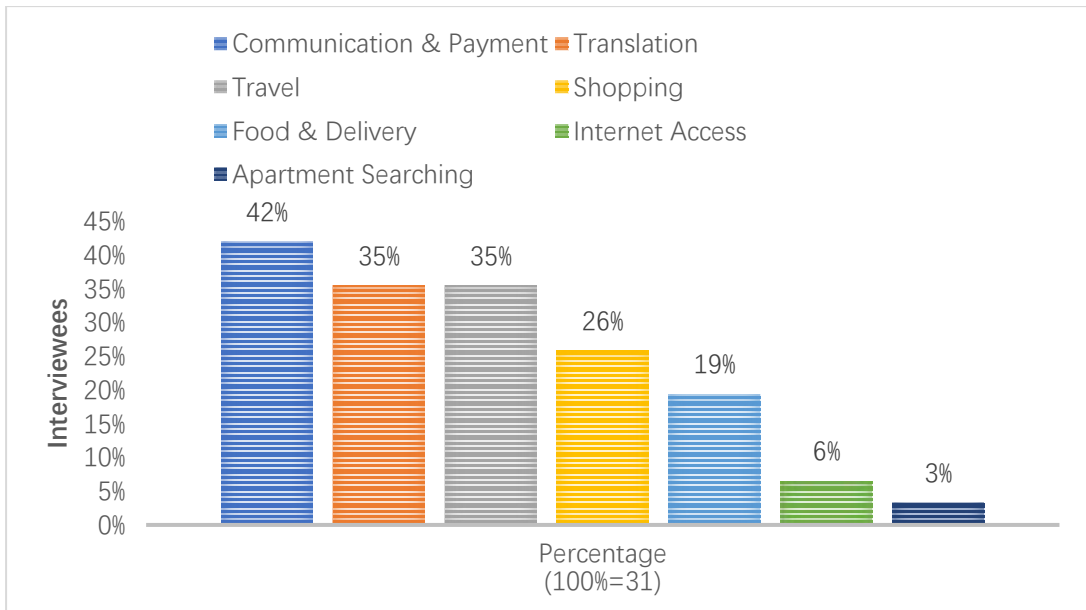
*No, for my case no. I know a lot of foreigners will speak very good Chinese and they feel uncomfortable in China. But I don't speak Chinese and I found myself at home in China. It's not a matter of language. My Chinese is very poor. Maybe because I don't speak Chinese. Maybe Chinese people much more friendly to me. Because they understand my difficulty, they try to make it easier. They are more helpful. They look at me say this foreigner poor guy doesn't speak Chinese, we should help him. <B2>*

## **Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps**

A very new and significant driving factor of cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics identified was expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps.

Attitude toward using mobile Apps is defined as *the degree to which users derive positive feelings from using given applications* (Hsu and Lin, 2016). The given application in this thesis refers to the local Chinese mobile Apps.

In this study, attitude toward using local mobile Apps was embodied in seven dimensions. Among them, three were highlighted by about one-third of the participants: communication and payment, such as WeChat and Alipay (13 out of 31); translation, such as WeChat and Baidu Translator (11 out of 31) and travel, such as Didi and Hello Bike (11 out of 31) (see Figure 3-7).



**Figure 3-7 Sub-factors of Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps**

Surprisingly, no previous research has identified the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates.

*In terms of these aspects, that is one of the easiest countries to get things done very quickly because everything goes through Apps here. <A15>*

*Like I said if you can adapt to use a phone, for example, in France we don't really use the phone. We don't pay by your phone or anything. In China, you [can't go] out [without using a phone] there. But I think maybe awareness or being able to use the technology and stuff like this could help. <B7>*

### ***Communication and Payment***

*This was in 2015, in China, as an expat, life was more difficult. There were no Apps, there was no WeChat pay or like less translation functions. It's now in 2022, a foreigner in 2015 and now, it's a completed world and it's not comparable in the way of opportunities you have. WeChat, 饿了么 [an App for takeaway delivery] like all these kinds of without somebody's help, you can do it by yourself and easy. <A15>*

*They're very convenient. These are often used, because I can know the English version of WeChat and Alipay. I can have an English language. So very easy to use. And everything is well connected. Very convenient. You get the subway to the airplane, buy grocery, go to the movie, just carry your phone. <B2>*

## **Translation**

*These online applications, with translators, so I use that to translate. If I need to say something or something is not very clear, I use the translation online from Baidu [a tool for translation]. So, I get things done and also and online. Just later we just said from any language to any language. So, I'm okay, I can get things done. <B2>*

*A translation App always helpful. So, I can join any conference in China. I was invited to several conferences and could listen to it because of my translation. That is really great. <C4>*

## **Travel**

*Other things in terms of adaptation, some things which were very problematic before are much easier, for example, Didi [an App for taxi] taxi and the ability to call. <A1>*

*To use the Hello Bike [an App for shared bike]. They're super useful. Being able to book train tickets online and those kinds of things, like things for mobility. Didi like those kinds of things. Being able to get yourself from one place to another place is much easier if you have this like digital familiarity with the everyday digital tools that Chinese people use. <A14>*

## **Shopping**

*Another thing with people getting used to being able to use things like 淘宝 [Taobao, an online shopping website], 京东 [Jing Dong, an online shopping website]. for example, on campus Jing Dong will deliver to your door of your apartment but Taobao doesn't. But Jing Dong does only when it's JD logistics. Whereas if it uses SF or another logistics company, it won't deliver to your door. if I want them delivered to my apartment, rather than to somewhere else, I will press that button JD logistics. And so, for something that's heavy, for other things, it doesn't really matter, and then I go to check JD. <A1>*

*Now because there is 淘宝 [Taobao, an online shopping website], I can do everything. It's now in 2022, a foreigner in 2015 and now, it's a completed world and it's not comparable in the way of opportunities you have to be ended. WeChat, 饿了么 [an App for takeaway delivery] like all these kinds of without somebody's help, you can do it by yourself and easy. <A15>*

## **Food and Delivery**

*I think for 2022 China being able to use all the Apps is, the main thing, if you can use 饿了么 [an App for takeaway delivery]. If you can use the local App, if you can use 货拉拉 [an App for delivery], if you can use all those things, then your life will be much easier and smoother and cheaper. <A14>*

*There are Apps, there is information out there for expats. If you feel that you don't have the food when you think I really want that food, you can get everything. I use Eat for Food and then all the other Apps for food delivery. <A20>*

### **Internet Access**

*That's important that people understand how to use VPN to access things, and that can include very routine things from their own country. <A1>*

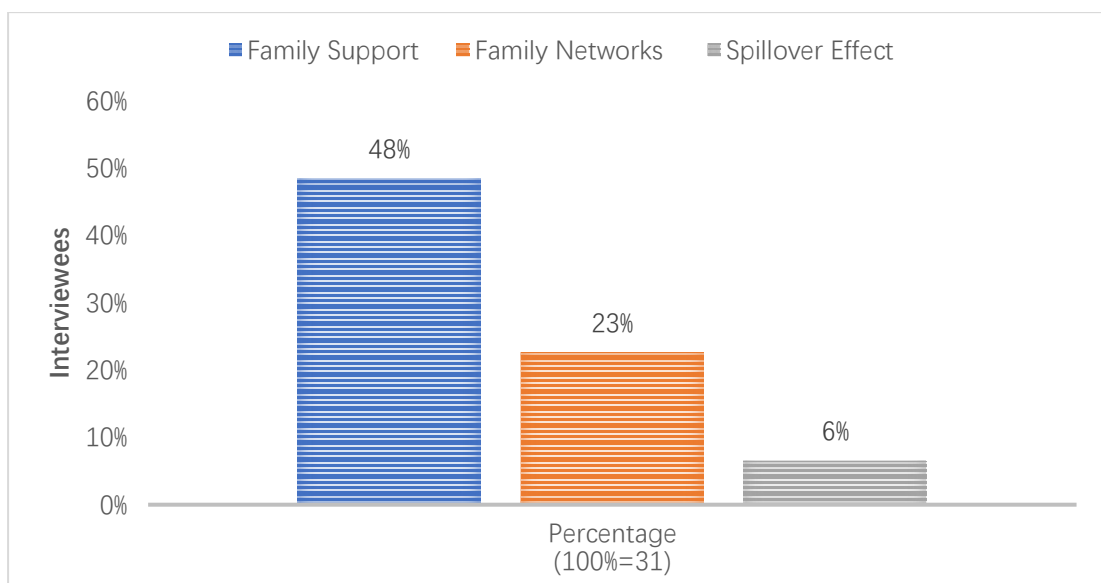
*I think kind of like all the Apps and the VPN that's a major issue. And constantly to communicate with my family because they don't have WeChat. There are not everybody's going to download WeChat. So, I constantly have to use VPN with What's Up. <A16>*

### **Apartment Renting**

*If you can rent an apartment on 链家 [an agent for housing leasing], if you can use all those things, then your life will be much easier and smoother and cheaper. <A14>*

### **Family Support and Network**

Family support and networks of expatriate academics was also identified as a very most important driving factor of cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Among the sub-factors of which, general family support was highlighted by about half of the participants (15 out of 31) (see Figure 3-8).



**Figure 3-8 Sub-factors of Family Support**

### ***Family Support***

Family support was confirmed to be a significant factor for cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. The results are consistent with the views that family support is positively associated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (see Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3), however, inconsistent with the view that family has nothing to do with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Kraimer, Wayne and Jaworski, 2001).

*He's an engineer. So, he can't work at the China, but he's a full-time nanny. And he's amazing. He likes China, likes the people, like the food, he likes the culture. It's just a pandemic that made this unstable. I would say we shouldn't just look at that. We should look at overall and he's happy. We live in a nice area. We live in Suzhou. So, we got to find places that makes us feel happy. I couldn't do without him. He's amazing. <A20>*

*They like living here. That's why they also support me and they happily come here. And that was also one of the decisions I prefer to work in China. Because my wife also think that China is better than Saudi Arabia to live. So, because she said that maybe too hot and too strict and not very open a society to live. So, I think she also supported me to come here because I was a little confused, because the salary there was very high, but there maybe not so suitable, the working environment and work cultures. So, I think my family supported me to settle here in China. <B5>*

### ***Family Networks***

In addition, this study found that expatriate academics with spouses or partners and children had more family networks in their lives and the social network naturally established by their spouses or partners and children was beneficial to their cross-cultural adjustment. These results are consistent with the view in the previous literature that spouses can actively support and promote their husbands' direct career and return opportunities by adopting social strategies like establishing social networks and alliances with people of influence through social activities such as dinner parties (Lauring and Selmer, 2010).

*My wife sometimes now also looks Chinese channels, by the way, seriously, but I don't. It's too complicated. my wife, especially as I said, she's developed a whole group of friends, which a lot of some from Ningbo, some from Taiwan, someone from other local people. <A11>*

*Since having a daughter that there's sort of a small network of parents within the school and the structures around that. So, there's been more interaction recently with the Chinese college. Chinese colleagues with children. <A4>*

## ***Spillover Effect***

In addition, the spillover effect and cross-cultural adjustment between expatriates and spouses (Takeuchi, Yun and Tesluk, 2002) was also confirmed.

*Because if we need support for something, it usually comes from \*\*\* through me to him. So, it's kind of uncomfortable for him. He feels a little bit like a child. He feels like he's dependent on me. It was awkward. So, another example is when we first came, we were told by the bank that we couldn't have a joint bank account, or that he couldn't have a bank account, because he doesn't earn any money. So, he was dependent on me to give him money, which made him very uncomfortable. He didn't have WeChat. So, he wasn't able to call a Didi for himself. So, he has WeChat, but without a bank account, it's not linked to that. You can't use Didi and you can't use online. purchasing or anything like that. So, he was really like a child. Finally, the bank, they changed the policy and we just got him a bank account recently. So now he can finally after so many years, but that was very hard for spouses. They're not really independent that dependent on the working member of the family to support them, which makes it very difficult for them. I'm not the only person who has an unhappy family member. We have a lot of faculties with family who are just not happy here. <A13>*

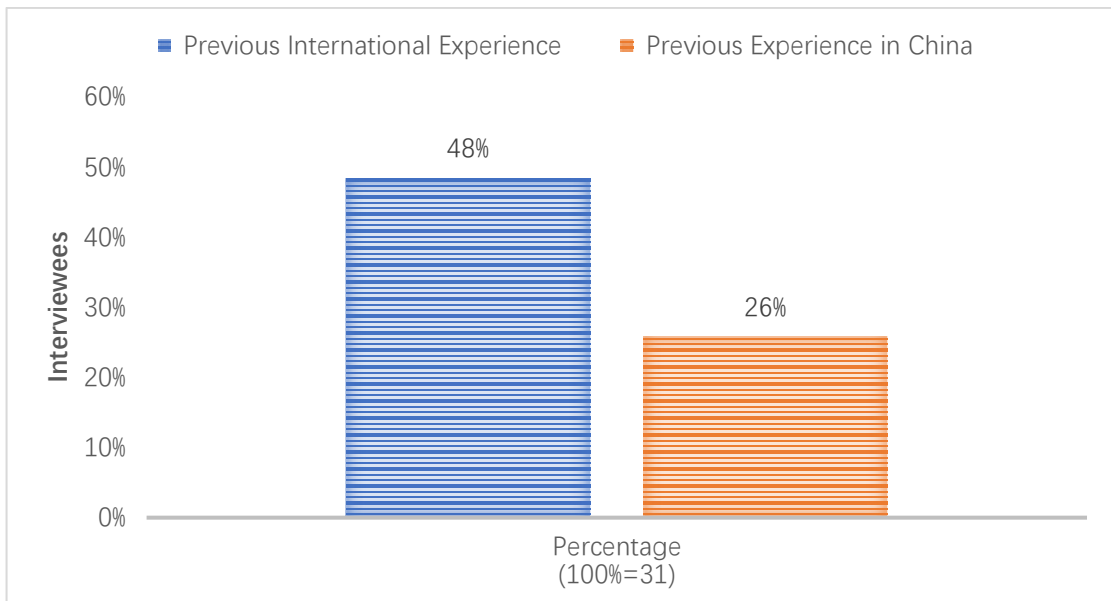
*I think if they find some work or something for spouse, I feel this is very good to adapt the culture because then you both are adapting toward the culture simultaneously. You and your spouse follow the. I have one German friend. He also thinks what troublesome is because his wife is already at home and she has nothing to do because in China, if you have not a visa, you cannot work or do business or teach or something. So, she has nothing to do all the day stay at home. That's the trouble both of them. So, I think that's also maybe the reason if they have some small work, not so much high salary, but some small work for his wife or some work. So, I think it can help them together to adapt the culture. <B5>*

## **Demographic Factors**

### ***Previous Experience***

Previous experience of expatriate academics was identified as a very important driving factor of cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Between the sub-factors of

which, previous international experience was highlighted by about half of the participants (15 out of 31). In this study, nearly 2/3 (20 out of 31) of the participants had previous work, educational and frequent travelling experience in China or in other countries (see Figure 3-9).



**Figure 3-9 Sub-factors of Previous Experience**

### ***Previous International Experience***

As for previous international experience, in terms of work experience, the results of this study are consistent with the view that previous international work experience is positively correlated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (see Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3), partially consistent with the view that previous Asian experience has a positive effect on work adjustment only for newly arrived expatriates, previous non-Asian work experience has no impact on the expatriates cross-cultural adjustment (Selmer, 2002b), however, contradictory with the view that there is no association between previous international experience and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Black and Gregersen, 1991b; Nolan and Liang, 2022; Shi and Franklin, 2014).

In terms of previous international living experience, the results are consistent with the views in the previous literature that there is a positive association between previous international living experience and cross-cultural adjustment (Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Tsang, 2001).

*Maybe having already adapted to Spain might have helped, because it's not just about learning the language, it's about changing your mindset. And I'll give you an example of that. We have a very famous sailor in Britain called Sir Francis Drake. I don't know if you've heard of him. In the time of Queen Elizabeth I in the 16th century, 17th century, Spain and Britain were at war. And Spain had a huge army and navy armada, lots of ships. They were going to invade Britain. And Sir Francis Drake was a very famous sailor and captain who used to go and fight with the Spanish ships and sink them and take their gold, which they were getting from the new world, as we call it from America. They were getting gold from there. So, for us, growing up as children's sir friends, Sir is a title. Sir Francis Drake is a famous hero, 英雄 [hero]. He's a very famous hero and very noble and everything. When I first went to Spain, I was teaching some children, and we had a textbook and it came up about the Spanish armada and things we were talking about Sir Francis. I was talking about sir Francis Drake, and they said, Sir Francis Drake, and I said, he was this famous hero, and they said, Drake, the pirate. You know what a pirate is? They said, you mean, Drake, the pirate? And I thought, Sir Francis Drake, he wasn't a pirate, but of course for the Spanish, he was, because he was sinking their ships and stealing their gold and taking it back to Britain. For different countries, different culture, different way of seeing. So, Francis Drake, for us, he was a hero. And for them, he was a pirate, and he was a pirate, and he was a hero. Just depends if you're British or Spanish. And that was a moment of illumination for me, because I thought, it's not just about learning a language and learning the cultures, about understanding how people see things in another country. They see history differently. I think living in Spain that taught me that you have to see things differently. It's not just learning the language. You have to be able to see the world through the eyes of a person who lives there. It's you have to learn how they see things and respect that. I think maybe having the two, having already seen different cultures or people who have travelled lived in different parts of the world find it a bit easier. Previous experience, I think is important. <A7>*

*The head of laboratory in USA was a Chinese. In our lab there were a lot of visitors from China, scientists. And also, because in the USA, lot of Chinese like your students, they are students and like postdocs, PhD students. And so, in a lab, let's say like 80 % of people are Chinese. Because I was working with a lot of Chinese people. I have an experience working with Chinese. So therefore, when I came here and no problem for me to work with Chinese. Especially for China, I had a very good experience working with Chinese people in USA. <C1>*

### ***Previous Experience in China***

In regard to previous experience in the host country, the results are consistent with the view that there is a positive association between previous experience in the host country and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Kim and Slocum, 2008), however,



inconsistent with the view that there is no association between the previous experience in the host country and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Caligiuri *et al.*, 1998b).

The focus of previous literature is on the association between previous international work experience and their cross-cultural adjustment. However, this study found that a big proportion of expatriate academics in China had previous educational experience in China before they became academics, either as exchanging students, PhDs or postdocs in Chinese universities, and many of them highlighted that such kind of experience, especially the experience as PhDs or postdocs, had big influence on their cross-cultural adjustment in China. Surprisingly, no previous literature has reported any research on the previous educational experience of expatriate academics in host country.

*I lived in China only from maximum 3 months before, but I visited China over many years. I lost counter the number even before I came to work here. I lost counter the number of times I travelled to China. So generally, you learn more about how things work in China through being here. So, I just said probably my level of awareness when coming was pretty high compared with most people. <A1>*

*I stayed in Shanghai for months at the Tongji university in 2015 as an invited scholar there. So, I already had a little bit an idea about how China functions, how university would look like, how things are here. So, from that respect, I think I already had quite a fitting idea about how it would look. And I also have friends in Hong Kong, whom I met before I was working in Zhuhai. So, I had already kind of an idea about the area how China would look like. <B1>*

### ***Chinese Nationality of Spouse/Partner***

Whether an expatriate academic had a Chinese spouse or partner was also found to be correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment.

In this study, among the married expatriate academics, more than half (13 out of 20) had Chinese spouses or partners. All of them said that they benefited from their ethnic Chinese spouses or partners, which greatly contributed to their cross-cultural adjustment in China. It seemed that, compared to those with Chinese spouses or partners, expatriate

academics with non Chinese spouses or partners might be slow in their cross-cultural adjustment.

The results are consistent with the previous study by Davies, Kraeh and Froese (2015), suggesting that expatriate academics who have spouses or partners of host country nationality adjust better in their cross-cultural adjustment than those who have spouses or partners of non host country nationality.

*Through my family ties like I don't, in that respect, I don't feel like an expat. In that sense I've never been that. I'm a guy married to a Chinese woman who works at a Chinese university. That was the term flex pat was coined for these kinds of expatriates who are more life centred in China than the classical expat who is not that much grounded in China as I am. because I'm married to a Chinese wife. So, I feel that I was more integrated into the in the Chinese common thing than the others were. personally, it helps a lot, or it's something that makes it easier to adapt. <B1>*

*Definitely, my wife was a big help, most from a kind of emotional perspective and but also sometimes there's things that if you're a Chinese just is here to do like, for example, here in Nanjing for the currency. I spent 1 hour checking online the policy of the local government for the currency. My wife called in 2 minutes. That was a big help. <C2>*

Additionally, the marital status of expatriate academics was identified which had some influence on their cross-cultural adjustment. Two participants highlighted that there was a tendency that next to those who had Chinese spouses or partners, expatriate academics who were single showed greater cross-cultural adjustment than those who had non Chinese spouses or partners. Surprisingly, in this study, a very big proportion of more than 1/3 (11 out 31) of the participants were single.

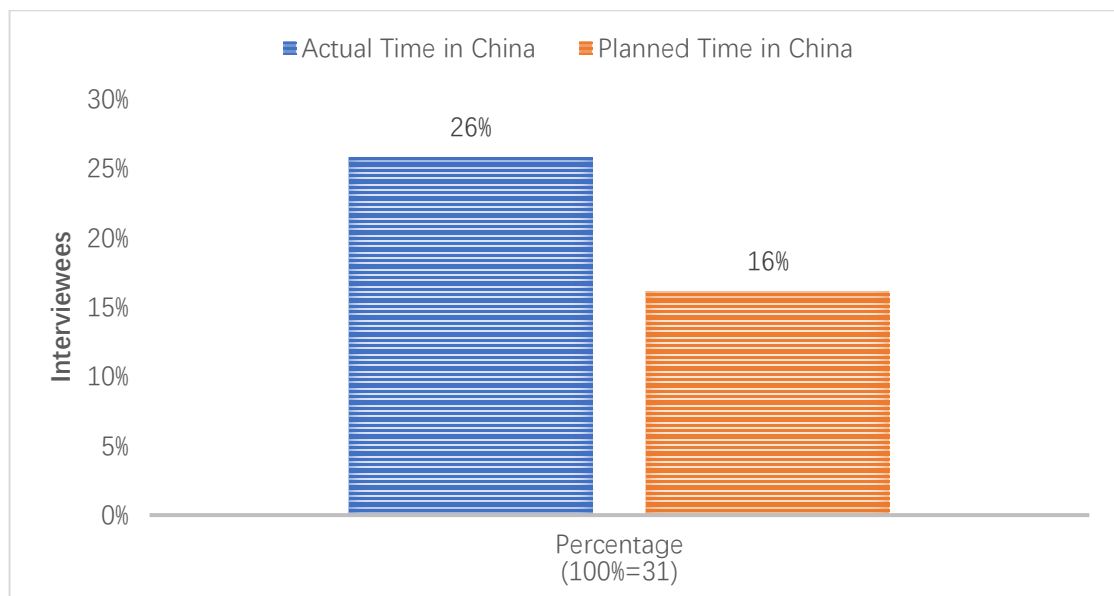
The results are inconsistent with the view that there is no statistically significant association between marital status and cross-cultural adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022), and contradictory with the view that married status of expatriates is positively related to cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Caligiuri, Joshi and Lazarova, 1999; Florkowski and Fogel, 1999; Selmer, 2001c; Thomas, 1998; Van Oudenhoven, Mol and Van der Zee, 2003).

*Sometimes people come with their partner and then there's less of a need perhaps to get involved with the culture. <A2>*

*Your status, if you have dependent status, that changes things along the way I would view things now, would be very differently to how I viewed it a few years ago. <A4>*

### ***Time in China***

Time of expatriate academics in China was also identified which had a direct relationship to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, although both sub-factors of which, planned time in China and actual time in China, were highlighted by only a few participants (see Figure 3-10).



**Figure 3-10 Sub-factors of Time in China**

### ***Actual Time in China***

For the actual time, the results are consistent with the views in the previous studies that time is positively associated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Lauring and Selmer, 2018; Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013; Selmer, 2002b). The results are partially consistent with the view that the differences of expatriate academics in cross-

cultural adjustment result from the interaction between spouse nationality and residence time in the host country (Davies, Kraeh and Froese, 2015), however, contradictory with the view that there is no or little impact of time on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022; Shi and Franklin, 2014).

*I have been lived in China for a long time, so actually like by now cross-cultural adaptation is not [a problem]. I'm more adapted than most people. Actually, I no longer need to adapt to, but it was something that I have needed to adapt to it earlier. <A14>*

*I believe I have stayed, I am living in China for a long time and I do really feel it is like a second home. <C2>*

### ***Planned Time in China***

Planned time in China was identified to have an impact on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, although it was highlighted by only a few participants. Nevertheless, all research on time in China only focuses on the actual time in China. For the planned time, no previous literature has ever drawn attention on its correlations to cross-cultural adjustment.

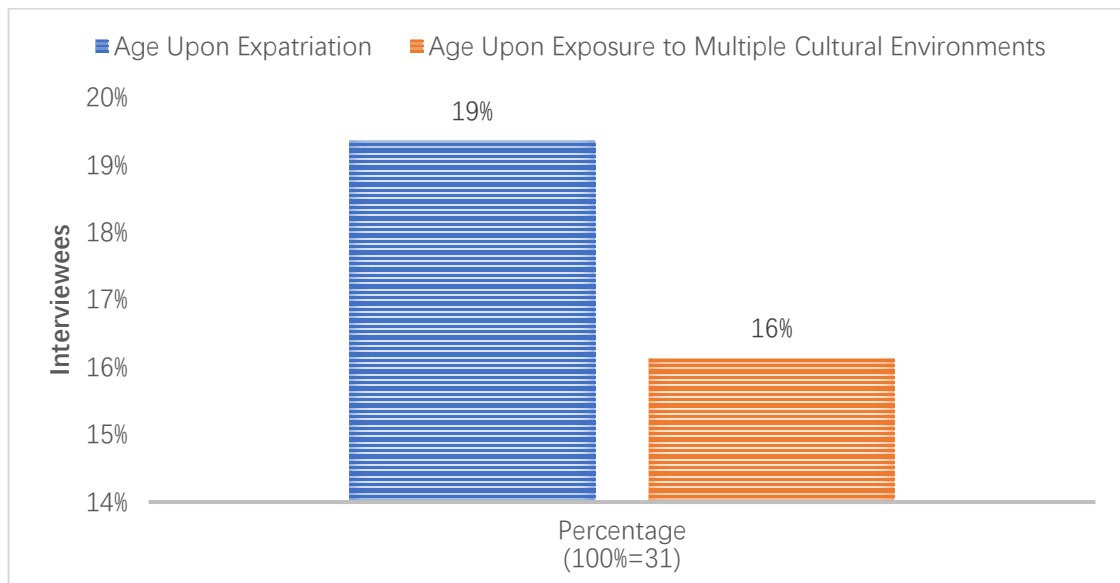
*A friend of mine, British guy marriage or Canadian woman, they don't have much interest in their children learning Chinese or learning Chinese culture and all that because they're probably not going to be here for more than 10, 15 years or 5, 10 years. So, getting them, their kids are similar age to mine, 3 years old, 5 years old. They've got two kids. They've got a 5-year plan maybe here. <A6>*

*My contract was for 3 years when I arrived and now, I'm in China for 4 years. I don't think that it's meaningful for me to study Chinese and to use. because I didn't expect that I will work here longer than three years so I didn't start to know Chinese. <C1>*

### ***Age***

Age was identified to have a crucial effect on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, although both sub-factors of which, age upon exposure to multiple cultural environments of expatriate academics and age upon expatriation of expatriate academics, were highlighted by only a few participants. In this study, nearly 1/3 (10 out of 31) of

the participants had experience to multiple cultural environments before the age of 25 (see Figure 3-11).



**Figure 3-11 Sub-factors of Age**

### ***Age upon Expatriation***

Apart from age upon exposure to multiple cultural environments, this study revealed that generally speaking, the younger age upon expatriation of expatriate academics, the better their cross-cultural adjustments were. The results are consistent with the view that younger expatriates are better adjusted than senior ones (Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao, 2000b), partially consistent with the view that age has a positive impact on work adjustment but a negative impact on general and interaction adjustment (Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen, 2003), however, conflict with the views that senior expatriates adjust better and quicker (Selmer and Lauring, 2013b; Wechtler, Koveshnikov and Dejoux, 2015), and there is no impact of age on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022; Parker and McEvoy, 1993).

*I was at a time a lot younger than most of the academics here, but especially when I was here at the beginning. It tended to attract a lot of older or more mature academics. They've already established a pattern of life and they have their expectations. I didn't have a wife at the time. I didn't have a child at the time. I think I will say being quite young in your academic career can help you adapt more quickly to the realities of working here. I think for me, that's been the biggest difference that I see between myself and older colleagues that come here. A lot of the older colleagues that have come here, have left in the time that I've been here. Their complaints, once I understand them, I don't experience. <A4>*

*I think because I am older, learning a language is more difficult. Because you don't remember things as easily as when you're in your 20s or 30s. My colleagues in the 20s and 30s seem to progress a lot faster. I think when you're if I'm in situations where I do have to use my Chinese a lot, I get tired very quickly and because it's hard work, speaking in the language, when you're not very proficient. But I think for younger people, it's not so tiring. Because they just that when you're younger, you need to be out and you need to be with people. When you get older, your kind of slow down a little bit. <B4>*

### ***Age upon Exposure to Multiple Cultural Environments***

As for the age upon exposure to multiple cultural environments, it has already been identified in the previous literature that when an individual is young, the international experience of living or studying abroad may have a greater impact on the formation of values, attitudes, beliefs and norms related to the individual (Takeuchi and Chen, 2013).

Surprisingly, the existing literature focuses on the exposure to multiple cultural environments of third-culture kids (TCKs), children who stay with their parents in another society (Cortrell and Useem, 2001) and adult third-culture kids (ATCKs), adults who have lived in a country that is different from the passport country of at least one parent for some time before the age of eighteen due to their parents' work (Pollock, Van Reken and Pollock, 2010).

However, this study found that in addition to the early exposure to a multicultural environment of TCK and ATCK before the age of 18 due to accompanying their parents, people's early exposure to a multicultural environment due to their study, work and other reasons, especially the early exposure to a multicultural environment due to their

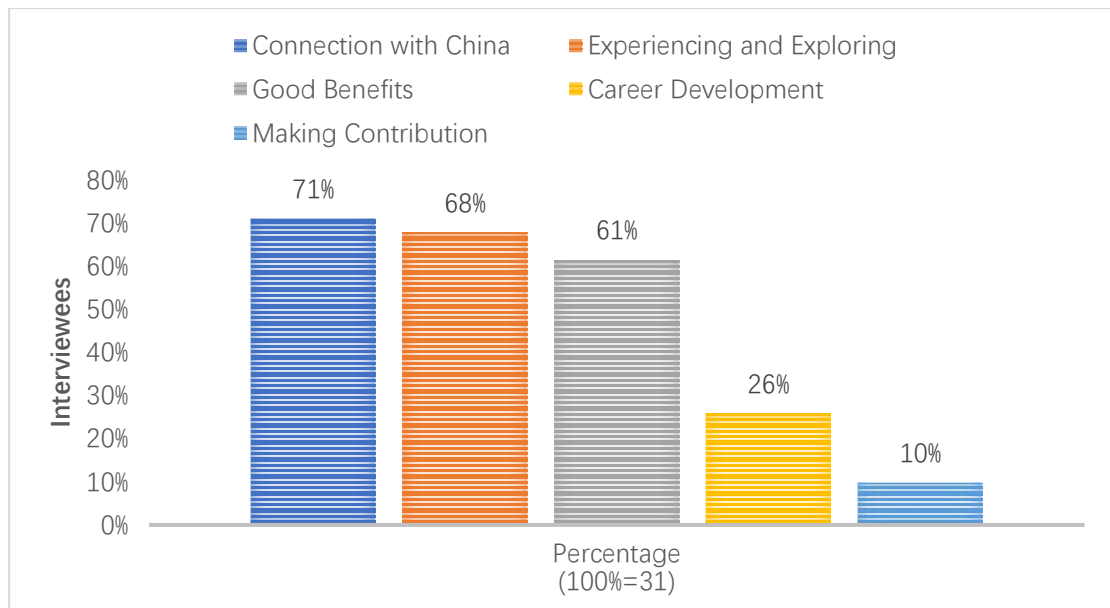
study even after the age of 18 and before 25, such as being as exchange students and doing PhD study in China, also had huge influence on their cross-cultural adjustment in their later expatriation. This had never been studied in the previous literature.

*I think it's less to do with living in lots of different countries, and I think it's more to do with the age you were when you started to live. When I moved to place from the U.K., I was 21, which is still very young. And then I continued for like 15, 20 years. And so, I think that it's got more to do because you're still growing at that age. So, I think if you start to be exposed to different kinds of work places, to different people, to different cultures, to different countries, to the challenges that come with it, then I think you start to change as a person. And that, for me, is the determinant as to whether or not somebody is going to be able to adapt. If somebody is 40, and they've never lived every anywhere internationally, it's unlikely, even if he is really an interesting person, they know about the world, and they travel to many places. They still won't stay. So, the determiner for me is always the age, like at what time and how long did you live there and what are you doing there. If you lived out before 25, because 25 is kind of when psychology says you kind of become fixed, more fixed as a person. That's around for the cut-off area. So, I want to know what was your early 20s and your teenage years like. <A10>*

*I want her to be in a Chinese preschool before school. I think it's really important to integrate. And they say, I'm different, you're different. It's nice. And she will be more to accept people later on in her life because supposed to this sort of culture, kids in different colours. Beautiful. <A20>*

## **Motivation for Expatriation**

In addition to identifying the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE, this study identified five different motivations for expatriation of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE. Among them, three motivations were highlighted by more than half of the participants: connection with China (22 out of 31), experiencing and exploring (21 out of 31), and good benefits (19 out of 31) (see Figure 3-12).



**Figure 3-12 Motivation for Expatriation**

Previous studies suggest two slightly different sets of five classic metaphors on the motivations of expatriate academics--explorers, refugees, mercenaries, architects, and missionaries (Richardson and McKenna, 2002; Richardson and McKenna, 2000; McKenna and Richardson, 2007), and adventure seekers, root seekers, redemption seekers, comfort seekers and nation builders (Chapmana *et al.*, 2014).

Among the five motivations identified in this study, four are consistent with the findings in previous literature. *Good benefits* is consistent with mercenaries, people who want to go abroad for reasons related to the maximization of remuneration, such as lifestyle, money, status and welfare (Richardson and McKenna, 2000), root seekers, who take advantage of job opportunities in the host country to maximize people with different interests (Chapmana *et al.*, 2014) and comfort seekers who feel that the host country has a more comfortable environment, where it is easier to live and raise a family than in their own country (Chapmana *et al.*, 2014). *Experiencing and exploring* is consistent with the metaphors identified in the previous literature: explorers, that is, adventurers



who want to experience a new professional and cultural environment (Richardson and McKenna, 2000), and adventure seekers, who pursue adventure in the host country (Chapmana *et al.*, 2014). *Career development* is consistent with architects, people who move to establish professional structure independent of the organisational structure (Richardson and McKenna, 2000). *Making contribution* is consistent with missionaries are suggested as another kind of expatriate. That is, people who wish doing good, improve others, add value, as well as spread knowledge, skills and progress to the world (McKenna and Richardson, 2007; Richardson and McKenna, 2002) and nation builders, usually people who have obtained advanced degrees and are committed to building a national higher education system in the host country (Chapmana *et al.*, 2014).

However, this study did not find anyone with one previous identified motivation, refugees, people who want to avoid personal problems, such as economic problems, divorce, climate, boring and unsatisfactory occupations, etc. (Richardson and McKenna, 2000), namely, redemption seekers, people who do not succeed in some aspects of life before and come to another country to seek opportunities and make a new start (Chapmana *et al.*, 2014).

Surprisingly, as one of the most important motivations for expatriation of expatriate academics, *connection with China* including: 1) people with a connection, 2) previous experience in China, and 3) Chinese spouse or partner, has never been studied as a separate motivation of expatriate academics in the previous literature, although some previous studies have revealed that some factors in relation to connection with China are important. Some examples are: family is the reason for expatriation of expatriate academics in northern Europe (Selmer and Lauring, 2011a), family plays a role in their decision for expatriation, at least partly because of their Korean spouse (Froese, 2012),

personal contact with local people such as spouse, family member or friends in Turkey is the secondary reason why academics choose to live and work in Turkey (Alpaslan Danisman, 2017), and academics have the experience of being as local students (Froese, 2012; Richardson and Wong, 2018).

In addition, this study also found that there seemed to be positive correlations between motivations of good benefits, experiencing and exploring, career development of expatriate academics and their cross-cultural adjustment.

The results show consistency with the view that explorer motivation is positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment (Vijayakumar and Cunningham, 2016), however, show no consistency with the view that mercenary motivation, explorer motivation, and architect motivation have no impact on expatriate academics' work adjustment (Selmer and Luring, 2013a), even contradict with the view that mercenary motivation is negatively associated with interaction and work cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (Vijayakumar and Cunningham, 2016).

## ***Connection with China***

### ***People with Connection***

*When I was a student in Germany, we had one Chinese guy. It was 1995. There were not many Chinese. He is now professor at the Beijing Jiao Tong and he and his wife and his family. I basically get exposed to China. And it was all just thought him to me like to how Chinese think, how they work and like what's the differences are. And he is the reason why I'm interested in China, right he and his family. <A15>*

*When I've been working in USA, we had a visitor scientist from China. I did with this visitor a very good scientific job. The visitor who was in the USA has been working in \*\*\* and continue working now. it's like it was the university has a trend to create to invite foreign experts for working, provide them the finding. So, it was like you see from university that they have a policy to invite foreign experts to establish. So that's why this invitation came to me, because this visitor she offered me. And so, I applied for the job at this university. <C1>*

## ***Previous Experience in China***

*When I was studying in \*\*\*, I got a part time to teach language here and then I stay for 14 years. I came here as a student. I came with a scholarship from the government. And after my scholarship finish, I just decided to kind of lived in China and experiments. Because I when I was studying here, I really like the country and the lives. when I saw I have a job opportunity here and that I could stay longer, I decided to stay. <A9>*

*I was traveling through for business for in 2014, I was making business in China. Some universities invited me to have a talk in front of students, and then I went back to Germany and they called me if I want to work there. 2 years later. And I said, why not I come over. And then this has started. <C4>*

## ***Chinese Spouse/Partner***

*Only after I met my wife, I decide, okay, let's go back to China on a more permanent basis. And because you see, maybe if I hadn't met my wife, I would never last so long in China, but even we're married and we buy house then. <B2>*

*By then I was already married with my wife, so I said I should apply with my wife in Shanghai, I think could a good idea to remain working here for the moment. <C2>*

## ***Good Benefits***

### ***International Reputation and Good Working Environment***

*I've always had, and just based on we have worked, and I always had this interest in international education, the ability to see different educational systems. I'm to participate in that. So that was always something I had in mind. But China specifically, I didn't really pick China. I picked \*\*\*. <A17>*

*But this salary was better than that in Saudi Arabia, but here is more flexible and more dynamic environment. <B5>*

### ***Job Opportunity***

*I didn't have any better opportunities in the U.K. at the time, so I just accepted the position here. <A6>*

*I need to be very honest because like that, jobs and academia are very difficult to find and especially in Europe. all trying to secure a decent life for myself in academia. <A15>*

## **Good Salary**

*I think one reason is the money, absolutely, the money at this institution is very high. It's very, very good, and the package is very good. So that's the primary reason that I came here. As I got older, I knew that I needed to make more money to make myself comfortable. It's in my old age. I knew the package here is very good. So, I came with the pay is very high. The how do you say the accommodation of things, the insurance and everything that was very, very good. I'm not going to take a position that's substantially lower than what I'm doing right now. <A10>*

*It was also, what decided me finally to go there was the package, my wage, the money was good and they paid for my accommodation, my flights, my insurances. So that package is very appealing. <A20>*

## **Children's Education**

*Because the educational level, education quality of Hangzhou for my son's education, it's quite the best country, but the best city to be educated in terms of educational level, my opinion, the best in China. <B2>*

## **Experiencing and Exploring**

*I think the world is a big place. I want to see as much as I can throughout my life. So that's the personal. To explore different things. <A15>*

*I need to learn something new. It was the main goal and I decided to stay here or just come here and try to learn something I came here and I just realized that here the way is totally different and I can learn something different, totally different. <B3>*

## **Career Development**

*My research is about China, so it's useful to be in China to do my research obviously. The job was very matching exactly what I wanted to do. So, it was a perfect position for me. <A18>*

*There was some offer for me that I had some opportunity in China to have my own lab. In USA, I didn't have my own lab. But here in China it was an opportunity, chance to get my own lab. And it was like an opportunity for building a new lab. And so, I was excited with the opportunity. And so, it was the reason how I arrived in China. <C1>*

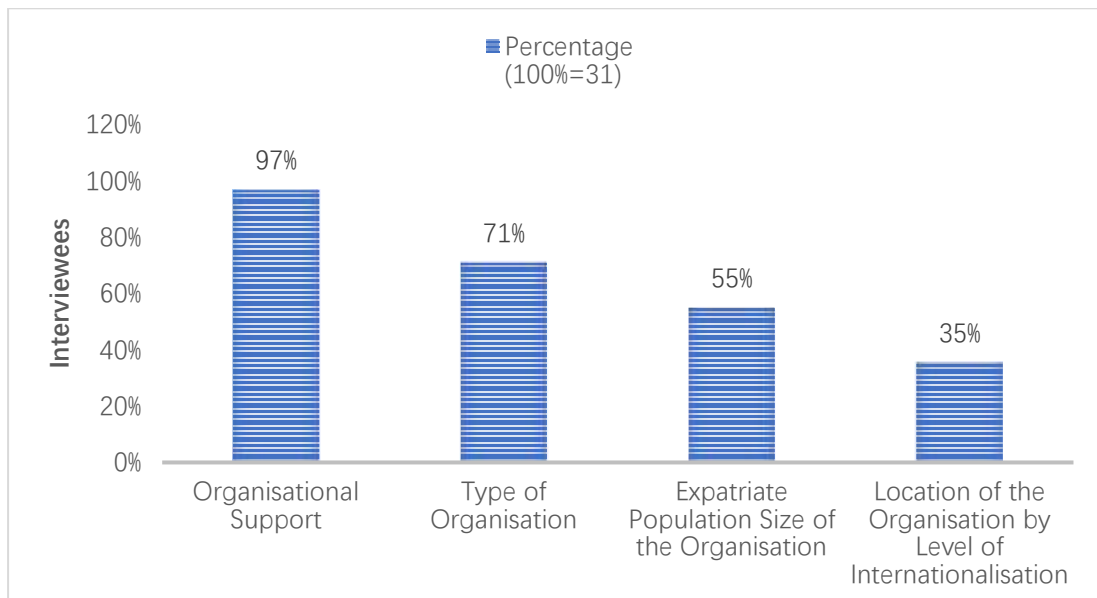
## **Making Contribution**

*It was just simply an exciting time and opportunity to be here right at the beginning of the very first Sino-foreign university in China. So, it was an opportunity to begin creating something shaping something. <A8>*

*And this was a start of university, so brand new and the ability to contribute to that.*  
<A17>

### 3.2.2 Organisational Dimension

In the organisational dimension, four factors were identified which had close relationships with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Among them, three factors were highlighted by more than half of the participants: organisational support (30 out of 31), type of organisation (22 out of 31), and expatriate population size of the organisation (17 out of 31) (see Figure 3-13).



**Figure 3-13 Main Factors in Organisational Dimension**

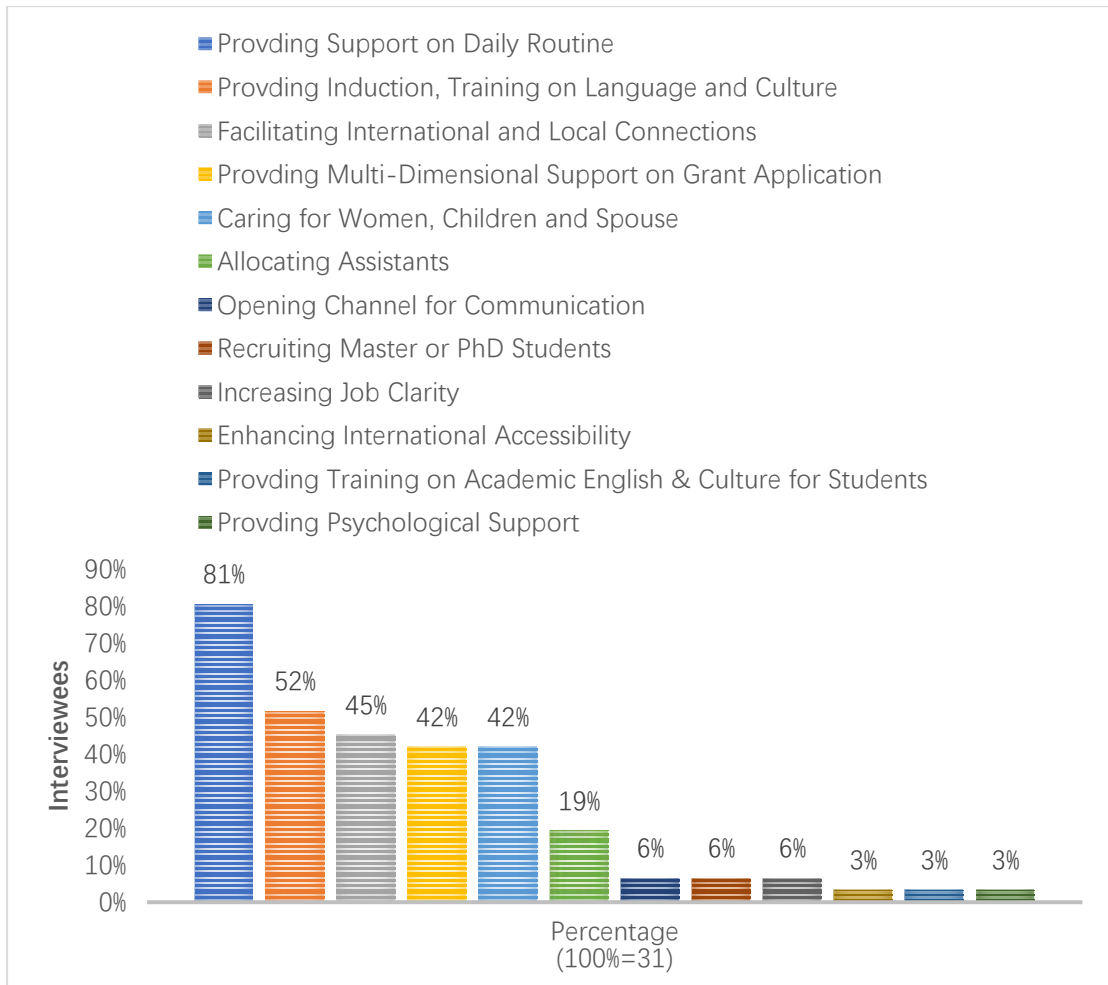
Based on the analysis technique (see 3.1.3), the following main themes in organisational dimension were identified (see Table 3-3).

<b>First Order themes</b>	<b>Second Order Themes</b>	<b>Aggregate Dimensions</b>
See the detailed references	Providing support for daily routine	Organisational support
	Providing induction, training on language and culture	
	Providing multi-dimensional support for grant applications	
	Caring for women, children and spouse	
	Facilitating international, local connections and each other	
	Allocating assistants	
	Opening channel for communication	
	Recruiting master or PhD students	
	Increasing of role clarity	
	Enhancing of international accessibility	
	Providing training on academic English and culture for students	
	Providing psychological support	
	International-centred university	
	China-centred institution or programme	
	Large expatriate population size	Expatriate population size of the organisation
	Small expatriate population size	
Internationalised region	Location of the organisation by level of internationalisation	
Less Internationalised Region		

**Table 3-3 Main Themes in Organisational Dimension**

## **Organisational Support**

This study identified that the support which expatriate academics got from their organisations was one of the most crucial factors affecting their cross-cultural adjustment. Among the sub-factors of which, the only two factors highlighted by more than half of the participants were: support for daily routine (25 out of 31) and induction, training on language and culture (16 out of 31) (see Figure 3-14).



**Figure 3-14 Sub-factors of Organisational Support**

The results are consistent with the views in the previous studies that perceived organisational support (POS) helps expatriates adjust to the new cultural environment and positively associated with expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (see Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).

*The difference for me is that the institution that I work for is what takes care of me. But if you come without an institution to take care of you, then you're probably going to adapt in a different way. You have to find your own accommodation, you have to find your own social circle, all of these things. So, I imagine that's probably the difference, but I don't think that's about business. I think that's just about if you have an institution to take care of you or not. <A10>*

*Surely an institutionalized supportive network is very important. I would say that's the most important thing is the network of support that is helpful, both for basically physical, practical things and for cultural issue sorts of having explanations on things. <A19>*

As for the specific types of support organisations provide for expatriates, the results are consistent with the ones identified previously as follows: support for daily routine, induction, training on language and culture, care for children and spouse, facilitation of international and local connections, recruitment of master or PhD students; and role clarity (see Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).

In addition, this study identified six other specific types of organisational support which had never been studied in the previous literature yet are of great importance for the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics - multi-dimensional support for grant applications, allocation of assistants, open channel for communication, enhancement of international accessibility, training on academic English and culture for students, and psychological support, among which multi-dimensional support for grant applications is highlighted by nearly half of the participants (13 out of 31).

### ***Providing Support for Daily Routine***

*One example is coming back to China, they organized our flights, organized quarantine. They were talking to people that we are in the quarantine, IT technology. When we arrived in China, they put us up into a hotel. They all paid for that. They helped us find an accommodation. They were or at all the steps, all the way until we found something. We liked, they help us again, because we didn't have the money. So, they helped us have money in advance to pay the rent. We're very lucky. The university said you're coming, this is the person we're going to take you around in Suzhou, so you're going to go and see some apartments. This is the supermarket. <A20>*

*In China, if any problem with the bank, I just make a call. Within half an hour. Some of the foreign office will come to the bank and solve the problem or even on the phone they solve the problem. <B2>*

### ***Providing Induction, Training on Language and Culture***

*Basically, they need help to learn how to use all the Apps. What is the important App? And how do you use them? That's what they need. That's immediate first thing. <A14>*



*I think one of the reasons that I have adapted so well is that I have in the past, I have had a lot of cultural training so that I understand different cultures, that I understand the different ways that people do things, and don't expect people to do things just the way that my cultured as. And I think that's really, really important. <B4>*

## ***Facilitating International and Local Connections***

*We're not linked into the research networks and the difficulty getting funding because of writing bits and began being connected to other people. You need people who are connected to the Chinese research system. They like to see international people on the bid, but it has to be, there also has to be Chinese people with a good reputation. I think if the university worked more on that, maybe we could start a project on that to integrate us more with local communities because they're interested in us. And lots of people want to learn English and lots of people want to know about this place during their way, during the open days and things like that, you meet lots of interesting people. I think the universities should try and integrate with the local community. <A7>*

*China is not in Europe and it's not in the United States. So, some like, for example, I usually join the ISA conference every year. And that's great because that's an opportunity to meet and getting again be in touch with other friends and colleagues that work in Europe or the United States or Australia. I think so it's good at this kind of opportunities, but sometimes I have the feeling of being kind of a bit outside. What is international academia. Sometimes so it's not really about research. It's more about contacts with the community. I think, even though I have to say before Covid, there were a lot of exchange and visiting programmes in \*\*\*. So actually, a lot of important scholars in my field, maybe it would come to \*\*\* for a week or 1 or 2 months. And so, I think that helped a lot because people come in. And being the only foreigner in my department, I always had a very good opportunity or good excuses to meet them. But now with Covid, geography is a problem. I think it feels like a big problem, maybe next year or hopefully in a few months. <C2>*

## ***Providing Multi-Dimensional Support for Grant Applications***

*If you're expecting an academic to write two grant proposals or grant applications a year, you're going to need to provide infrastructure around translation and translations not get PhD students to do. It's experienced academics, or native Chinese speakers with strong academic background. That's the core. Because there's no way a PhD student can translate to the same standard of expected Chinese languages as an experienced academic. But if we want to be competitive as foreigners in the plan for these proposals, all these applications, we need to have that level of Chinese. <A4>*

*For Chinese grants basically impossible basically, because the most important grants are not open to foreigners and the small ones. Basically, I've been told informally that I could apply, but they're still very competitive and basically being impossible for me to get it pretty much. And I would need probably even with the support of some other colleague to be in the same group and so on, it would still be pretty difficult if I was the person writing the grand. So, like I joined one grand proposal with a colleague some time ago, but she did everything. So, she got the money, she managed the project. I just had to do the research. I think there are two issues. One is everything is in Chinese. I can read, but writing a good research proposal in the correct Chinese is extremely difficult. It takes forever. I could spend the same amount of time doing something more valuable. So, one is language, definitely. It's a big barrier. I think there are also formal and informal barriers sometimes. And another thing is that all these grants are very policy oriented. <C2>*

## ***Caring for Women, Children and Spouse***

*The issue recruiting women is not so difficult, retaining them is difficult. This is very problematic, but the institution doesn't see it as an issue. And I say is an issue. It's a big issue. For example, if men come, they often come with a wife and a family. So, they will start work straight away and they will say, my wife is finding the apartment. My wife is buying everything we need for the apartment. My wife is setting everything up. But the woman who arrives at the same time, she has to do all of that herself. And also, she has to do everything herself and start work at the same time as well. Another issue is that men will generally come here, and they will find because China is a very patriarchal society, so they will immediately find a Chinese wife or a Chinese partner. That doesn't happen for women. That situation is much more unstable in this way, and they're much less likely to stay for a long time. So there needs to be incentives for female members of staff to stay. <A10>*

*If you are a couple of two expats in China with a child, I think you would find it more much more of a challenge to find the right school for your child, because you would probably end up with our child can only go to a private international school, because maybe you cannot communicate with the teachers in the Chinese schools so well and you don't have any understanding of how Chinese schools actually work. And obviously you also don't have the first-hand experience in the Chinese school system, which a little bit like that universities also are different than western school system. So that would be quite a challenge. I think that's also kind of a limited. I guess that may be the point for many expats to decide they go back to our home country. <B1>*

## ***Allocating Assistants***

*Because I don't read Chinese, I use more research assistance to find some of the data that I need in my research. Which and it's easy to find research assistance, and they're really good at what they do. So, I think that's one big difference. Like previously in Malaysia or in Thailand, I would find it myself. But here, I need research assistance to do it, which is fine. <A10>*

*I need and we also have that assistance in class. If there's a language problem with students, it helps if there's an if there's an assistant in class who helps to with translation. <B1>*

## ***Opening Channel for Communication***

*I think the one very small reasonable proposal is to open communication channels that allow staff to be open and propose ideas, talk about their concerns and raise our concerns. So, they feel more valued. <A9>*

*The thing I would suggest is to sit up, at least to create really atmosphere of discussing. So far, I cannot offer things like that, because first, we need to sit up and to discuss. There's no space for that. <B6>*

## ***Recruiting Master or PhD Students***

*I don't have any PhD student yet. Get PhD students. <A3>*

*I ask to give me some master students. So, I think it will help me to do, because actually I feel a little problem during my first few weeks of because I have to do many things. Some teachers suggested me you apply for a master student. The student can help you in doing many things and you will know. Because many things I don't know, and I also apply and they will give me a master student this year so that I think this was I needed a student who can as this to me and also, I can supervise him. So, this was the suggestion and I apply and they approve it. <B5>*

## ***Increasing Role Clarity***

*I suffered from lack of clarity sometimes about what I'm supposed to do, which is so I think that's made me less efficient. I'm more efficient when I know what I'm doing. <A13>*

*it would be a more attractive department if everything was clear what to do. Sometimes students, because I'm a foreign teacher. So, every year there is some foreign students, maybe they do not take my course, but if they reach out to me asking, what should I do with this? How should I contact my advisor and so on? Just because they see I'm foreigners. So maybe I know and a lot of time, I think these are small questions that there is an answer in the website or in the administration and so on. But my students do not know how to find it or there's some communication problem. <C2>*

## ***Enhancing International Accessibility***

*For example, at the beginning of Covid, \*\*\* had a Zoom account, and then they decided not use it anymore to use Tencent. That's quite uncomfortable and quite inconvenient, because if you want to invite people from abroad to keep, for example, an online talk and so on, it's always very annoying to find other ways to use Zoom and its very small things. I'm fully aware these are small things. But small plus more, plus more, plus more. Sometimes you just have to accept. Sometimes even complain about them with like administration. They know that it's a system that works well in China with Chinese. But when it comes to interact with anything that is foreigner, there are this kind of small inconsistencies that it's really up to the person in between like me or others to figure out how to make the match. The administrative is not yet very well designed to interact with foreign people. <C2>*

## ***Providing Training on Academic English and Culture for Students***

*Even though we have fairly high entry requirements for IELTS and English language requirements, the actual academic English writing is poor. I spend probably weeks months even to rewrite it. Email etiquette. So, this goes back to English writing as well, the way that students speak to teachers. It's rude. They don't know to articulate themselves how to phrase things correctly. I'm discussing recently now in terms of provided language support to postgraduate students, that would be a real time saver. <A4>*

## ***Providing Psychological Support***

*Psychological support can really helpful from professionals like help from because there are many struggles you face at different steps. And I think having a professional mental health support can be very helpful, to disentangle these different things. <A18>*

## **Type of Organisation**

The type of organisation was a factor identified to have correlation with cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.

Many participants in this study believed that in the international-centred universities, they had few needs to adjust but basically only in their work. At the same time, they also claimed that they had few opportunities to practise their Chinese and interact with local Chinese people in their daily life due to the comparatively bigger international

community around them, which was not helpful for improving their Chinese. Surprisingly, many participants also said that in the China-centred institutions or programmes, they could fully communicate in English in their work because of the high English proficiency of their Chinese colleagues. However, they believed that they had lots of opportunities to practise Chinese and interact with local Chinese people in their daily life due to the comparatively smaller international community around them. In addition, both participants from international-centred universities and from China-centred institutions or programmes believed that there was a tendency for expatriate academics to group together and interact within the group.

The results are consistent with the view that expatriate academics in China-centred institutions or programmes have more opportunities to use Chinese and interact with local Chinese people than those in international-centred universities, and basically consistent with the view that expatriate academics in local organisations in mainland China and Taiwan have better general and interaction adjustment than those in foreign organisations (Selmer *et al.*, 2015).

### ***International-centred University***

*Language is only a problem outside the university. That's the problem for our living. In the university. Everybody speaks English, very good language. So, language is never a problem just outside. I don't need to speak Chinese to do my work. <A13>*

*But I would say there is actually a fairly little adaptation that's required of us. I think, in the end, the university is much an environment where I feel very comfortable. It's very familiar to me. And I like to do fairly little adaptation. <A16>*

### ***China-centred Institution or Programme***

*You're working as an expat at a university, it is different because you meet more Chinese people directly like you have your students and you have your staff there, you're much more in the such Chinese society. <B1>*

*Everyone in university speaks English, so no problem. When there are many foreigners, they will do a German group or will do an English group. I had this experience in Zhuhai.*  
<C4>

## **Expatriate Population Size of the Organisation**

The expatriate population size of the organisation was identified to have correlation with cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, which had never been studied in any previous literature. This study found that even in universities with large number of expatriate academics, still a few people tried to avoid interaction with other expatriate academics and deliberately interact with local Chinese people. On the contrary, in China-centred institutions and programmes with very few expatriate academics, some expatriate academics still would like to interact with other expatriate academics rather than local Chinese people.

*Being in \*\*\* University, there are more fixed expatriates, so they tend to mix more together within the university.* <A12>

*The university in Dalian was smaller like there were fewer expats. So basically, there was less of a core group of people who we spend time together with. They have been simply because of the size. The one in Dalian also was a British university but just one little faculty so not the whole thing. So that was felt very Chinese and obviously lots of Chinese staff professor is everywhere, whereas here lots of the international foreigners.*  
<A2>

## **Location of the Organisation by Level of Internationalisation**

This study revealed that location of the organisation by level of internationalisation had an impact on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. It seemed that the more internationalised the region in which a city was located, the more beneficial it was for the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Shanghai, the city located in the most internationalised region in eastern China, was considered as the easiest city for the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. The results are consistent with

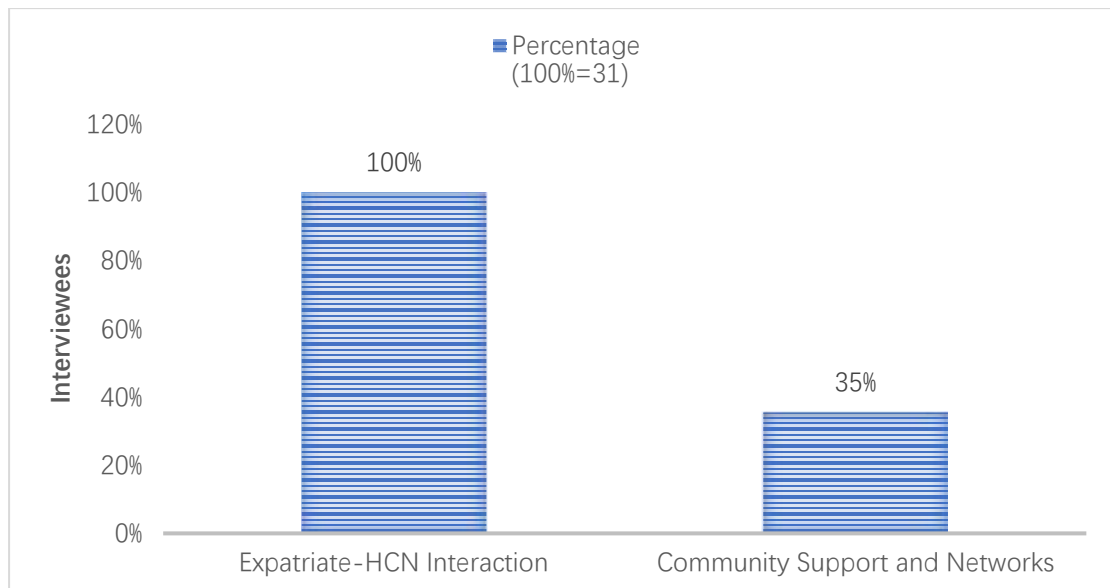
the view in the previous study that specific city location has some effect on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013). In addition, the results are similar but also different from the previous study which focuses on the population size of location arguing that the population size of different locations in China is positively correlated with the general adjustment and work adjustment of Western business expatriates, however, there is no correlation between the population size of the location and interaction adjustment with HCNs (Selmer, 2005c).

*However, it took me a long time to settle in Suzhou, not because I was in China, but because I was in Suzhou. I think different because I spend most of my life living in London, London is smaller than Suzhou, London as a metropolitan, a collective whole, is a global city. It's one of three possibly global cities in the world. Suzhou is a village. It's just a very big village in from comparison. The thought process in Suzhou influenced maybe Suzhou industrial park, 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock, nobody is on the streets. In London, people on the streets 24 hours. The shots wrote 24 hours, so I took me a long time to get used to changing from living in a global city to a non global city. And it took me a long time to get used to living in a multicultural environment to a different multicultural environment. <A12>*

*You can just live in a French way just in another country kind of like Shanghai, Shanghai, a lot of French people like this. <B7>*

### **3.2.3 Social Dimension**

In the social dimension, two factors were identified which had close relationships with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Expatriate-HCN interaction was highlighted by all participants (31 out of 31) (see Figure 3-15).



**Figure 3-15 Main Factors in Social Dimension**

Based on the analysis technique (see 3.1.3), the following main themes in social dimension are identified (see Table 3-4).

First Order themes	Second Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions
See the detailed references	Expatriates' attitude and behaviour toward HCNs	Expatriate-HCN interaction
	HCNs' attitude and behaviour toward expatriates	
	Providing information support	Community support and networks
	Providing social companionship	
	Providing emotional support	
	Providing instrumental support	

**Table 3-4 Main Themes in Social Dimension**

## Expatriate-HCN Interaction

Expatriate-HCN interaction was identified to be a major factor driving the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. The results are consistent with the view that successful interaction between HCNs and expatriates has important strategic significance to cross-cultural adjustment (Van Bakel, 2019; Kang and Shen, 2018; Wang and Varma, 2018; Chiu *et al.*, 2009; Black, 1988; Johnson *et al.*, 2003; Jannesari



and Sullivan, 2021; Van Bakel, Gerritsen and Van Oudenhoven, 2016), however, contradictory with the views that cross-cultural adjustment does not necessarily need in-depth communication or participation with the host society (Siljanen and Lämsä, 2009), the relationship with HCNs might not be so important in more international contexts (Langinier and Froehlicher, 2018), the social relationship with other expatriates rather than HCNs provides greater social support (Johnson et al., 2003), and establishing a better network with HCN colleagues is even negatively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment (Bruning, Sonpar and Wang, 2012).

*Having local friends, having local friends, Chinese friends. I've realized after many years that it was very good to have foreign friends, but my foreign friends come and go. Foreign friends, they stay here for 1 year, 2 years, and then they leave, they move on to another country. My Chinese friends, Ningbonese, they don't go anywhere, they stay here. So, I think I decided to do my network of friends, local friends, and they have been my friends for more than 12 years, really. And that helped me a lot to be stable. Because I'm there how to say, aunty, now all of them have kids. I'm part of the family. I'm the aunt of the kids that helped me to have a family life. I think that also help me. <A9>*

*I think with Chinese people will help you adapt better, but again you need the language more, but I think that helps you to settle somewhere. <B4>*

### ***Expatriate Academics' Attitude and Behaviour Toward HCNs***

From the perspective of expatriate academics, first, the willingness to interact with Chinese HCNs was identified to contribute greatest to their cross-cultural adjustment. The results show consistency with the views in the previous studies that acculturation attitudes of expatriates (Aycaan, 1997b) are correlated with their cross-cultural adjustment. Second, the willingness of expatriate academics to ask for help from HCNs was identified to be another important factor of their cross-cultural adjustment. The results show consistency with the views in the previous studies that expatriates who are willing to seek support from HCNs benefit more from it and have better cross-cultural adjustment (Van Bakel, 2019; Mahajan and Toh, 2014; Farh *et al.*, 2010). Third,

ethnocentrism of expatriate academics was identified to have an influence on their cross-cultural adjustment. The results show consistency with views in the previous studies that perceived ethnocentrism has a negative impact on work adjustment (Florkowski and Fogel, 1999) and subordinate ethnocentrism (Templer, 2010) is also considered to be a predictor of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment.

### ***Willingness to Interact with HCNs***

*Because if you live in a country, then I would expect to connect with local people, not live in an international, let's say, any like an international bubble. <A1>*

*I came to China, it's not to be in France. I don't want to stay too much with French people. If I came to China is because I want to enjoy the kind of like the culture discover stuff. Having too many people of one group is maybe kind of a handicap, maybe. <B7>*

### ***Willingness to Ask for Support from HCNs***

*I think also it's a kind of resourcefulness to know how to ask for help and where to get help. And you have be willing, have to realize that you will be able to do everything yourself and you have to be willing to ask for help. <A16>*

*If I'm surprised with something, I asked my colleague to explain. If I do it, for example, something not good in China what I'm doing, this colleague tells me that in China, it's not Okay. Because Chinese culture is different. <C1>*

### ***Low Ethnocentrism***

*Whenever go to the country, I don't learn into a country with some what we call it self-consciousness of a western person. Don't come to China, speaking your culture is superior, come to China, use your culture value to better understand the Chinese value. <B2>*

*Recognizing that your own culture is not the one and only best one. That's what I find. <C3>*

### ***HCNs' Attitude and Behaviour Toward Expatriate Academics***

From the perspective of HCNs, first, HCNs' willingness to offer support was identified to be one of the most crucial factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate

academics. The results are consistent with the views in the previous studies that the attitude and behaviour of HCNs toward expatriates are reported to be significantly positively correlated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (see Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3). Second, HCNs' categorization of ingroup or outgroup was identified to be another factor relating to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. However, no previous literature has studied the direct relationship between HCNs' categorization of ingroup or outgroup and the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.

### ***HCNs' Willingness to Offer Support and HCNs' Support and Networks***

*Now, with Covid, we were kind of in lock down again, because my compound where I live was close to one case. So, we were locked of, you were not, and they put the fences around, so we cannot leave. All the people we live in the compound, we all know each other, because we have been neighbours for a long time. So, we all organized each other. We say, okay, so we cannot go out. They kind of create some groups to be at the entrance. Other people helping people to go to take their pieces, other people to get the codes to get the foods. We had the WeChat group. So, who's going to do that test? What food you have? I have this food, we have food, share information. Then because I have two dogs, I have another group, the pet owners. What happens if one of us go to quarantine? What we do, we all exchange keys, so I gave them the keys of my house to one of my neighbours. I said if I get locked in quarantine, he said don't worry. I come to pick your dogs here. You have the keys. If I get locked, you go and pick my dogs. So, we create kind of these support networks to help each other. I can experience that and my life is significantly better as an expat because where I live, I am part of a community. <A9>*

*For example, yesterday, I wanted to buy a guitar and I saw one in the shopping mall, but I was meeting my Chinese friend and colleague. She said to me. No, don't buy that one. I'll take you to a music centre. They have lots of guitars. I know the guy. We bought one there last week for my nephew. It's done, has some lessons there. She took me there. We had a very nice night, a lovely guy and great contact. <B4>*

## ***HCNs' Categorization of Ingroup or Outgroup***

*We remember sitting in outside a bar in Ningbo. Well, a restaurant eating looking for one day. I remember they sent us over some beer, and we said thanks very much. We tried to give them a beer, invite them, but they didn't want to. They came over to talk to us. This is when my Chinese was a bit more fluent because I've got worse through the years. And they were saying that I thank for coming to Ningbo to help our education and things and we just felt so welcome. I think that's gone down a bit kind of the year. We just felt really welcome here that we weren't just here to earn money or something. The people thought we were here to help and they were glad that we come and that doesn't happen hardly anywhere in the world that as an immigrant, they say, welcome, we really need you and thank you very much. We said China so special because in other places in the world immigrants, they don't want them. And here people and that made us feel really special about this place. <A7>*

*I think that really helped a lot to feel to make me feel a part of the department. And I know that I'm not a core part, but I'm part of it. And the fact that I'm a foreigner and it I never felt like it was an issue like or something like. We don't talk about this with him because, never happened or actually the other way around. The more I can do that before they try to make me do like, for example, creating the admission exams into our department. So, they asked me like, would you be comfortable or would you be able to read the exams and create them and say, sure, small activities, but you can do with them and you are a part of the group, the treating me like a normal person, not Chinese, not foreigner, just as a normal person. <C2>*

## **Community Support and Networks**

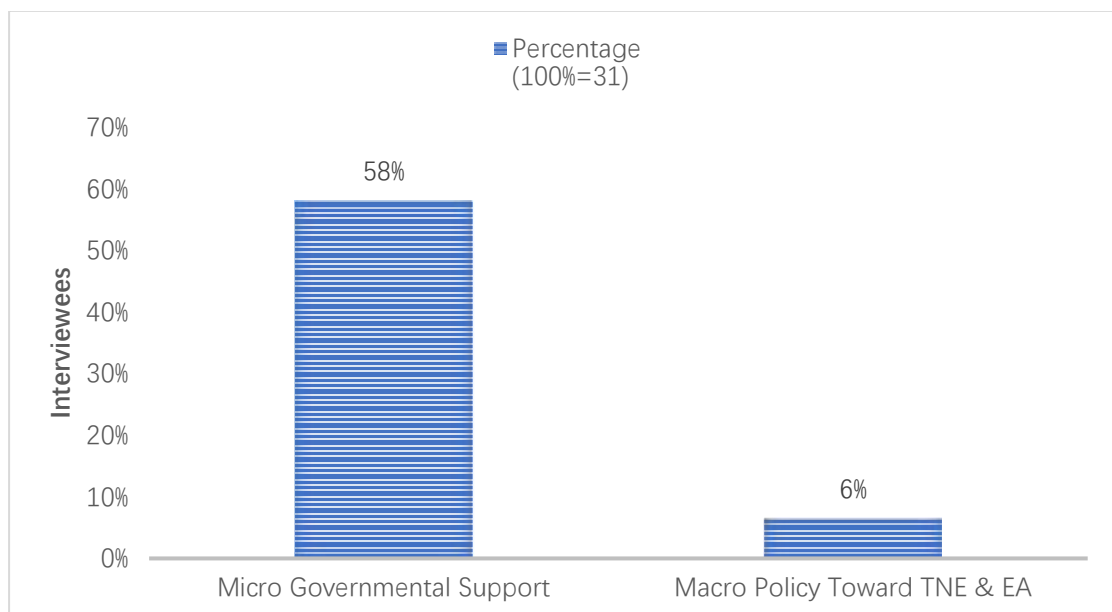
Community support and networks was another factor identified which had correlation with cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. However, community support and networks has never been studied in the previous literature as a separate factor instead of as one part of social support.

*I think my Jewish community has helped me with a few things if I had problems finding a dentist or something, people not only my colleagues, but also my community can recommend or help me with other things. When I have problems, people in the community also provides some support. <A16>*

*I do belong to some expat groups. There's particularly one. It's a group of Canadians who live in shanghai, and they have a WeChat group. I will periodically find out information from them, but most it's about travel back and forth to Canada or that kind of information. But it's interesting and it's particularly to living in Shanghai. I might be long to one, but not a WeChat group like where I see the notices. I think there's a Facebook group or something. <C3>*

### 3.2.4 Governmental Dimension

Two factors of great importance in a Chinese context in the governmental dimension which had never been studied in previous literature were identified to have close relationships with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Micro governmental support was highlighted by more than half of the participants (18 out of 31) (see Figure 3-16).



**Figure 3-16 Main Factors in Governmental Dimension**

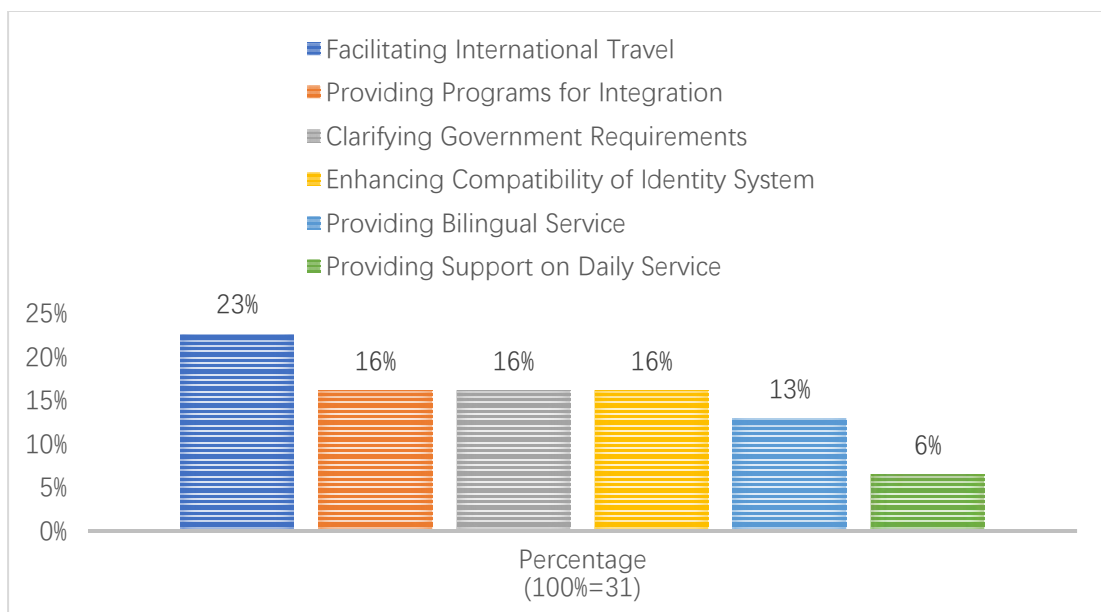
Based on the analysis technique (see 3.1.3), the following main themes in governmental dimension are identified (see Table 3-5).

First Order themes	Second Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions
See the detailed references	Facilitating international travel	Micro governmental support
	Providing programmes for integration	
	Clarifying government requirements	
	Enhancing compatibility of identity system	
	Providing bilingual service	
	Providing good daily service	
	Supportive policy	Macro policy toward TNE and EA
Unsupportive policy		

**Table 3-5 Main Themes in Governmental Dimension**

### Micro Governmental Support

This study identified that micro governmental support for expatriate academics was one of the factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, although each factor in this dimension was not highlighted by more than a quarter of participants. Among them, the most highlighted factor was facilitation of international travel (7 out of 31) (see Figure 3-17).



**Figure 3-17 Sub-factors of Micro Governmental Support**

## ***Facilitating International Travel***

*A very important thing that could come either from the government or from the employer is basically facilitation of international travel. I haven't been back to the U.K. since January 2020. So that's 2.5 year. Actually. No, I haven't been back to the U.K. so summer 2019, 3 years, I've never been out of mainland China for 2.5 years and that's getting it's ridiculous. I feel like the government should make this easier if they want to attract more talents to come to them and work in China, they have to let them to go home occasionally and not make that process something that costs up really large amount of money. Because the flights, they say they shorten quarantine, but flights are still thousands and thousands of dollars. And really hard to by even if you have the money, that's so see a facilitation of international travel would be the major thing. <A14>*

*It's not easy because you see when I go to Canada, I should stay like for quarantine. Return back to China should stay here for 2 weeks for quarantine. So, it's like horrible thing. So, it's nothing from vacation. And so, if you understand this. When I went to Canada for vocation, I arrived at home and then after 2 weeks, it was always there, all these limitations started for and so I stayed at home and worked at home through internet at university. But finally, you see I do experiments, so many things need my personal presence. <C1>*

## ***Providing Programmes for Integration***

*When I first came here, the local authorities Ningbo council used to invite us to lots of things that gave us a very positive impression. It was from the foreigner's bureau, they have a, foreigners bureau, and they would invite us to theatre or dinners or shows or things like that. And ii was very impressed by that. I felt very welcome. And also, they would give us sometimes somebody would come along to give a talk about something to do with the local government and they would, give us little gifts like a cushion or something like that. I felt very welcome. It was like they were saying, we're glad you've come to Ningbo and that made me feel really, really positive. It doesn't happen so much now, but the local government used to make us feel really and they'd say, thank you for coming to Ningbo, and it made us feel really good. <A7>*

*Once I was writing for this magazine Ningbo Focus, I wrote for 2 years for the magazine and then I start getting connected and getting more familiar with people in the governments and people that help me to do some projects. For example, last year I was a cultural ambassador for Zhejiang province. So, I was part of a network and we travel in different parts of Zhejiang to different cities to promote. So, we went to Lishui, Wenzhou and now I'm working with Ningbo office of culture and tourisms. And last week we made a video about Yuyao and 杨梅 [bayberry]. So, we made a video about how we collect the 杨梅 in Yuyao. So, I have become how to say involved in some cultural projects. And that also has helped me to definitely adapt. <A9>*

## **Clarifying Government Requirements**

*Transparency. I think it's good. So, you need to make sure that the organisations' plan is very clear. And transparency and is transmitted to the individual. So, this where you're coming to work, these are constraints that you're going to work under. These are the constraint within the organisation, the constraint to set of organisations. You need to make that clear. So, you don't have people showing up expect a team to, let's use the ability to travel anywhere if they want. And then in China and realize they can't go to Tibet, or you can't do this or we can't that. You need to make sure. <A17>*

*In China, everything is very clear. I know what I have to do, and you also know what you have to do. The things are very clear, and it's very smooth. <B5>*

## **Enhancing Compatibility of Identity Systems**

*If you want to order some, let's say, train tickets, you don't have to show an ID. Lots of the systems in China are geared up to Chinese ID. So that's part of the problem. So therefore, there's that much more institutional differentiation between foreigners and Chinese. That used to be much stricter than it is now. When I first came to China, for example, there were different hotels for foreigners, for 华侨 [overseas Chinese] and for local. That's largely disappeared, but there'll still be hotels that don't want to accept foreigners, because you have to register people at 公安局 [bureau of public security], which may bring too much trouble. Or some places they can do electronically for Chinese but not for non-Chinese. So be lots of things like that. You find we go around in circles that you can't do something because you don't have a Chinese ID. For example, one thing is local system 浙里办 [an App for government service], which is the local government information sources and things like that. Again, we found almost impossible to register an even with a permanent resident card. You're supposed to have it. If you're a permanent resident, at least. If you want to get certain one thing in 东部新城 [a district of Ningbo], there's a chemist that does imported goods. If you're foreigner, you can't go there because you don't have a Chinese ID you can't buy anything, you don't have a Chinese ID. If you go on to 淘宝 [Taobao, an online shopping website], 京东 and it's something that's an import. Then in general you can't, that's imported through Hong Kong unless you go to the ID certification. And a foreign passport doesn't work. <A1>*

*They don't accept foreigner information. They don't always work if you try to put in your passport number, they don't always work. So that was very confusing for us and very frustrating. But for some of them they just don't work for foreigners. So, I tried to link my bank account Alipay, and it just doesn't work. It doesn't accept my bank account details on my passport number and I just keep getting messages saying that this that I don't exist. Maybe difference and the bank, I called the bank. The bank doesn't know how to fix this so that there's a lot of problems with Apps. They don't seem to work well with passport numbers, I think. And then some Apps will only accept Chinese ID numbers, so some Apps are just not accessible to us at all. <A13>*



## ***Providing Bilingual Service***

*To have a translation whenever you need it, that would be very helpful. Just having a hotline, anyone, could be the university, could be the government, could be whatever. Having a hotline that you can just translate on the spot what you need. So, there are certain times you need to talk with the person and they don't understand you well. You would need to have a translation, but maybe it's later in the evening. You cannot call a friend or cannot for a colleague, whatever. <A19>*

*For example, in Poland, every single city office or something, it has information in English, in Ukrainian now because of the war. Because they know that a lot of refugees came to Poland, so they adapt all system for the Ukrainian, too. So, it's like Polish, Ukrainian, and in English. In every office, there is at least one person who can speak German, French, Spanish, and English. For sure, it's not one person, but there is a lot every single office take care about it. Here you can forget about it. <B3>*

## ***Providing Good Daily Service***

*What this is a very small thing, but one thing we have problems is with vegetarian. Now there's a few in Kunshan that we know about and we go to regularly. But it's been very difficult, and then it's been very difficult to explain to people what that means. A school cafeteria, actually it's really hard to get good vegetarian food in our school cafeteria. Some days I go over there for lunch and there's nothing that I can eat. but there's not very many. In Kunshan, we only know of one. It's associated with a Buddhist monastery. We just tell the mayor, but sometimes that works. Sometimes what they think is that we just want a little bit of meat. Or when we say we don't want meat, I think in their minds, what we're saying is we don't want a big piece of meat like we don't want a steak, but it's okay to have vegetables with a little bit of meat. So, it's very and it may be a translation issue. I'm not sure what exactly what we're saying, but it's been hard. <A13>*

*Because now there are hospitals all the way through Ningbo. Many of them, the doctors can speak English. There are special areas for international people, and also the doctors who are here now, they know about my health condition, my disease. They didn't know before. I had to go to Shanghai when I was here before because nobody really knew about this problem when I was here before. the only other support really that I have is the doctors, the medical care they have been a big support. To me, they've always helped me when they come and give me advice. They've made sure medicine. They measure on my blood tests and injections and things. <A8>*

## **Macro Policy Toward TNE and EA**

Macro policy toward TNE and EA was also identified as another factor of cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.

*They just feel like the political environment is changing around transnational universities. And I think we expatriates feel that so I think that is a kind of, it just sorts of worry. I think it's kind of a creates a kind of uncertainty and worry about like, what is the future of the transnational? Is there kind of going to be more interest or less interest in this kind of cross-cultural, cross-national universities? <A16>*

*I arrived in China in a moment when president Hu was here. And I think the policy of president who was very open with a kind of international policy that was very welcoming of foreigners was have to we want come to China, come to study, come to work. And I remember when I came at that time, I felt really welcome. <A9>*

### **3.3 Summary**

This qualitative study identifies a comprehensive and detailed framework of the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics from individual, organisational, social and governmental dimensions.

In the individual dimension, nine factors were found to affect cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in China. Among them, *attitude toward using local mobile Apps*, is a major newly identified factor of crucial importance. In addition, this study highlights the impacts between several other newly identified factors and cross-cultural adjustment: *willingness to adjust, being positive, persistent, proactive, realistic, independent and patient, Chinese dialect proficiency, previous educational experience in China, planned time, and the early exposure to a multicultural environment*. Moreover, this study proposes *connection with China* as separate category of motivation for expatriation of expatriate academics. Meanwhile, this study puts forward the possible association between motivations of good benefits, experiencing and exploring and career development and cross-cultural adjustment.

In the organisational dimension, four factors were found to affect cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in China. Among them, *six specific forms of organisational support* are newly identified factors of crucial importance. In addition,

this study identifies *type of organisation, expatriate population size of the organisation,* and *location by internationalisation* may have some influence but not be the determining factors.

In the social dimension, two factors have been identified as most relevant to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in China. *HCNs' categorization of ingroup or outgroup* is a newly identified factor and *community support and networks* is a separate factor.

In the governmental dimension, two factors have been identified as most relevant to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in China. Both *micro governmental support* and *macro policy toward TNE and EA* are newly identified factors..

In conclusion, this qualitative study not only conducts a detailed analysis on the factors affecting the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics from different dimensions, proposing a comprehensive framework, but also sheds additional light on the motivation for expatriation. Through this qualitative study, some results identified by previous literature have been further verified and some previously unidentified new gaps have been newly revealed and filled. Again, it can be seen from the above results that expatriate academics in Chinese TNE actually do not show fundamental differences from other types of expatriates in other countries in terms of factors affecting their cross-cultural adjustment apart from one totally new factor, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, which has never had attention in previous studies. Therefore, this qualitative study lays a solid foundation for the quantitative study in the next stage.

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## 4. QUANTITATIVE STUDY

Based on the results of the first qualitative study, to gain a more comprehensive understanding and have further examination, a second quantitative study examined the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions, mainly addressing three aspects: first, the interrelationships between different demographic factors; second, the impacts of demographic factors on expatriate academics' Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment, future intentions, and motivation of expatriation; third, the role of Chinese proficiency, time in China and expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps. In the quantitative study, special attention was paid to expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps, as this was a newly identified factor revealed in the qualitative study and is an under-recognised and under-researched aspect of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment which has received little attention in the previous literature.

This chapter looks at the second part of the empirical research, the quantitative study. It first elaborates the research design of the quantitative study, including hypotheses and conceptual framework, research methods, sample and procedure, measures and analysis technique. Then it reports the results and analyses of the quantitative study, including descriptive statistics and analyses and inferential statistics and analyses. Relevant aspects of research ethics have been covered above in Section 3.1.1.

## **4.1 Research Design and Methodology**

### **4.1.1 Hypotheses and Conceptual Framework**

Based on the previous literature review (see Chapter 1) and the results of the qualitative study (see Chapter 3), the hypotheses and conceptual framework are proposed as follows.

#### **Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps and Cross-cultural Adjustment**

Firstly, a favourable attitude toward using information technology is believed to be one of the antecedents of actual adoption (Al-Gahtani and King, 1999; Davis, 1989; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977; Mehra, Paul and Kaurav, 2021), therefore, it is highly possible for expatriates with a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps to obtain a large number of resources and information such as emotional support, interpersonal relationships, social networks, and further support from local mobile Apps in various aspects such as language, life, transportation, shopping, travel, food, internet, entertainment, etc.. All these contribute to their better cross-cultural adjustment in the host country. Some studies on social media, a specific category of mobile Apps, have suggested that social media helps individuals develop their cross-cultural abilities through multicultural experiences (Cambie, 2012). For example, the use of social media may improve individuals' interaction and cooperation in multicultural activities, enhance their interpersonal relationships, enable them to gain knowledge from peers, provide them with additional support, and help them overcome cultural difficulties (Chung and Koo, 2015; Hughes et al., 2012), such as loneliness, depression, and stress (Cheng, Leung and Wu, 2011; Townsend and Wan, 2007).

Secondly, expatriates who have a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps may to a large extent be curious about the host country culture, easily accept new things, and are willing to learn new things. Therefore, they may have the personal trait of openness to experience. Multiple studies have revealed that such traits are closely related to cross-cultural adjustment (Bruning, Sonpar and Wang, 2012; Caligiuri, 2000b), especially on interaction adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012), general adjustment and work adjustment (Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005).

Thirdly, expatriates who have a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps may to a large extent demonstrate a high degree of personal initiative and are willing to actively understand and interact with new environments, therefore, are highly likely to possess a personal initiative. This type of expatriates who are driven by their own choice and interest (Deci and Ryan, 2008; Deci, Olafsen and Ryan, 2017; Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2016) often rely on favourable environmental factors to engage in proactive and autonomous activities in the host country, demonstrate initiative for communication and information acquisition and seek opportunities (Cheon *et al.*, 2015). In the interaction with the culturally new environment, they also actively update their social behaviour, such as engaging in more online socializing with the host country nationals and using the host country language more to incorporate themselves into the new standards and norms of the host country. Through this approach, they adjust better to the foreign environment. Multiple studies have confirmed that this trait is closely related to cross-cultural adjustment (Gagné *et al.*, 2015; Stroppa and Spieß, 2011), especially social initiative (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmaeilzadeh, 2017). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

***Hypothesis 1: Attitude toward using local mobile Apps is positively associated with the***

## **Chinese Proficiency and Time in China as Moderator**

Firstly, the host country language proficiency helps expatriates to be regarded as in-group members by HCNs (Tenzer, Terjesen and Harzing, 2017; Karhunen *et al.*, 2018), while the lack of host country language proficiency may become some obstacles to interactive development (Ljubica *et al.*, 2019) and may lead expatriates to depend more on the help of their supervisors or spouses who may speak the same language (Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999). A large amount of previous literature has proven the positive association between host country language proficiency with cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates (c.f. Kim and Slocum, 2008; Peltokorpi, 2008; Puck, Kittler and Wright, 2008; Salgado and Bastida, 2017; Selmer and Luring, 2015; Selmer, 2006b; Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002), especially with general and interaction adjustment (Tsang, 2001) and work adjustment (Nolan and Liang, 2022). Previous evidence has also shown that the more time expatriates spend in the host country culture, the more they learn, the better they adjust (c.f. Luring and Selmer, 2018; Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013; Selmer, 2002b).

Secondly, concerning the attitude toward using local Apps, expatriate academics with high Chinese proficiency are likely to experience fewer challenges and difficulties in accessing Chinese web pages, such as reduced attention concentration, decreased interactive perception control, and increased navigation difficulty (Luna, Peracchio and de Juan, 2002). The advantage of Chinese language proficiency may make them have a more favourable attitude toward using local Apps, therefore, as suggested above, make them benefit more from using local Apps, which can ultimately facilitate their cross-cultural adjustment. Expatriate academics who stay in China for a long time are likely

to have more knowledge about and be more proficient in using local Apps, so may benefit more from using local Apps, which can ultimately promote their cross-cultural adjustment.

Thirdly, previous literature has shown some evidence supporting the moderating role of host country language proficiency in expatriates' efforts (Bell and Harrison, 1996), role conflict (Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999) and cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

***Hypotheses 2a-b:** (a) Chinese proficiency, and (b) time in China positively moderates the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.*

## **Cross-cultural Adjustment and Future Intentions**

Firstly, according to the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Festinger, 1957), cognitive dissonance, a psychological drive state of aversiveness that when experienced, people are motivated to reduce, will occur when an individual's cognition shows inconsistency with others, resulting in feeling of nerve and pressure, and thereby increasing the probability of making mistakes. When expatriates are unable to adjust to the work and cultural environment of their host country, in order to reduce this cognitive difference and avoid further deterioration of the adverse effects of cognitive dissonance, they usually choose to withdraw.

Secondly, as shown in Section 2.2.4, unsuccessful cross-cultural adjustment process of expatriates may lead to strong withdrawal intention (Griffeth, Hom and Gaertner, 2000; Harzing, 1995). On the contrary, it is believed that the intentional interactions between expatriates and their micro environment such as family, mesoscopic environment such



as organisation, and macro environment such as culture can produce positive and satisfactory results for them, they may be embedded in the host country and have stronger intention to stay in the host country (Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010). The successful cross-cultural adjustment process enables expatriates to use resources to successfully reduce pressure when meeting the challenges in the host country. Meanwhile, they can focus more on their own tasks and achieve more satisfactory results, thus increasing their recognition and loyalty to the organisation and increasing their intention to stay.

Thirdly, evidence can be found in many previous literature that expatriates who can adjust better cross-culturally have less intention to quit a job (Akhal and Liu, 2019; Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005; Siers, 2007), also have more intention to stay abroad (Black and Gregersen, 1991a) and less intention to return home (Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso and Werther, 2012; Siers, 2007; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2005).

As stated above, if expatriates cannot make good cross-cultural adjustment in their life, work, and interaction in the host country, they may leave the host country and at the same time quit their job and organization. Therefore, the intention to quit job and organization seems to represent the intention to quit the host country. Many previous literature only focused on the impact of cross-cultural adjustment on expatriates' intention to quit job and organization (c.f. Akhal and Liu, 2019; Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005; Siers, 2007). However, if it is due to some organizational factors in expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, such as expatriates have not received strong support from their current organization in daily routine (Mercer, 2006; Guzzo, Noonan and Elron, 1994), induction, training on language and culture (Black, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1991; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2001; Florkowski and Fogel, 1999; Mercer, 2006; Sousa *et al.*, 2017;

Waxin and Panaccio, 2005; Zhuang, Wu and Wen, 2013), children and spouse (Guzzo, Noonan and Elron, 1993; Guzzo, Noonan and Elron, 1994; Cole and Nesbeth, 2014), interaction with HCNs (Toh and Srinivas, 2012; Pustovit, 2020), and clarification of role ambiguity (Black, 1988; Aryee and Stone, 1996), or expatriates have different views on the management style, organizational structure, hierarchical system, work ethics, values, and communication methods of their current organisation under the cultural background of the host country, or if they encounter conflicts with colleagues or HCNs within their current organization, they may quit their current and organization but still be willing to stay in the host country, by relocating to another organization to maintain a similar job. Therefore, considering that organizational factors in expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment may have an impact on their future intentions, this study examines two concepts respectively, the intention to quit current organization and the intention to stay in China. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

***Hypothesis 3a-b:** Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE is (a) negatively associated with intention to quit their current organisation, and (b) positively associated with intention to stay in China.*

### **Cross-cultural Adjustment as Mediator**

Firstly, because expatriates who have a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps are likely to accept the value of new things, learn new things, demonstrate a high degree of personal initiative, actively understand and interact with the new environment, according to the Theory of Person Environment (P-E) Fit (Edwards, 1996), they can obtain a large amount of resources and information support, which not only promotes their cross-cultural adjustment process, but also in return further enhances their favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, thereby further reducing their

intention to quit the current organisation and increasing their intention to stay in the host country.

Secondly, the previous literature has also shown some evidence in the mediating mechanism of cross-cultural adjustment in the relationship between some factors and expatriates' withdrawal intention, such as the Five Factor Model (FFM) (Harari et al., 2018), motivational CQ (Akhil and Liu, 2019), and protean career attitude (Cao, Hirschi and Deller, 2013), and the mediating mechanism of cross-cultural adjustment in the association between resilience and expatriates' intention to stay in the host country (Davies, Stoermer and Froese, 2019).

In view of the hypothetical relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment, as well as the strong empirical evidence of the correlation between expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions, and the hypothetical direct impact of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on future intentions, it is further assumed that cross-cultural adjustment is a proximal predictor, becoming an important component of the favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps to reduce the intention to quit the current organisation and increase the intention to stay in the host country, which may mediate the negative impact of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on the intention to quit and the positive impact of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on the intention to stay. The following hypotheses are proposed:

***Hypotheses 4a-b:*** *Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE mediates the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and (a) intention to quit their current organisation, (b) intention to stay in China.* In summary, the conceptual framework is proposed as follows (see Figure 4-1).

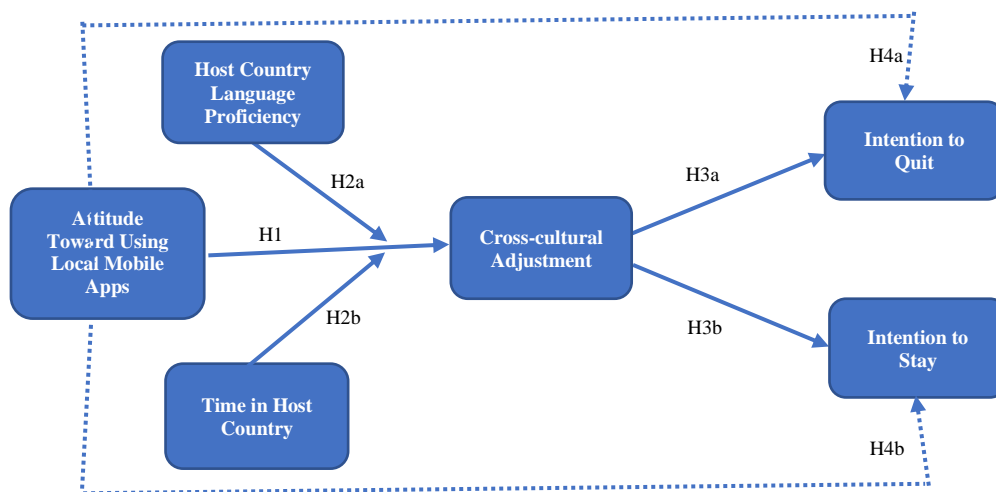


Figure 4-1 Conceptual Framework

## Motivation for Expatriation and Cross-cultural Adjustment

Expatriate academics who go abroad for the purpose of good benefits are willing to overcome difficulties and endure some discomforts because they know that their stay is purposeful (Richardson and McKenna, 2002), and they know that these discomforts can be compensated economically. Under such stimulation of economic factors, expatriate academics are willing to choose host countries that provide economic incentives and attempt to quickly adjust in order to continue to enjoy these favourable conditions (Selmer and Luring, 2013a). One previous empirical study has supported this view (Froese, 2012).

A motivation of experiencing and exploring is viewed by expatriate academics as an opportunity to explore and gain deeper cultural experiences in other countries, which helps them prepare for going abroad. Moreover, such expatriate academics usually make decisions through conscious and thoughtful consideration, and are psychologically well prepared. In addition, their exploratory mindset, as well as their independence and drive

for adventure, enable them to more effectively manage their sense of insecurity in the host country (Selmer and Luring, 2013a). Moreover, the characteristics of such expatriate academics determine that they are likely to have personality traits of openness to experience, which has also been proven to be closely correlated with cross-cultural adjustment (Bruning, Sonpar and Wang, 2012; Caligiuri, 2000b), especially on interaction adjustment (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2012), general adjustment and work adjustment (Huang, Chi and Lawler, 2005).

Expatriate academics who go abroad due to motivation of career development usually are willing to spend time and energy quickly adjusting to their new job in the host country to promote their future career development. They may actively participate in various plans and activities which they believe may contribute to improving their future career prospects, and actively strive to do related things to promote themselves. In addition, the decisions of such expatriate academics are usually carefully considered and carefully planned (Selmer and Luring, 2013a). Adequate psychological preparation makes it possible for them to less feel surprise and disappointment in the host country, and enable them to better cope with the pressure and difficulties they face at their destination.

Expatriate academics with motivation of escaping flee from the previous situation for the sake of career development or disappointment with the uncertainty and insecurity of their status in their country (Richardson and McKenna, 2000). Expatriate academics who fled the current situation and are sent abroad due to motivation of escaping may not have fully prepared themselves psychologically and practically for their assignment. Moreover, due to their possible unrealistic expectations for foreign environments and work, when encountering various difficulties, they may feel that the decision to leave at

that time is a huge mistake and failure, and they may develop highly negative emotions (Selmer and Luring, 2013a) such as disappointment, boredom, and low satisfaction, and therefore are unable to adjust well to the new cultural environment and their work. Moreover, such motivation of escaping based on emotional reactions may lead to more extreme and polarized negative emotions and reactions than decision-making based on cognition as suggested by Ratner and Herbst (2005) and Sinaceur, Heath and Cole (2005). One previous empirical study has also supported the significant negative impact of refugee reasons on work adjustment (Selmer and Luring, 2013a).

Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*Hypotheses 5a-d: Motivations for expatriation including: (a) good benefits, (b) experiencing and exploring, (c) career development are positively associated with, and motivation of expatriation of (d) escaping is negatively associated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE.*

#### **4.1.2 Research Methods**

A quantitative study, which involves quantifying and analysing variables, using and analysing numerical data, and using statistical techniques that specifically answer questions (Apuke, 2017), is often used to test research hypotheses (Bryman, 2006), helps solve problems about causality, universality or importance (Fetters, Curry and Creswell, 2013) and is believed to be very suitable for providing certain types of facts, descriptive information and conclusive evidence (De Vaus, 2013). However, quantitative study is accused of being barren and unimaginative (De Vaus, 2013).

According to Fink (2003), a survey is a system that collects information to describe, interpret, or compare knowledge, behavioural practices and attitudes. An open-ended

survey enables respondents to indicate open-ended questions in their own words and enable them to think reflectively, although the collected data may be more difficult to explain (Fink, 2003). Nevertheless, a closed-ended survey provides standardized data that make statistical testing and technique adopting easier (Fink, 2003), although participants have to know the answers in advance (Fink, 2003).

### **4.1.3 Sample and Procedure**

The data for the quantitative study were collected electronically via a web-based survey using the Qualtrics software package, which was also used to manage the questionnaires prior to importing into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) for analysis.

The size of sample (N) in this study satisfied the formula  $N > 50 + 8m$  ( $N=297$ ,  $m=5$ ), in which m refers to the number of independent variables (Tabachnick, 2013). Due to the low response rate of sending survey questions by e-mail, this study adopted a combination of non-probability purposive sampling method and snowball sampling method. Respondents were recruited by 1) inviting expatriate academics in Sino-foreign universities, Sino-foreign joint programmes/institutions, Chinese universities and institutions, as well as mainland China-Hong Kong universities/institutions by e-mails. For developing a database for initiating our survey, a long list of foreign-sounding names was identified through the list of faculty provided on the websites of each university and a long list of e-mail addresses was created; 2) by adopting snowball sampling (Welch and Piekkari, 2006), inviting participants in previous qualitative interviews to share survey QR code and links with other expatriate academics by e-mail or online communication tools such as WeChat.

A total of 1296 e-mails with a consent form and a URL for the online survey form were distributed to expatriate academics in 73 universities/institutions / programmes located in 21 different provinces/municipalities in China, and at the same time, the QR code or link of the online survey was shared among multiple expatriate academic groups, with an assurance of anonymity and confidentiality and a guarantee that the data would only be used for academic purposes and be reported as group data.

Three rounds of emails and follow-up reminders were sent to the expatriate academics in order to increase the response rate of the survey. Finally, 337 questionnaires were collected including 255 questionnaires collected via e-mails and 82 questionnaires collected via shared QR code or link. The email response rate was 19.7%, which was more favourable than the response rate seen as typical by Shaffer et al. (2006) that in studies in which researchers directly contact expatriates, the typical response rate is about 15%. This may be due to the population of this study being expatriate academics, who do research themselves, are interested in contributing to the research, as suggested by Fowler (2014), when participants are interested in the topic or research, email surveys have a more favourable response rate.

In terms of language and content, the questionnaires were written in English. The questionnaire survey started with a consent form including a brief description of the research purpose, procedure, benefit, risk and discomfort, privacy and confidentiality, voluntary participation, contact information, then continued with questions on demographic variables and followed with questions on other variables. Furthermore, due to the semi-structured in-depth interviews prior to the questionnaire survey had already been conducted, this study used a survey primarily with closed-ended questions. For some questions, this study used “other” as the question option, which gave the



respondents the opportunity to specify if one of the options did not align with their respective experiences, therefore, helped increase the validation of the conclusion (see Appendix II).

In terms of system setting, before sending questionnaires, the researcher first set the survey rules, including setting jumping logics, through which the web pages were automatically jumped to next or ended when unqualified samples were encountered, enabling the function to prevent multiple submissions from the same respondent, enabling robot detection and marking their responses with embedded data syllables, enabling the security scan monitor to prevent the security scanner from accidentally starting an investigation, enabling the function to analyse the browser, operating system and location of the respondents to prevent fraudulent replies, and enabling the mandatory reply and only single answer to improve the effectiveness of the questionnaires.

Prior to the actual study, a questionnaire pre-test was conducted on 15 expatriate academics being asked to comment on the questionnaire, focusing on whether concise language statements are comprehensible, whether explanations were clear, whether the layout of the questionnaire was reasonable, whether the questions were easy to be understood, and whether there was sufficient time to answer the questionnaire. Then, according to their suggestions, the questionnaire was modified.

Because the data of those who have not completed the survey or part of the survey may skew the data and results (Fowler, 2014), for more accurately completed responses (Treiman, 2014), the data were checked for missing values and handled by replacing or deleting missing rows (Hair, Page and Brunsveld, 2019). 40 responses which contained

missing data or did not meet the criteria were removed from the final analysis (see Table 4-1).

<b>Reason for Removal</b>		<b>Number of Responses</b>
<b>Excluded</b>	From Hong Kong	1
	From business expatriates	2
	From Chinese nationality	3
	Did not agree to participate	3
	From those who have already left China	21
<b>Problematic</b>	Unreasonable short response time, or with identical or obviously contradictory answers	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>

**Table 4-1 Data Removed**

#### **4.1.4 Measures**

##### **Demographics**

Demographics were based on background variables and were gauged by asking a single direct question for each to the respondents (see Appendix IV).

##### **Variables**

All scales used in this study were established scales which had been applied successfully in previous studies. Some of these scales were slightly modified to fit the Chinese context because the data were derived from expatriate academics in China (see Table 4-2).

Variable		Scale Type	Scale Item	Author	Journal
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps		4-item, 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. Using Chinese local mobile Apps is a good idea.	Taylor and Todd (1995)	<i>Information Systems Research</i>
			2. Using Chinese local mobile Apps is a foolish idea. R		
			3. I like the idea of using Chinese local mobile Apps.		
			4. Using Chinese local mobile Apps would be pleasant.		
Chinese proficiency		5-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. I feel confident in using Chinese in general	Takeuchi, Yun and Russell (2002), Takeuchi, Yun and Tesluk (2002)	<i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i>
			2. I feel confident in writing in Chinese		
			3. I feel confident in speaking Chinese		
			4. I feel confident in reading and understanding Chinese		
			5. I feel confident in listening to Chinese		
Cross-cultural adjustment	General	7-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “very unadjusted”, to 7 “completely adjusted	1. Living conditions in general	Black and Stephens (1989)	<i>Journal of Management</i>
			2. Housing conditions		
			3. Food		
			4. Shopping		
			5. Cost of living		
			6. Entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities		
			7. Health care facilities		
	Interaction	4-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “very unadjusted”, to 7 “completely adjusted	1. Socializing with host nationals		
			2. Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day basis		
			3. Interacting with host nationals outside of work		
			4. Speaking with host nationals		
	Work	3-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “very unadjusted”, to 7 “completely adjusted	1. Specific job responsibilities		
			2. Performance standards and expectations		
3. Supervisory responsibilities					
Intention to quit		5-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. I am actively looking for a job outside my current organisation.	Wayne, Shore and Liden (1997)	<i>Academy of Management journal</i>
			2. As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave my current organisation.		
			3. I am seriously thinking about quitting my job.		

			4. I often think about quitting my job at my current organisation. 5. I think I will be working at my current organisation five years from now. R		
Intention to stay		2-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. In five years from now, I will continue to live in China. 2. Recently, I have been seriously considering the option of leaving China. R	Cao, Hirschi and Deller (2013)	<i>Career Development International</i>
Motivation for expatriation	Good benefits	2-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. I hope to save a large amount of money. 2. I need a well-paying job for my family.	(Selmer and Luring, 2011a)	<i>International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>
	Exploring and experiencing	3-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. I want to see more of the world. 2. I desire an adventure/challenge. 3. I want new experiences.		
	Career development	3-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. I desire to enhance my career prospects. 2. I want to do the right thing for promotion. 3. I thought it might do my career some good.		
	Escaping	3-item, 7-point scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, to 7 “strongly agree”	1. I wanted to escape from my situation before I came. 2. I am bored with my home country. 3. I want something new.		

**Table 4-2 Scale Information**

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### 4.1.5 Analysis Techniques

For descriptive statistics, the researcher conducted cross tabulation analysis, independent t-test, and one-way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) to explore the relationship between different variables. A confidence level of 0.05 was adopted to determine statistical significance in all tests.

For inferential statistics, the researcher adopted two steps to examine the theoretical model (Anderson and Gerbing, 1982). At first step, both reliability testing with SPSS 28 and confirmative factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS 28 were conducted on all scales including multiple items to evaluate reliability and validity (Hair, Page and Brunsveld, 2019) to prove that the hypothetical structural model was reasonable. When conducting factor analysis, the sample size of 297 was sufficient as it exceeded the recommendation of Pallant (2010) that it is appropriate with a minimum sample size of 150. At second step, hierarchical regression through SPSS 28 and structural equation modelling (SEM) through AMOS 28 were assessed for hypothesis testing.

The hierarchical regression analysis using SPSS 28 through the approach of PROCESS model and 5000 samples bootstrap (Preacher, Rucker and Hayes, 2007) was used to examine the proposed moderation. In addition, since Chinese proficiency and time in China were measured through the use of continuous variables, using regression can maintain the continuity of variables without loss of information or reduction of the ability of detecting interactive effects (Cohen et al., 2002; Aiken, West and Reno, 1991).

Statistical control refers to the use of statistical methods to identify, separate, or eliminate variance in dependent variables, which may be caused by one or more independent variables unrelated to the specific relationship being studied (Pedhazur,

1997). The impact of variables can only be explained after statistical control is applied to other variables. It is also possible that individual independent variables are not significant, but the “combined effects of these variables” may have statistical significance (Berry et al., 1985). Due to the inclusion and diversity of different respondents in this study to improve external effectiveness which may influence the results, four demographic variables which presented a statistically significant difference with respect to cross-cultural adjustment identified through independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used as control variables, including age, academic title, time in China, and previous work experience in China. The other demographic variable, Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner was not used as a control variable because it presented a statistically significant difference only on interaction adjustment.

For understanding the nature of the identified moderating effect and determining whether the moderating effects developed in the expected direction better, the interaction plots (Aiken, West and Reno, 1991) were created.

Moreover, variables may be interrelated, which means high multicollinearity. To avoid possible multicollinearity problem, the centring method was applied with the independent variables and moderator mean-centred before creating interaction item (Aiken, West and Reno, 1991; Frazier, Tix and Barron, 2004). Furthermore, in order to examine whether there was multicollinearity between constructs, the variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis was conducted. The variables involved in the interaction were standardized.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) using estimation of maximum likelihood method was applied to examine the proposed relationships among different variables (Kaplan,

2008), especially with mediator variables and latent constructs measured using multiple items (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). Compared to mediation testing using multiple regression and the four step process (Baron and Kenny, 1986), SEM is much simpler, more efficient and can reduce the complexity of the model (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). As in this study, models that assume many causal and mediating relationships need to be examined simultaneously, SEM is particularly useful (Heckler and Hatcher, 1996; Kline, 2005). To verify the mediating effect, the mediating model using 5000 samples bootstrap was tested followed the advice in path analysis by Weston and Gore (2006). At the same time, all direct path effects were also tested to ensure their robustness.

In addition, by using SPSS 28, the influence of motivation of experiencing and exploring on cross-cultural adjustment was tested through hierarchical regression analysis, which was suitable for studying the impact of independent variable on the dependent variable after statistical control of other variables (Pedhazur, 1997).

## **4.2 Results and Analyses**

The results and analyses of the quantitative study are as follows.

### **4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics and Analysis**

Descriptive statistics and analyses include demographic characteristics of respondents and descriptive statistics of variables.

## Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Minimum, maximum, the mean and standard deviation, frequency and percentage were calculated to analyse the demographic characteristics of respondents and to describe their reactions to different factors. In addition, kurtosis and skewness were calculated to ensure the prerequisites for subsequent analyses.

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent	Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent
<b>Age</b>			<b>Accompanying spouse/partner</b>		
Under 30	3	1	With	176	59.3
30-39	92	31	Without	43	14.5
40-49	110	37	Single	78	26.3
50-59	57	19.2	<b>Accompanying children</b>		
60-69	32	10.8	With	99	33.3
Over 70	3	1	Without	198	66.7
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Previous educational experience</b>		
Male	224	75.4	Chinese UG degree	2	0.7
Female	73	24.6	Chinese Master degree	5	1.7
<b>Time in China</b>			Chinese PhD/ Postdoc	24	8.1
Less than 1 year	35	11.8	Exchange to China/ short programme in China	30	10.1
1-4 years	83	27.9	No	236	79.5
4-7 years	72	24.2	<b>Previous work experience</b>		
More than 7 years	107	36	With	132	44.4
<b>Marital status</b>			Without	163	54.9
Currently married/ in a stable partnership	219	73.7	N/A	2	0.7
Single	78	26.3			

**Table 4-3 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables of Personal and Family**

The results (see Table 4-3) demonstrated that the majority of the participants were aged between 30 to 49, within which those between 40 to 49 (N=110, 37%) and 30 to 39 (N=92, 31%) were basically half each. Those who were under 30 (N=3, 1%) and over



70 (N=3, 1%) only accounted for a very small proportion. The number of males (N=224, 75.4%) was more than three times that of females (N=73, 24.6%). More than one-third had been in China for over 7 years (N=107, 36%), and only about one tenth were less than a year (N=35, 11.8%). Married ones or in a stable relationship (N=219, 73.7%) far exceeded single ones (N=78, 26.3%). Among married ones or in a stable relationship, the vast majority were accompanied by spouses or partners in China (N=219, 80.4%). Only one-third were accompanied by children in China (N=99, 33.3%). Most participants had no previous educational experience in China (N=236, 79.5%), and more than half had no previous work experience in China (N=163, 54.9%).

Demographic	Frequency	Percent	Demographic	Frequency	Percent
<b>Chinese ethnicity</b>			<b>Continent</b>		
Ethnic Chinese	16	5.4	Africa	13	4.4
Non-ethnic Chinese	281	94.6	America	89	30
<b>Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner</b>			Asia	39	13.1
Ethnic Chinese	97	32.7	Oceania	7	2.4
Non-ethnic Chinese	122	41.1	Europe	147	49.5
Single	78	26.3	Mixed	2	0.7
<b>Nationality</b>			<b>Nationality</b>		
American (USA)	67	22.6	Israeli	2	0.7
American/Colombia	1	0.3	Italian	7	2.4
Australian	8	2.7	Italian and British	1	0.3
Australian/Colombi	1	0.3	Jordan	1	0.3
Bangladesh	1	0.3	Luxembourger	1	0.3
Belarusian	2	0.7	Madagascar	1	0.3
Belgian	3	1	Malaysian	9	3
Brazilian	3	1	Mauritian	1	0.3
British	49	16.5	Mexican	1	0.3
British/German	1	0.3	Montenegrin	1	0.3
Burkina Faso	1	0.3	Nepalese	2	0.7
Canadian	15	5.1	Nigerian	2	0.7
Chilean	1	0.3	Pakistani	5	1.7
Colombian	1	0.3	Polish	7	2.4
Czech	1	0.3	Portuguese	1	0.3
Dutch	4	1.3	Romanian	2	0.7
Estonian	1	0.3	Russian	3	1
Finnish	2	0.7	Singapore	1	0.3
French	23	7.7	Slovenian	1	0.3
French/British	1	0.3	South African	2	0.7
French/British/Irani	1	0.3	South Korean	9	3
German	18	6.1	Spanish	3	1
Ghanaian	5	1.7	Sri Lankan	2	0.7
Greek	3	1	Swedish	2	0.7
Hungarian	3	1	Swiss	2	0.7
Indian	2	0.7	Thai	2	0.7
Indonesian	1	0.3	Tunisian	1	0.3
Iranian	1	0.3	Turkish	1	0.3
Irish	4	1.3			

**Table 4-4 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables of Nationality and Ethnicity**

The results (see Table 4-4) demonstrated that the vast majority were non ethnic Chinese (N=281, 94.6%). About one-third had ethnic Chinese spouses or partners (N=97, 32.7%). Participants came from all five continents, with the largest number being Europe (N=147, 49.5%), America (N=89, 30%), Asia (N=39, 13.1%), Africa (N=135, 4.4%),

and Oceania (N=7, 2.4%). Participants were of 57 nationalities, with the largest number being American (N=67, 22.6%), British (N=49, 16.5%), French (N=23, 7.7%), German (N=18, 6.1%), and Canadian (N=15, 5.1%).

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent	Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent
<b>Type of expatriate</b>			Other	4	1.3
AE	19	6.4	<b>Academic title</b>		
SIE	278	93.6	Research/teaching assistants/fellow	37	12.5
<b>Discipline</b>			Assistant professor/lecturers	131	44.1
Business	38	12.8	Associate professors/ senior	77	25.9
Humanities and social science	177	59.6	Full/chair professor	39	13.1
Natural and applied science	78	26.3	Other	13	4.4

**Table 4-5 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables of Job**

The results (see Table 4-5) demonstrated that self-initiated expatriate (SIE) accounted for an overwhelming majority (N=278, 93.6%). Participants engaged in humanities and social science exceeded half (N=177, 59.6%). Nearly half were assistant professors/lecturers (N=131, 44.1%), while research/teaching assistants/fellow (N=37, 12.5%) and full/ chair professor (N=39, 13.1%) were only about one tenth each.

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent	Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent
<b>Type of organisation</b>			Guangdong	36	12.1
Sino-foreign university	171	57.6	Guizhou	3	1
Sino-foreign joint institution/program	25	8.4	Hebei	1	0.3
Mainland China-Hong Kong	11	3.7	Heilongjiang	1	0.3
Chinese university/institutio	90	30.3	Henan	1	0.3
<b>Number of expatriate</b>			Jiangsu	58	19.5
Less than 5	22	7.4	Liaoning	2	0.7
5--20	51	17	Shandong	1	0.3
21-50	42	14.1	Shanghai	39	13.1
More than 50	182	61.3	Sichuan	4	1.3
<b>Province/municipality</b>			Tianjin	7	2.4
Beijing	17	5.7	Yunnan	1	0.3
Chongqing	6	2	Zhejiang	118	39.7
Fujian	2	0.7			

**Table 4-6 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables of Organisation and Location**

The results (see Table 4-6) demonstrated that more than half participants were from Sino-foreign universities (N=171, 57.6%) and nearly one-third were from Chinese universities/institutions (N=90, 30.3%). More than half were from organisations with more than 50 expatriates (N=182, 61.3%) and only less than one-tenth were from organisations with less than 5 (N=22, 7.4%). The organisations were distributed in 16 provinces and municipalities in China, with the largest number being Zhejiang (N=118, 39.7%), Jiangsu (N=58, 19.5%), Shanghai (N=39, 13.1%), Guangdong (N=36, 12.1%), and Beijing (N=17, 5.7%).

### **Cross Tabulation Analysis of Demographic Variables**

In order to further explore the interrelationships between different demographic variables, cross tabulation analyses were conducted.

## *Gender and Academic Title*

			Position					Total
			Research/ Teaching Assistant/ Fellow	Assistant Professor/ Lecturers	Associate Professors/ Senior Lecturers	Full/Chair Professor	Other	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	Count	19	97	66	34	8	224
		%	8.5%	43.3%	29.5%	15.2%	3.6%	100.0%
	Female	Count	18	34	11	5	5	73
		%	24.7%	46.6%	15.1%	6.8%	6.8%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>		Count	37	131	77	39	13	297
		%	12.5%	44.1%	25.9%	13.1%	4.4%	100.0%

**Table 4-7 Cross Tabulation on Gender and Academic Title**

Among males, 29.5% were associate professors/ senior lecturers and 15.2% were full/chair professors, while among females, only 15.1% are associate professors/ senior lecturers and 6.8% were full/chair professors (see Table 4-7), indicating that the proportion of males holding senior positions was significantly higher than that of females.

## *Gender and Discipline*

			Discipline				Total
			Business	Humanities and Social Science	Natural and Applied Science	Other	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	Count	34	122	66	2	224
		%	15.2%	54.5%	29.5%	0.9%	100.0%
	Female	Count	4	55	12	2	73
		%	5.5%	75.3%	16.4%	2.7%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>		Count	38	177	78	4	297
		%	12.8%	59.6%	26.3%	1.3%	100.0%

**Table 4-8 Cross Tabulation on Gender and Discipline**

Among males, 54.5% were engaged in humanities and social sciences, 29.5% in natural and applied science, while among females, 75.3% were engaged in humanities and social sciences, 16.4% in natural and applied sciences (see Table 4-8), indicating that

males were more engaged in natural and applied science than females, while females were more engaged in humanities and social sciences than males.

### ***Gender and Marital Status***

			Marital Status		Total
			Currently Married/in a Stable Partnership	Single	
Gender	Male	Count	176	48	224
		%	78.6%	21.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	43	30	73
		%	58.9%	41.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	219	78	297
		%	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%

**Table 4-9 Cross Tabulation on Gender and Marital Status**

Among males, only 21.4% were single, while among females, 41.1% were single (see Table 4-9), indicating that females were less likely to be married than males.

### ***Gender and Accompanying Spouse/Partner***

			Accompanying Spouse/Partner		Total
			With	Without	
Gender	Male	Count	145	31	176
		%	82.4%	17.6%	100.0%
	Female	Count	31	12	43
		%	72.1%	27.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	176	43	219
		%	80.4%	19.6%	100.0%

**Table 4-10 Cross Tabulation on Gender and Accompanying Spouse/Partner**

Even among people currently married/in a stable partnership, 82.4% of males had accompanying spouses/partners in China, and only 72.1% of females had accompanying spouses/partners in China (see Table 4-10), indicating again that females were less likely to be accompanied by their spouses/partners than males.

## *Accompanying Spouse/Partner and Accompanying Children*

			Accompanying Children		Total
			With	Without	
<b>Accompanying Spouse/Partner</b>	With	Count	88	88	176
		%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Without	Count	5	38	43
		%	11.6%	88.4%	100.0%
	Single	Count	6	72	78
		%	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>		Count	99	198	297
		%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%

**Table 4-11 Cross Tabulation on and Accompanying Children**

Among those with accompanying spouses/partners in China, only 50.0% had accompanying children in China, while among those without accompanying spouses/partners in China, only 11.6% had accompanying children in China, and among those single ones, only 7.7% had accompanying children in China (see Table 4-11), indicating that even those with accompanying spouses/partners in China might not necessarily have accompanying children in China, and those without accompanying spouses/partners in China or those single ones rarely had accompanying children in China.

## *Age and Accompanying Children*

			Accompanying Children		Total
			With	Without	
Age	Under 30	Count	0	3	3
		%	0.0%	1.5%	1.0%
	30-39	Count	30	62	92
		%	30.3%	31.3%	31.0%
	40-49	Count	47	63	110
		%	47.5%	31.8%	37.0%
	50-59	Count	19	38	57
		%	19.2%	19.2%	19.2%
	60-69	Count	3	29	32
		%	3.0%	14.6%	10.8%
	Over 70	Count	0	3	3
		%	0.0%	1.5%	1.0%
<b>Total</b>		Count	Count	198	297
		%	%	100.0%	100.0%

**Table 4-12 Cross Tabulation on Age and Accompanying Children**

Among those who had accompanying children, 47.5% were aged between 40 and 49, and 30.3% were aged between 30 and 39 (see Table 4-12), indicating that the majority of people who had accompanying children were aged between 30 and 49.



## *Age and Academic Title*

			Academic Title					Total
			Research/ Teaching Assistant/ Fellow	Assistant Professor / Lecturer	Associate Professor/ Senior Lecturer	Full/Chair Professor	Other	
<b>Age</b>	Under 30	Count	1	0	0	1	1	3
		%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	7.7%	1.0%
	30-39	Count	16	59	13	1	3	92
		%	43.2%	45.0%	16.9%	2.6%	23.1%	31.0%
	40-49	Count	9	49	39	8	5	110
		%	24.3%	37.4%	50.6%	20.5%	38.5%	37.0%
	50-59	Count	5	17	19	14	2	57
		%	13.5%	13.0%	24.7%	35.9%	15.4%	19.2%
	60-69	Count	5	6	5	15	1	32
		%	13.5%	4.6%	6.50%	38.5%	7.7%	10.8%
	Over 70	Count	1	0	1	0	1	3
		%	2.7%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	7.7%	1.0%
<b>Total</b>		Count	Count	131	77	39	13	297
		%	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Table 4-13 Cross Tabulation on Age and Academic Title**

Among research/teaching assistants/fellow, the two groups with the largest proportion were aged between 30 and 39 (N=16, 43.2%) and between 40 and 49 (N=9, 24.3%), among assistant professors/ lecturers, the two groups with the largest proportion were aged between 30 and 49 (N=59, 45.0%) and between 40 and 49 (N=49, 37.4%), among associate professors/ senior lecturers, the two groups with the largest proportion were aged between 40 and 49 (N=39, 50.6%), and between 50 and 59 (N=19, 24.7%), and among full/chair professors, the two groups with the largest proportion were aged between 50 and 59 (N=14, 35.9%) and between 60 and 69 (N=15, 38.5%) (see Table 4-13), indicating that those with senior academic titles were generally senior in age.

## *Nationality and Discipline*

			Discipline				Total	
			Business	Humanities and Social Science	Natural and Applied Science	Other		
Nationality	European	Count	15	90	39	3	147	
		%	10.2%	61.2%	26.5%	2.0%	100.0%	
	American	Count	9	67	12	1	89	
		%	10.1%	75.3%	13.5%	1.1%	100.0%	
	Asian	Count	11	11	17	0	39	
		%	28.2%	28.2%	43.6%	0.0%	100.0%	
	Australian	Count	2	4	1	0	7	
		%	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%	
	African	Count	1	4	8	0	13	
		%	7.7%	30.8%	61.5%	0.0%	100.0%	
	Mix	Count	0	1	1	0	2	
		%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%	
	<b>Total</b>		Count	Count	177	78	4	297
			%	%	59.6%	26.3%	1.3%	100.0%

**Table 4-14 Cross Tabulation on Nationality and Discipline**

Among Europeans, 61.2% were engaged in humanities and social sciences, only 26.5% in natural and applied science, among Americans, 75.3% were in humanities and social sciences, only 13.5% were in natural and applied science, among Australians, 57.1% were in humanities and social sciences, only 14.3% were in natural and applied science, however, among Asians, 43.6% were in natural and applied science, only 28.2% were in humanities and social sciences, and among Africans, 61.5% were in natural and applied science, and only 30.8% were in humanities and social sciences (see Table 4-14), indicating that Europeans, Americans and Australians tended to engage more in humanities and social sciences, while Asians and Africans tended to engage more in natural and applied science.

In summary, for expatriate academics in Chinese TNE, generally speaking, the proportion of females was far less than males and not as senior as males in terms of academic titles, but were more independent than males. Males were more engaged in

natural and applied sciences, while females were more engaged in humanities and social sciences. Those who had spouses/partners did not necessarily bring their children with them to China, and those who had no spouse/partner or single rarely brought their children with them. The age of those who brought their children to China was usually between 30 and 49. Those who had senior academic titles were usually senior in age. The largest nationality groups were from the United States and the United Kingdom, followed by some European countries. Europeans, Americans, and Australians tended to be more involved in the humanities and social sciences, while Asians and Africans tended to be more involved in natural and applied sciences.

It could be seen that the sample of this study was quite diverse and well covered different groups. Although there were imbalanced gender ratio and distribution of major nationalities in this sample, these were basically consistent with those of the samples in the few previous studies on Chinese expatriate academics (cf. Kim, 2015; Cai and Hall, 2016; Jonasson *et al.*, 2017; Selmer *et al.*, 2015; Chen and Zhu, 2022). Therefore, this sample was typical and representative.

## Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Scale	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.	Kurtosis	Skewness
<b>Motivation of expatriation</b>						
<i>Good Benefits</i>						
1. I hope to save a large amount of money.	1	7	4.57	1.673	-0.461	-0.565
2. I need a well-paying job for my family.	1	7	4.35	1.913	-1.078	-0.395
<i>Experiencing and Exploring</i>						
3. I want to see more of the world.	1	7	5.71	1.232	2.528	-1.400
4. I desire an adventure/challenge.	1	7	5.55	1.302	1.497	-1.144
5. I want new experiences.	1	7	5.71	1.258	1.749	-1.290
<i>Career Development</i>						
1. I desire to enhance my career prospects.	1	7	5.48	1.473	1.288	-1.241
2. I want to do the right thing for promotion.	1	7	4.32	1.746	-0.746	-0.361
3. I thought it might do my career some good.	1	7	5.05	1.662	0.249	-0.998
<i>Escaping</i>						
1. I wanted to escape from my situation before I	1	7	3.63	1.937	-1.181	0.219
2. I am bored with my home country.	1	7	3.39	1.920	-1.151	0.333
3. I want something new.	1	7	5.23	1.441	0.744	-0.966

**Table 4-15 Descriptive Statistics of Variables of Motivation**

The results (see Table 4-15) demonstrated that the mean values of experiencing and exploring were the highest while escaping was the lowest, indicating that experiencing and exploring was the biggest motivation for coming to China, then career development, then benefit, and escaping was the smallest.

Scale	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.	Kurtosis	Skewness
<b>Attitude toward using local mobile Apps</b>						
1. Using Chinese local mobile Apps is a good idea.	1	7	5.90	1.323	2.243	-1.502
2. Using Chinese local mobile Apps is a foolish idea. R	1	7	5.98	1.230	1.882	-1.453
3. I like the idea of using Chinese local mobile Apps.	1	7	5.28	1.482	0.204	-0.834
4. Using Chinese local mobile Apps would be pleasant.	1	7	4.64	1.588	-0.57	-0.342
<b>Chinese proficiency</b>						
1. Using Chinese in general	1	7	3.40	2.013	-1.329	0.301
2. Writing in Chinese	1	7	2.36	1.719	0.255	1.183
3. Speaking Chinese	1	7	3.43	2.006	-1.371	0.260
4. Reading and understanding Chinese	1	7	2.81	1.938	-0.832	0.730
5. Listening to Chinese	1	7	3.19	1.952	-1.223	0.425
<b>Cross-cultural adjustment</b>						
<i>General</i>						
1. Living conditions in general	1	7	5.59	1.188	2.613	-1.567
2. Housing conditions	2	7	5.58	1.183	1.173	-1.166
3. Food	1	7	5.56	1.337	0.743	-1.091
4. Shopping	1	7	5.74	1.240	2.739	-1.520
5. Cost of living	2	7	5.89	1.039	1.464	-1.105
6. Entertainment/ recreation facilities and opportunities	1	7	4.88	1.532	0.058	-0.867
7. Health care facilities	1	7	4.50	1.628	-0.596	-0.525
<i>Interaction</i>						
1. Socializing with host nationals	1	7	4.74	1.535	-0.213	-0.670
2. Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day	1	7	5.14	1.502	0.468	-0.943
3. Interacting with host nationals outside of work	1	7	4.63	1.651	-0.524	-0.563
4. Speaking with host nationals	1	7	4.74	1.618	-0.337	-0.650
<i>Work</i>						
1. Specific job responsibilities	1	7	5.95	1.080	3.659	-1.578
2. Performance standards and expectations	1	7	5.72	1.219	1.728	-1.277
3. Supervisory responsibilities	1	7	5.56	1.265	1.172	-1.054

**Table 4-16 Descriptive Statistics of Variables of Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps, Chinese Proficiency, Cross-cultural Adjustment**

The results (see Table 4-16) demonstrated that the mean value of “using Chinese local mobile Apps is a good idea” reached 5.9, while the mean value of “using Chinese local mobile Apps is a foolish idea” was only 2.02, indicating that there was a generally favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps. The mean values of Chinese proficiency were rather low. It could be seen that writing, reading, understanding Chinese were the most difficult, while speaking and listening to Chinese were comparatively easier. In terms of three aspects of cross-cultural adjustment, work adjustment was the highest, and then general adjustment, but among which, adjustment on entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities and health care facilities were rather low, and interaction adjustment was the lowest.

Scale	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.	Kurtosis	Skewness
<b>Intention to quit</b>						
1. I am actively looking for a job outside my current organisation.	1	7	3.21	1.939	-1.057	0.480
2. As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave my current organisation.	1	7	3.45	1.938	-1.146	0.289
3. I am seriously thinking about quitting my job.	1	7	2.88	1.760	-0.424	0.765
4. I often think about quitting my job at my current organisation.	1	7	2.97	1.790	-0.769	0.636
5. I think I will be working at my current organisation five years	1	7	3.84	1.792	-0.861	0.220
<b>Intention to stay</b>						
1. In five years from now, I will continue to live in China.	1	7	5.43	1.413	0.982	-1.077
2. Recently, I have been seriously considering the option of leaving	1	7	4.30	1.945	-1.206	-0.123

**Table 4-17 Descriptive Statistics of Variables of Intention to Quit and Intention to Stay**

The results (see Table 4-17) demonstrated that the mean values of intention to quit were rather low while those of intention to stay in China were rather high, indicating that

generally speaking, most participants tended to continue to work in their current organisation and stay in China.

Moreover, statistical testing requires normality of data, which is a prerequisite as well as a necessary assumption in parameter testing (Giles and Kipling, 2003). The results (see Table 4-16) showed that the skewness of all the variables was between -2 and +2, and the kurtosis was between -7 and +7, indicating that these data could be considered to have normal distribution (Byrne, 2010; Hair *et al.*, 1998).

### **Difference Analysis**

In order to determine what demographic variables show significant differences on Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment, future intentions, and motivation of expatriation, independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) were applied.

### ***Chinese Proficiency***

The results (see Table 4-18) revealed that five demographic variables, including Chinese ethnicity, Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner, previous educational experience in China, previous work experience in China, and time in China, showed statistically significant differences with respect to Chinese proficiency.

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	T	P
Chinese ethnicity	Chinese	16	4.750	1.647	4.105	< 0.001***
	Non-Chinese	281	2.942	1.718		
Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner	Chinese	97	3.631	1.823	4.637	< 0.001***
	Non-Chinese	122	2.564	1.509		
Previous educational experience in China	With	61	4.718	1.618	3.521	< 0.001***
	Without	236	2.605	1.520		
Previous work experience in China	With	132	3.444	1.890	9.551	< 0.001***
	Without	163	2.718	1.588		
Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Time in China	Less than 1 year	35	2.263	1.468	7.026	0.000***
	1-4 years	83	2.622	1.613		
	4-7 years	72	3.189	1.785		
	More than 7 years	107	3.516	1.796		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-18 T-test and ANOVA of Demographic Variables on Chinese Proficiency**

*Chinese ethnicity* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to Chinese proficiency (t = 4.105, P < 0.001). Expatriate academics with Chinese ethnicity had higher Chinese proficiency than those with non Chinese ethnicity.

*Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to Chinese proficiency (t = 4.637, P < 0.001). Expatriate academics with spouses/partners of Chinese ethnicity had higher Chinese proficiency than those with non Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner.

*Previous educational experience in China* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to Chinese proficiency (t = 3.521, P < 0.001). Expatriate academics with previous educational experience in China had higher Chinese proficiency than those without previous educational experience in China.

*Previous work experience in China* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to Chinese proficiency (t = 9.551, P < 0.001). Expatriate academics with



previous work experience in China had higher Chinese proficiency than those without previous work experience in China.

*Time in China* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to Chinese proficiency ( $F = 7.026$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). The longer time the expatriate academics stayed in China, the higher Chinese proficiency they had.

### ***Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps***

The results revealed that no demographic variable presented a statistically significant difference with respect to attitude toward using local mobile Apps. Meanwhile, a counterintuitive result was that people over 70 had the most favourable attitude, while those below 30 had the least favourable attitude.

### ***Cross-cultural Adjustment***

The results revealed that four demographic variables including age, academic title, time in China, previous work experience in China showed statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment, and Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner only on interaction adjustment.

Variable	Age	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Cross-cultural adjustment	Under 30	3	4.738	1.325	3.451	0.005**
	30-39	92	5.085	1.052		
	40-49	110	5.288	0.95		
	50-59	57	5.389	0.931		
	60-69	32	5.857	0.631		
	Above 70	3	5.429	0.258		
Cross-cultural adjustment general	Under 30	3	5.000	1.169	2.944	0.013*
	30-39	92	5.231	1.021		
	40-49	110	5.312	1.012		
	50-59	57	5.519	0.939		
	60-69	32	5.920	0.568		
	Above 70	3	5.667	0.218		
Cross-cultural adjustment work	Under 30	3	5.111	2.143	3.716	0.003**
	30-39	92	5.409	1.284		
	40-49	110	5.846	0.937		
	50-59	57	5.883	0.958		
	60-69	32	6.188	0.785		
	Above 70	3	5.222	0.694		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-19 ANOVA of Age on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

*Age* presented statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment (F = 3.451, P = 0.005), general cross-cultural adjustment (F = 2.944, P = 0.013), and work cross-cultural adjustment (F= 3.716, P= 0.003) (see Table 4-19). Generally speaking, the older the expatriate academics were, the better they adjusted cross-culturally.

Variable	Academic Title	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Cross-cultural adjustment	Instructor/research/teaching assistant/fellow	37	4.988	0.976	4.041	0.003**
	Assistant professor/lecturer	131	5.183	1.006		
	Associate professor/senior lecturer	77	5.391	0.918		
	Full/chair professor	39	5.625	0.902		
	Other	13	5.890	0.559		
Cross-cultural adjustment general	Instructor/research/teaching assistant/fellow	37	5.131	0.920	2.782	0.027*
	Assistant professor/lecturer	131	5.294	1.031		
	Associate professor/senior lecturer	77	5.460	0.971		
	Full/chair professor	39	5.670	0.853		
	Other	13	5.890	0.569		
Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	Instructor/research/teaching assistant/fellow	37	4.351	1.478	3.584	0.007**
	Assistant professor/lecturer	131	4.700	1.496		
	Associate professor/senior lecturer	77	4.834	1.395		
	Full/chair professor	39	5.301	1.218		
	Other	13	5.673	0.732		
Cross-cultural adjustment work	Instructor/research/teaching assistant/fellow	37	5.505	1.085	3.118	0.016*
	Assistant professor/lecturer	131	5.567	1.140		
	Associate professor/senior lecturer	77	5.970	0.974		
	Full/chair professor	39	5.949	1.004		
	Other	13	6.180	0.968		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-20 ANOVA of Academic Title on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

*Academic title* presented statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment (F= 2.952, P = 0.003), general cross-cultural adjustment (F = 2.782, P = 0.027), interaction cross-cultural adjustment (F = 3.584, P = 0.007), work cross-cultural adjustment (F= 3.118, P = 0.016) (see Table 4-20). Generally speaking, the more senior position they were, the better they adjusted cross-culturally.

Variable	Time in China	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Cross-cultural adjustment	less than 1 year	35	4.706	1.025	10.47	0.000***
	1-4 years	83	5.058	1.001		
	4-7 years	72	5.485	0.787		
	more than 7 years	107	5.562	0.923		
Cross-cultural adjustment General	less than 1 year	35	4.739	1.177	10.408	0.000***
	1-4 years	83	5.193	0.928		
	4-7 years	72	5.569	0.822		
	more than 7 years	107	5.642	0.919		
Cross-cultural adjustment Interaction	less than 1 year	35	4.129	1.518	8.162	0.000***
	1-4 years	83	4.434	1.526		
	4-7 years	72	5.014	1.241		
	more than 7 years	107	5.196	1.315		
Cross-cultural adjustment Work	less than 1 year	35	5.400	1.019	2.952	0.033*
	1-4 years	83	5.574	1.140		
	4-7 years	72	5.917	0.873		
	more than 7 years	107	5.863	1.154		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-21 ANOVA of Time in China on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

*Time in China* presented statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment (F = 10.47, P = 0), general cross-cultural adjustment (F = 10.408, P = 0), interaction cross-cultural adjustment (F = 8.162, P = 0), work cross-cultural adjustment (F = 2.952, P = 0) (see Table 4-21). The longer time they stayed in China, the better they adjusted cross-culturally.

Variable	Previous Work Experience in China	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	t	P
Cross-cultural adjustment	With	132	5.433	0.977	2.082	0.038*
	Without	163	5.197	0.963		
Cross-cultural adjustment	With	132	5.051	1.359	2.525	0.012*
	Without	163	4.630	1.473		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-22 T-test of Previous Work Experience in China on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

*Previous work experience in China* presented statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment (t = 2.082, P = 0.038), interaction cross-cultural adjustment (t = 2.525, P = 0.012) (see Table 4-22). Those who had previous work experience in

China adjusted better cross-culturally than those who had no previous work experience in China.

Variable	Chinese Ethnicity of Spouse/Partner	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	T	P
Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	Chinese	97	5.070	1.349	2.472	0.014*
	Non-Chinese	122	4.590	1.484		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-23 T-test of Chinese Ethnicity of Spouse/partner on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

In addition, *Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to interaction cross-cultural adjustment ( $t= 2.472$ ,  $P= 0.014$ ) (see Table 4-23). Those whose spouses/partners were ethnic Chinese adjusted better on interaction cross-culturally than those whose spouses/partners were not ethnic Chinese.

Moreover, additional tests were conducted in order to further explore the differences of location on cross-cultural adjustment.

The results further revealed that expatriate academics in different cities did not show significant differences in terms of their cross-cultural adjustment, and those in the highly internationalised city like Shanghai did not present the highest score.

Furthermore, more tests were conducted in order to explore the differences of groups combining different demographic characteristics including marital status, Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner, gender, accompanying children on cross-cultural adjustment.

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Cross-cultural Adjustment	With ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	97	5.452	0.956	0.648	0.524
	With non ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	122	5.303	0.945		
	Single	78	5.348	1.041		
Cross-cultural Adjustment General	With ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	97	5.600	0.987	0.310	0.733
	With non ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	122	5.531	0.922		
	Single	78	5.485	1.036		
Cross-cultural Adjustment Interaction	With ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	97	5.070	1.349	3.085	0.047*
	With non ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	122	4.590	1.484		
	Single	78	4.843	1.421		
Cross-cultural Adjustment Work	With ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	97	5.667	1.134	0.38	0.684
	With non ethnic Chinese spouses/partners	122	5.795	1.008		
	Single	78	5.748	1.139		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-24 ANOVA of Chinese Ethnicity of Spouse/partner and Marital Status on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

The results (see Table 4-24) revealed that three groups, those with ethnic Chinese spouses/partners, those with non ethnic Chinese spouses/partners and those single ones showed statistically significant differences with respect to interaction cross-cultural adjustment ( $F = 3.085$ ,  $P = 0.047$ ). Those with Chinese spouses/partners were the best, and then single ones and those with non Chinese spouses/partners were the worst. Although these groups did not show statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment, these different groups exhibited the same trend as that in interaction cross-cultural adjustment.

Further, the results revealed that among those with Chinese spouses/partners, gender did not show statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment ( $t = 1.464$ ,  $p = 0.147$ ). However, it could be seen that the number of males far exceeded the number of females and male adjusted better than females.

Furthermore, the results revealed that for those with Chinese spouses/partners, accompanying children did not show statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment ( $t = 0.129$ ,  $p = 0.897$ ).

In addition, this study explored the association between *cultural distance* and cross-cultural adjustment. Cultural distances in this study (the distance between nationalities of expatriate academics and Chinese) were calculated by a slightly modified Kogut and Singh (1988) formula, using the index of four cultural dimensions by Hofstede (1980), power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism (see Table 4-25). The formula is as follows.  $CD_j$  represents cultural difference of the  $j$ th nationality from Chinese;  $I_{ij}$  represents the index for the  $i$ th cultural dimension and  $j$ th nationality;  $V_i$  represents the variance of the index of the  $i$ th dimension;  $c$  represents Chinese. Most nationalities in the sample have available scores in the index. The cultural distances of expatriate academics from 39 out of 57 nationalities were calculated and then grouped into three levels: high ( $\geq 4.8$ ), medium ( $\geq 2.4 < 4.8$ ) and low ( $< 2.4$ ).

$$CD_j = \sum_{i=1}^4 \frac{(I_{ij} - I_{ic})^2}{4V_i}$$

Country	Cultural Distance	Level	Nationality	Cultural Distance	Level
American (USA)	3.269	Medium	Irish	2.816	Medium
Australian	3.409	Medium	Israeli	4.892	High
Bangladesh	0.511	Low	Italian	2.826	Medium
Belgian	3.390	Medium	Luxembourger	2.651	Medium
Brazilian	1.419	Low	Malaysian	0.621	Low
British	3.311	Medium	Mexican	1.280	Low
Canadian	2.905	Medium	Pakistani	1.365	Low
Chilean	2.831	Medium	Polish	2.569	Medium
Colombian	1.272	Low	Portuguese	3.729	Medium
Czech	1.894	Low	Romanian	2.569	Medium
Dutch	5.157	High	Russian	2.938	Medium
Estonian	3.205	Medium	Singapore	0.516	Low
Finnish	3.934	Medium	Slovenian	3.458	Medium
French	3.047	Medium	South Korean	2.251	Low
German	2.796	Medium	Spanish	2.655	Medium
Greek	3.482	Medium	Swedish	5.770	High
Hungarian	3.888	Medium	Swiss	2.707	Medium
Indian	0.462	Low	Thai	1.552	Low
Indonesian	0.501	Low	Turkish	1.995	Low
Iranian	1.325	Low			

**Table 4-25 Cultural Distances Between Home Countries of Expatriate Academics and China**

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Cross-cultural adjustment	High	8	5.567	1.233	5.558	0.004**
	Medium	226	5.436	0.945		
	Low	38	4.885	0.994		
Cross-cultural adjustment General	High	8	5.604	1.050	4.915	0.008 **
	Medium	226	5.601	0.957		
	Low	38	5.070	1.021		
Cross-cultural adjustment Interaction	High	8	5.000	1.927	1.875	0.155
	Medium	226	4.910	1.412		
	Low	38	4.441	1.207		
Cross-cultural adjustment Work	High	8	6.250	0.904	8.035	< 0.001***
	Medium	226	5.808	1.037		
	Low	38	5.105	1.271		

Note: n=272, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-26 ANOVA of Cultural Distance on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

The results (see Table 4-26) revealed that cultural distances with high, medium, and low levels showed statistically significant differences in cross-cultural adjustment (F = 5.558, P = 0.004), cross-cultural adjustment general (F = 4.915, P = 0.008) and cross-cultural



adjustment work ( $F = 8.035, P < 0.001$ ). Expatriate academics with larger cultural distances had better cross-cultural adjustment than those with smaller distances.

## *Future Intentions*

### *Intention to Quit*

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Age	Under 30	3	4.800	1.400	2.892	0.014*
	30-39	92	3.457	1.449		
	40-49	110	3.382	1.641		
	50-59	57	3.154	1.670		
	60-69	32	2.519	1.306		
	Above 70	3	2.067	0.987		

Note:  $n=297$ , \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Table 4-27 T-test and ANOVA of Demographic Variables on Intention to Quit**

The results (see Table 4-27) revealed that only one demographic variable, age, showed a statistically significant difference regarding to intention to quit current organisation.

*Age* presented a statistically significant difference regarding to intention to quit ( $F = 2.892, P = 0.014$ ). The older they were, the less they intended to quit current organisation.

### *Intention to Stay*

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	T	P
Type of expatriate	Organisational expatriate (AE)	19	4.105	1.477	-2.334	0.020*
	Self-initiated expatriate (SIE)	278	4.919	1.470		
Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Academic title	Instructor/research/teaching assistant/fellow	37	4.716	1.489	2.975	0.020*
	Assistant professor/lecturer	131	4.817	1.465		
	Associate professor/senior lecturer	77	4.617	1.495		
	Full/chair professor	39	5.526	1.371		
	Other	13	5.308	1.407		

Note:  $n=297$ , \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Table 4-28 T-test and ANOVA of Demographic Variables on Intention to Stay**

The results (see Table 4-28) revealed that two demographic variables, academic title and type of expatriate, showed statistically significant differences with respect to intention to stay in China.

*Type of expatriate* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to intention to stay ( $F = -2.334$ ,  $P = 0.02$ ). Self-initiated expatriates were more likely to stay than organisational expatriates.

*Academic title* presented a statistically significant difference with respect to intention to stay ( $F = 2.975$ ,  $P = 0.02$ ). Those most senior ones had the greatest intention to stay in China, while the second most senior ones had the least intention to stay in China.

### ***Motivation for Expatriation***

The results revealed that nine demographic variables, including age, gender, nationality, Chinese ethnicity, Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner, accompanying children, previous work experience in China, time in China, and type of organisation showed statistically significant differences with respect to motivation of expatriation.

### ***Experiencing and Exploring***

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	t	P
Gender	Male	224	5.578	1.158	-2.013	0.045*
	Female	73	5.895	1.185		
Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Type of organisation	Sino-foreign university	171	5.723	1.228	2.697	0.046*
	Sino-foreign joint institution/programme	25	6.053	0.921		
	Mainland China-Hong Kong university/institution	11	5.818	0.780		
	Chinese university/institution	90	5.400	1.122		

Note:  $n=297$ , \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table 4-29 T-test and ANOVA of Demographic Variables on Motivation of Experiencing and Exploring**

*Gender* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of experiencing and exploring ( $t = -2.013$ ,  $P = 0.045$ ) (see Table 4-29). Females were more driven by motivation of experiencing and exploring to work in Chinese TNE than males.

*Type of organisation* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of experiencing and exploring ( $F = 2.697$ ,  $P = 0.046$ ) (see Table 4-29). Expatriate academics in Sino-foreign joint programmes/institutions were most driven by motivation of experiencing and exploring to work in Chinese TNE, and the last was in Sino-foreign universities and Chinese universities/ institutions.

***Escaping***

The results revealed that no demographic variable presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of escaping.

## Good Benefits

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	T	P
Chinese ethnicity	Chinese ethnicity	16	5.438	0.981	2.476	0.014*
	Non Chinese ethnicity	281	4.404	1.652		
Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner	Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner	97	4.041	1.807	-3.842	< 0.001***
	Non Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner	122	4.902	1.507		
Accompanying children	With	99	4.788	1.594	2.463	0.014*
	Without	198	4.296	1.639		
Previous work experience in China	With	132	4.239	1.736	-2.087	0.038*
	Without	163	4.638	1.547		
Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Time in China	Less than 1 year	35	4.486	1.432	3.365	0.019*
	1-4 years	83	4.861	1.472		
	4-7 years	72	4.500	1.619		
	More than 7 years	107	4.112	1.777		
Nationality	European	147	4.095	1.58	5.254	< 0.001***
	American	89	4.517	1.734		
	Asian	39	5.410	0.945		
	Australian	7	4.571	1.397		
	African	13	5.346	1.951		
	Mix	2	4.000	2.828		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-30 T-test and ANOVA of Demographic Variables on Motivation of good benefits**

*Chinese ethnicity* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of good benefits ( $t = 3.910$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) (see Table 4-30). Expatriate academics with Chinese ethnicity were more driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those with non Chinese ethnicity.

*Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of good benefits ( $t = -3.764$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) (see Table 4-30). Expatriate academics with spouses/partners of Chinese ethnicity were less driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those with non Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner.

*Accompanying children* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of good benefits ( $t = 2.463, P = 0.014$ ) (see Table 4-30). Expatriate academics with children companion were more driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those with no child(ren) companion.

*Previous work experience in China* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of good benefits ( $t = -2.087, 0.038$ ) (see Table 4-30). Expatriate academics with previous work experience in China were less driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those without previous work experience in China.

*Time in China* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of good benefits ( $F = 3.365, P = 0.019$ ) (see Table 4-30). The motivation of career development was strongest for those who were in China for 1-4 years while weakest for those who were in China for more than 7 years.

*Nationality* presented a statistically significant difference regarding to motivation of good benefits ( $F = 5.254, P < 0.001$ ) (see Table 4-30). Expatriate academics from under developing regions (Asia and Africa) were more driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those from developing regions (Australia, America, and Europe).

## Career Development

Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	T	P
Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner	Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner	97	4.608	1.512	-2.647	0.009**
	Non Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner	122	5.156	1.527		
Variable	Group	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Age	Under 30	3	5.889	1.388	5.598	< 0.001***
	30-39	92	5.101	1.288		
	40-49	110	5.239	1.246		
	50-59	57	4.731	1.652		
	60-69	32	3.885	1.634		
	Above 70	3	4.333	1.202		
Time in China	Less than 1 year	35	5.066	1.323	4.197	0.006**
	1-4 years	83	5.277	1.388		
	4-7 years	72	5.074	1.362		
	More than 7 years	107	4.576	1.511		

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-31 T-test and ANOVA of demographic variables on motivation of career development**

*Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of career development ( $t = -2.647$ ,  $P = 0.009$ ) (see Table 4-31). Expatriate academics with spouses/partners of Chinese ethnicity were less driven by motivation of career development to work in Chinese TNE than those with non Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner.

*Age* presented a statistically significant difference with regard to motivation of career development ( $F = 5.598$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) (see Table 4-31). Generally speaking, those expatriate academics who were younger (between under 30 to 49) were more driven by motivation of career development than those who were older (between 50 to above 70) to work in Chinese TNE.

## 4.2.2 Inferential Statistics and Analysis

Inferential statistics and analyses includes testing of reliability, validity, correlation, common method variance, significant differences of demographics, moderating effect, mediating effect and moderated mediating effect.

### **Measurement Model**

Reliability refers to the consistency obtained when measuring the same object repeatedly using the same method (Trochim and Donnelly, 2001). Validity indicates to what extent a concept, conclusion, or measurement has sufficient basis and may accurately align with the main real-world factors (Campbell, 1957).

### ***Internal Consistency Reliability***

Cronbach's Alpha is for assessing internal consistency so as to determine the reliability of instruments in the measurement sample (Cronbach, 1951). Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.6 is considered high reliability and acceptable index, above 0.70 is considered good index (Nunnally, 1994). For two-item scales, a better measure of reliability may be inter item correlation (IIC) reaching the lowest level of 0.25, because to some extent, Cronbach's Alpha is a function of the number of items (Nunnally, 1994).

The results (see Table 4-32 and Table 4-33) showed that all the values of Cronbach's Alpha were bigger than 0.7 except a two-item scale value of 0.683 (IIC= 0.545 > 0.25). Therefore, the internal consistency reliability was established.

Construct	Item	Factor Loading	CR	AVE	$\alpha$
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps	1. Using Chinese local mobile Apps is a good idea.	0.769	0.835	0.561	0.825
	2. Using Chinese local mobile Apps is a foolish idea. R	0.696			
	3. I like the idea of using Chinese local mobile Apps.	0.849			
	4. Using Chinese local mobile Apps would be pleasant.	0.670			
Chinese proficiency	1. Using Chinese in general	0.957	0.943	0.769	0.950
	2. Writing in Chinese	0.755			
	3. Speaking Chinese	0.962			
	4. Reading and understanding Chinese	0.802			
	5. Listening to Chinese	0.890			
Cross-cultural adjustment	1. General	0.921	0.823	0.612	0.923
	2. Interaction	0.724			
	3. Work	0.680			
Cross-cultural adjustment general	1. Living conditions in general	0.866	0.874	0.538	0.863
	2. Housing conditions	0.808			
	3. Food	0.664			
	4. Shopping	0.735			
	5. Cost of living	0.674			
	6. Entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities	0.626			
Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	1. Socializing with host nationals	0.894	0.932	0.775	0.930
	2. Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day basis	0.896			
	3. Interacting with host nationals outside of work	0.923			
Cross-cultural adjustment work	4. Speaking with host nationals	0.803	0.901	0.751	0.896
	1. Specific job responsibilities	0.872			
	2. Performance standards and expectations	0.909			
Intention to quit	3. Supervisory responsibilities	0.817	0.904	0.658	0.907
	1. I am actively looking for a job outside my current organisation.	0.762			
	2. As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave my current organisation.	0.711			
	3. I am seriously thinking about quitting my job.	0.930			
	4. I often think about quitting my job at my current organisation.	0.960			
Intention to stay	5. I think I will be working at my current organisation five years from now. R	0.646	0.709	0.550	0.683
	1. In five years from now, I will continue to live in China.	0.687			
	2. Recently, I have been seriously considering the option of leaving China. R	0.793			

Table 4-32 Reliability and Validity



Construct	Item	Factor Loading	CR	AVE	$\alpha$
Good benefits	1. I hope to save a large amount of money.	0.788	0.802	0.669	0.796
	2. I need a well-paying job for my family.	0.847			
Experiencing and exploring	1. I want to see more of the world.	0.823	0.918	0.790	0.917
	2. I desire an adventure/challenge.	0.932			
	3. I want new experiences.	0.907			
Career development	1. I desire to enhance my career prospects.	0.860	0.872	0.696	0.862
	2. I want to do the right thing for promotion.	0.739			
	3. I thought it might do my career some good.	0.896			
Cross-cultural adjustment general	1. Living conditions in general	0.862	0.874	0.539	0.863
	2. Housing conditions	0.809			
	3. Food	0.666			
	4. Shopping	0.736			
	5. Cost of living	0.676			
	6. Entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities	0.626			
Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	1. Socializing with host nationals	0.893	0.932	0.775	0.930
	2. Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day basis	0.897			
	3. Interacting with host nationals outside of work	0.923			
	4. Speaking with host nationals	0.803			
Cross-cultural adjustment work	1. Specific job responsibilities	0.872	0.901	0.751	0.896
	2. Performance standards and expectations	0.909			
	3. Supervisory responsibilities	0.817			

**Table 4-33 Reliability and Validity of Motivation for Expatriation**

### ***Content Validity***

All scales used in this study were mature scales which had been applied successfully in many previous studies with a few items slightly being modified to fit the context in China (see Section 4.1.4). Therefore, content validity was not a problem.

### ***Construct Validity***

The measurement model's goodness of fit was evaluated with different global fit indices including CMIN/df, which shows good if it is less than 2 (2-5 is adequate), goodness of fit index (GFI), which shows good if it is over 0.9 (over 0.8 is adequate), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), which shows good if it is over 0.9 (over 0.8 is adequate),

normed fit index (NFI), which shows good if it is over 0.9 (over 0.8 is adequate), comparative fit index (CFI) which shows good if it is over 0.9 (over 0.8 is adequate), and root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), which shows good if it is under 0.08 (less than 0.1 is adequate) (Byrne, 2010; Bentler, 1990; Bentler and Bonett, 1980).

First, the measurement model of attitude toward using local mobile Apps, Chinese proficiency, expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, their intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China was examined. The study adopted a second-order model taking cross-cultural adjustment as one overall variable with three dimensions, which is more concise, and has stronger descriptive ability because the second-order latent variable explains the correlation between first-order factors and is indirectly correlated with the measured variable (Mansolf and Reise, 2017), providing deeper understanding and insight into relationships, especially those latent factors and structures that are difficult to directly observe, and is more suitable for handling complex causal relationships and data analysis involving multiple levels or abstract levels. The results showed that measurement model (see Table 4-33 value 1) were basically statistically reliable and effective.

<b>Fit Indices</b>	<b>CMIN</b>	<b>GFI</b>	<b>AGFI</b>	<b>NFI</b>	<b>IFI</b>	<b>CFI</b>	<b>TLI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>
Value 1	2.769	0.799	0.762	0.850	0.899	0.898	0.887	0.077
Value 2 (one item discarded)	2.270	0.834	0.800	0.884	0.931	0.931	0.923	0.066

**Table 4-34 Summary of Measurement Model Fit Indices**

In addition, the standardized regression weights (SRW) of items should be over 0.50 (Bagozzi, Yi and Phillips, 1991; Hair *et al.*, 2006). The results (see Table 4-32) revealed that all the standardized regression weights (SRW) were over 0.5, indicating that each item could effectively explain its dimension. Therefore, the construct validity was

established. The results revealed that the standardized regression weights (SRW) of two items of motivation of escaping were under 0.5, therefore, the motivation of escaping was removed. After removing this, all the standardized regression weights (SRW) were over 0.5 (see Table 4-33), indicating that each item could effectively explain its dimension. Therefore, the construct validity was established.

In addition, the measurement model of motivation for expatriation and cross-cultural adjustment was examined. The results (see Table 4-35) indicated that the model fit the data well.

Fit Indices	CMIN/df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	IFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Value	2.279	0.887	0.850	0.910	0.947	0.947	0.936	0.066

**Table 4-35 Summary of Measurement Model Fit Indices of Motivation for Expatriation**

### ***Convergent Validity***

Convergent validity was tested by assessing the average extracted variance (AVE) of each dimension by using CFA (Smith, Milberg and Burke, 1996). The AVE of each factor should be bigger than 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

The results showed that all values of average extracted variance (AVE) were bigger than 0.5 except the slight lower value of cross-cultural adjustment general (AVE= 0.487 < 0.5). Therefore, one item with the lowest factor loading in cross-cultural adjustment general was removed. The results (see Table 4-32 and Table 4-33) showed that all values of average extracted variance (AVE) were bigger than 0.5, indicating that the convergent validity was established. Furthermore, the results (see Table 4-34 value 2) indicated that the model fit the data better after one item in general cross-cultural adjustment was removed.

### ***Composite Reliability***

Composite reliability (CR) value should be bigger than 0.7 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair *et al.*, 1998). The results (see Table 4-32 and 4-33) showed that all the values of composite reliability were bigger than 0.7. Therefore, the composite reliability was established.

### ***Discriminant Validity***

Further, through the comparison between the values of the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) and the values of the correlation coefficient between the variables, the discriminant validity was examined. The square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) values of each variable should be bigger than its correlation values with any other factor in the model (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

<b>Construct</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
1. Attitude toward using local mobile Apps	<b>0.749</b>						
2. Chinese proficiency	0.170	<b>0.877</b>					
3. Cross-cultural adjustment general	0.383	0.184	<b>0.733</b>				
4. Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	0.275	0.366	0.643	<b>0.880</b>			
5. Cross-cultural adjustment work	0.253	0.036	0.582	0.471	<b>0.867</b>		
6. Intention to quit	-0.241	0.022	-0.254	-0.169	-0.232	<b>0.811</b>	
7. Intention to stay	0.297	0.070	0.286	0.204	0.220	-0.674	<b>0.742</b>

**Table 4-36 Average Variances Extracted**

The results (see Table 4-36) showed that the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) values of each variable were bigger than the correlation coefficient between the variables. Therefore, the discriminant validity was established. All present construct dimensions remained.

<b>Construct</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
1. Good benefits	<b>0.818</b>					
2. Experiencing and exploring	-0.028	<b>0.888</b>				
3. Career development	0.508	0.061	<b>0.833</b>			
4. Cross-cultural adjustment general	-0.060	0.135	-0.076	<b>0.733</b>		
5. Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	-0.077	0.054	-0.071	0.643	<b>0.880</b>	
6. Cross-cultural adjustment work	-0.089	0.104	0.030	0.582	0.471	<b>0.867</b>

**Table 4-37 Average Variances Extracted of Motivation for Expatriation**

The results (see Table 4-37) also showed that the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) values of each variable were bigger than the correlation coefficient between the variables, Therefore, the discriminant validity was established.

### ***Correlation***

<b>Variable</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
1. Attitude toward using local mobile Apps	1						
2. Chinese proficiency	0.170**	1					
3. Cross-cultural adjustment general	0.383**	0.184**	1				
4. Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	0.275**	0.366**	0.643**	1			
5. Cross-cultural adjustment work	0.253**	0.036	0.582**	0.471**	1		
6. Intention to quit	-0.241**	0.022	-0.254**	-0.169**	-0.232**	1	
7. Intention to stay	0.297**	0.070	0.286**	0.204**	0.220**	-0.674**	1

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01

**Table 4-38 Correlations**

The results (see Table 4-38) showed that attitude of using local mobile Apps, three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment, intention to quit and intention to stay were significantly correlated, indicating that correlations between these variables were satisfactory.

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Good benefits	1					
2. Experiencing and exploring	-0.028	1				
3. Career development	0.508**	0.061	1			
4. Cross-cultural adjustment general	-0.060	0.135*	-0.076	1		
5. Cross-cultural adjustment interaction	-0.077	0.054	-0.071	0.643**	1	
6. Cross-cultural adjustment work	-0.089	0.104	0.030	0.582**	0.471**	1

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-39 Correlations of Motivation for Expatriation**

The results (see Table 4-39) also showed that the correlations between motivation of good benefits, motivation of career development, and three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment were insignificant, therefore, these motivations were not associated with cross-cultural adjustment. However, experiencing and exploring was associated with cross-cultural adjustment general.

In summary, the above satisfactory results of tests on common method variance, reliability, validity, and correlation gave adequate support for the subsequent test of structural equation modelling.

## Hypothesis Testing

*Hypothesis 1: Attitude toward using local mobile Apps is positively associated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE.*

By using structural equation modelling, the impact of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on cross-cultural adjustment was examined.

The results (see Table 4-46) indicated that attitude toward using local mobile Apps was positively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = 0.450$ ,  $t = 6.438$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Therefore, H1 was supported.

### ***Moderating Effect***

***Hypothesis 2a-b:*** (a) Chinese proficiency, and (b) time in China positively moderates the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.

#### ***Chinese Proficiency***

The model was run hierarchically by including the corresponding set of predictive variables in sequential steps: 1) step one, control variables including age, academic title, time in China, and previous work experience in China were added; 2) step two, the independent variable attitude toward using local mobile Apps and the moderator Chinese proficiency were added; and 3) step three, the interaction term between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and Chinese proficiency was added.

The results (see Table 4-40) showed that attitude toward using local mobile Apps was positively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = 0.304$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). After incorporating Chinese proficiency into the model, the interaction term of attitude toward using local mobile Apps and Chinese proficiency had a significant predictive effect on cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = -0.175$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that Chinese proficiency played a negative moderating role in the prediction of attitude toward using local mobile Apps to cross-cultural adjustment. In addition, the  $R^2$  of model 2 was 0.293,  $R^2$  of Model 3 was 0.322, indicating an improvement in the explanatory ability of the models. However, the direction was negative. Therefore, H2a was not supported.

Variable Model	Cross-cultural Adjustment		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Step 1 (Control variables)</i>			
Age	0.104	0.141*	0.144**
Academic title	0.266**	0.174**	0.177**
Time in China	0.196**	0.178**	0.146**
Previous work experience in China	-0.021	-0.031	-0.035
<i>Step 2 (Independent variables)</i>			
Attitude toward using local mobile		0.304***	0.300***
Chinese proficiency		0.195***	0.205***
<i>Step 3 (interaction term)</i>			
Attitude toward using local mobile			-0.175**
Maximum value of VIF	1.223	1.309	1.309
R <sup>2</sup>	0.150	0.293	0.322
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.139	0.278	0.306
F	12.823***	19.876***	19.482***

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-40 Moderating Effect of Chinese Proficiency on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

Not only the impact on cross-cultural adjustment as a whole was examined, but also the impact of Chinese proficiency on the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and three different dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment was tested respectively.

The results (see Table 4-41) showed that attitude toward using local mobile Apps was positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment general ( $\beta = 0.338$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), cross-cultural adjustment interaction ( $\beta = 0.191$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and cross-cultural adjustment work ( $\beta = 0.229$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). After incorporating Chinese proficiency into the model, the interaction term of attitude toward using local mobile Apps and Chinese proficiency had a significant predictive effect on cross-cultural adjustment general ( $\beta = -0.184$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), cross-cultural adjustment interaction ( $\beta = -0.109$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and cross-cultural adjustment work ( $\beta = -0.185$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that Chinese proficiency played a negative moderating role in the prediction of attitude toward using local mobile Apps to three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment. In addition, the R<sup>2</sup> of model 2 was 0.293,



$R^2$  of Model 3 was 0.322, the  $R^2$  of model 5 was 0.230,  $R^2$  of Model 6 was 0.245, the  $R^2$  of model 8 was 0.182,  $R^2$  of Model 9 was 0.192, indicating improvements in the explanatory ability of the models.

Variable Model	Cross-cultural Adjustment General			Cross-cultural Adjustment Interaction			Cross-cultural Adjustment Work		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<i>Step 1 (Control variables)</i>									
Age	0.094	0.108	0.112*	0.055	0.125*	0.127*	0.133*	0.127*	0.130*
Academic title	0.245***	0.174**	0.176**	0.235***	0.126*	0.127*	0.124*	0.094	0.096
Time in China	0.134*	0.116*	0.082	0.192**	0.176**	0.156**	0.147*	0.137*	0.103
Previous work experience in China	-0.005	-0.031	-0.035	-0.061	-0.043	-0.045	0.022	-0.004	-0.008
<i>Step 2 (Independent variables)</i>									
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps		0.338***	0.335***		0.191***	0.189***		0.229***	0.225***
Chinese proficiency		0.100	0.110*		0.322***	0.328***		-0.002	0.008
<i>Step 3 (Interaction term)</i>									
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps			-0.184***			-0.109*			-0.185**
Maximum value of VIF	1.223	1.309	1.309	1.223	1.309	1.309	1.223	1.309	1.309
R <sup>2</sup>	0.106	0.238	0.270	0.123	0.269	0.280	0.073	0.123	0.156
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.094	0.222	0.253	0.111	0.254	0.263	0.060	0.105	0.136
F	8.641***	14.988***	15.198***	10.157***	17.662***	15.978***	5.676***	6.757***	7.602***

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

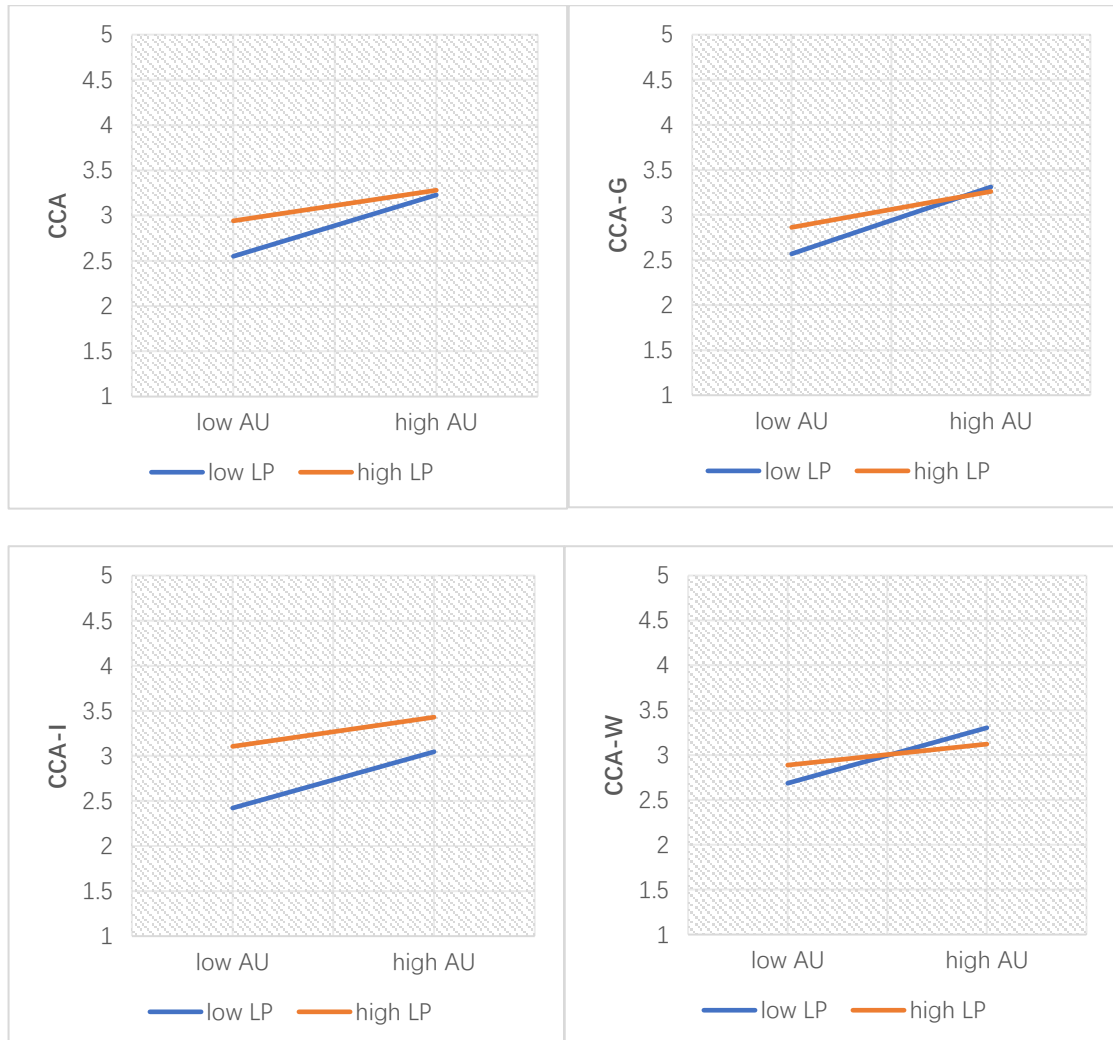
**Table 4-41 Moderating Effect of Chinese Proficiency on Three Dimensions of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

Variable model	Cross-cultural Adjustment General			Cross-cultural Adjustment Interaction			Cross-cultural Adjustment Work		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<i>Step 1 (Control variables)</i>									
Age	0.144*	0.084	0.080	0.104	0.048	0.045	0.159**	0.127*	0.125*
Academic title	0.127*	0.118*	0.118*	0.186**	0.181**	0.182**	0.144*	0.137*	0.137*
Previous work experience in China	-0.094	-0.045	-0.056	-0.147*	-0.089	-0.098	-0.023	-0.004	-0.010
<i>Step 2 (Independent variables)</i>									
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps		0.355**	0.361***		0.245***	0.25***		0.228***	0.232***
Time in China		0.197**	0.185**		0.202**	0.192**		0.094	0.087
<i>Step 3 (Interaction term)</i>									
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps			-0.124*			-0.102			-0.069
Maximum value of VIF	1.101	1.242	1.252	1.101	1.242	1.252	1.101	1.242	1.252
R <sup>2</sup>	0.057	0.230	0.245	0.078	0.182	0.192	0.060	0.123	0.128
F	5.906***	17.219***	15.541***	8.171***	12.817***	11.395***	6.192***	8.137***	7.048***

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-42 Moderating Effect of Time in China on Three Dimensions of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

Further, the simple slope analysis (see Figure 4-2) confirmed the negative moderating role of Chinese proficiency on the association between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment.



**Figure 4-2 Moderating Effect of Chinese Proficiency**

Moreover, the results (see Table 4-41) of variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis showed that the highest value was 1.309, which was significantly lower than the threshold of 3.3 (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2006), excluding the multicollinearity problem.

### ***Time in China***

The model was run hierarchically by including the corresponding set of predictive

variables in sequential steps: 1) step one, control variables including age, academic title, and previous work experience in China were added; 2) step two, the independent variable attitude toward using local mobile Apps and the moderator time in China were added; and 3) step three, the interaction term between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and time in China was added.

The results (see Table 4-43) showed that attitude toward using local mobile Apps was positively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = 0.336$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). After incorporating time in China into the model, the interaction term of attitude toward using local mobile Apps and time in China had a significant predictive effect on cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = -0.118$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that time in China played a negative moderating role in the prediction of attitude toward using local mobile Apps to cross-cultural adjustment. In addition, the  $R^2$  of model 2 was 0.261, the  $R^2$  of model 3 was 0.274, indicating an improvement in the explanatory ability of models. However, the direction was negative. Therefore, H2b was not supported.

Variable Model	Cross-cultural Adjustment		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Step 1 (control variables)</i>			
Age	0.158**	0.094	0.090
Academic title	0.188**	0.181**	0.181**
Previous work experience in China	-0.118*	-0.059	-0.070
<i>Step 2 (independent variables)</i>			
Attitude toward using local mobile		0.336***	0.342**
Time in China		0.221***	0.209***
<i>Step 3 (Interaction term)</i>			
Attitude toward using local mobile			-0.118*
Maximum value of VIF	1.101	1.242	1.252
$R^2$	0.092	0.261	0.274
$\Delta R^2$	0.083	0.248	0.259
F	9.887***	20.382***	18.148***

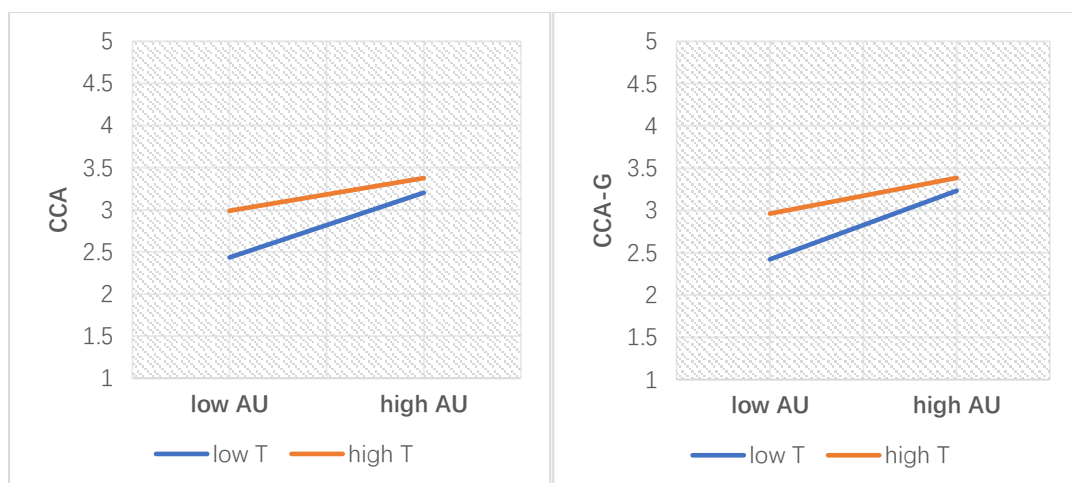
Note: n=297, \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table 4-43 Moderating Effect of Time in China on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

Not only the impact on cross-cultural adjustment as a whole was examined, but also the impact of time in China on the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and three different dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment was tested respectively.

The results (see Table 4-42) showed that attitude toward using local mobile Apps was positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment general ( $\beta = 0.355, p < 0.05$ ), cross-cultural adjustment interaction ( $\beta = 0.245, p < 0.01$ ), and cross-cultural adjustment work ( $\beta = 0.228, p < 0.01$ ). After incorporating time in China into the model, the interaction term of attitude toward using local mobile Apps and time in China had a significant predictive effect only on cross-cultural adjustment general ( $\beta = -0.124, p < 0.05$ ), indicating that time in China played a negative moderating role in the prediction of attitude toward using local mobile Apps to cross-cultural adjustment general. In addition, the  $R^2$  of model 2 was 0.230,  $R^2$  of Model 3 was 0.245, indicating an improvement in the explanatory ability of models.

The simple slope analysis (see Figure 4-3) confirmed the negative moderating role of time in China on the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment.



**Figure 4-3 Moderating Effect of Time in China**

The results (see Table 4-42) of variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis showed that the highest value was 1.252, which was significantly lower than the threshold of 3.3 (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2006), excluding the multicollinearity problem.

### ***Mediating Effect***

***Hypothesis 3a-b:*** *Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE is (a) negatively associated with intention to quit their current organisation, and (b) positively associated with intention to stay in China.*

***Hypothesis 4a-b:*** *Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE mediates the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and (a) intention to quit their current organisation, (b) intention to stay in China.*

### ***Goodness of Model Fit***

First, the structure model of attitude toward using local mobile Apps, Chinese proficiency, expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, their intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China was examined.

<b>Fit Indices</b>	<b>CMIN/df</b>	<b>GFI</b>	<b>AGFI</b>	<b>NFI</b>	<b>IFI</b>	<b>CFI</b>	<b>TLI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>
Value	2.259	0.859	0.825	0.893	0.938	0.937	0.928	0.065

**Table 4-44 Summary of Structure Model Fit Indices**

The results showed that the structural model was statistically reliable and effective (see Table 4-44).

### ***Mediation Path***

If there is a significant indirect effect between two variables, indicating that the causal correlation between the two variables can be significantly carried by a mediating variable, a mediation path can be revealed (Weston and Gore, 2006).

Path	Value	S.E.	95% Confidence		P
			Lower	Upper	
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps → Cross-cultural adjustment → Intention to quit	-0.100	0.037	-0.180	-0.034	0.004
Attitude toward using local mobile Apps → Cross-cultural adjustment → Intention to stay	0.111	0.04	0.046	0.206	0.001

**Table 4-45 Mediation Path**

The results (see Table 4-45) showed that the value of the mediation path of the indirect effect of cross-cultural adjustment on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps to intention to quit was -0.100 ( $p = 0.004 < 0.05$ ), with the interval excluding zero (95% CI = [-0.180, -0.034]). The value of the mediation path of the indirect effect of cross-cultural adjustment on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps to intention to stay was 0.111 ( $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ ), with the interval excluding zero (95% CI = [0.046, 0.206]). Therefore, the indirect effects were significant.

### ***Hypothesized Path***

By using structural equation modelling, the impacts of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on intention to quit, attitude toward using local mobile Apps on intention to stay, cross-cultural adjustment on intention to quit, and cross-cultural adjustment on intention to stay were examined respectively.

		<b>Paths</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>S.E</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>
Cross-cultural adjustment	<---	Attitude toward using local mobile Apps	0.450	0.066	6.438	0
Intention to quit	<---	Attitude toward using local mobile Apps	-0.132	0.105	-1.820	0.069
Intention to stay	<---	Attitude toward using local mobile Apps	0.235	0.079	2.824	0.005
Intention to quit	<---	Cross-cultural adjustment	-0.247	0.116	-3.287	0.001
Intention to stay	<---	Cross-cultural adjustment	0.261	0.085	3.059	0.002

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-46 Hypothesized Path**

The results indicated that attitude toward using local mobile Apps was negatively associated with intention to quit ( $\beta = -0.132$ ,  $t = -1.820$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), attitude toward using local mobile Apps was positively associated with intention to stay ( $\beta = 0.235$ ,  $t = 2.824$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and cross-cultural adjustment was negatively associated with intention to quit ( $\beta = -0.247$ ,  $t = -3.287$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, H3a was supported. The results indicated that cross-cultural adjustment was positively associated with intention to stay ( $\beta = 0.261$ ,  $t = 3.059$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). As shown above, attitude toward using local mobile Apps was positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, H3b was supported.

Both indirect effects were significant, but the direct effect of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on intention to quit was not significant, and the direct effect of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on intention to stay was significant, indicating that cross-cultural adjustment fully mediated the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit and partially mediated the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to stay. Thus, H4a and H4b were supported.



## Regression

**Hypothesis 5a-d:** Motivations for expatriation including: (a) good benefits, (b) experiencing and exploring, (c) career development are positively associated with, and motivation of expatriation of (d) escaping is negatively associated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE.

As shown previously (see Table 4-39), the insignificant correlations between motivation of good benefits, career development and three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment had already proven that they were not associated with cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, H5a, H5c, H5d were not supported.

In order to verify the association between experiencing and exploring and cross-cultural adjustment, the model was run hierarchically by including the corresponding set of predictive variables in sequential steps: 1) step one, control variables including age, academic title, time in China, and previous work experience in China were added; 2) step two, the independent variable motivation of experiencing and exploring.

Variable Model	Cross-cultural Adjustment	
	Model 1	Model 2
<i>Step 1 (Control variables)</i>		
Age	0.102	0.085
Academic title	0.251***	0.257***
Time in China	0.186**	0.190**
Previous work experience in China	-0.025	-0.025
<i>Step 2 (Independent variables)</i>		
Experiencing and exploring		0.102
R <sup>2</sup>	0.138	0.148
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.126	0.133
F	11.584***	10.035***

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-47 Regression of Motivation of Experiencing and Exploring on Cross-cultural Adjustment**

The results (see Table 4-47) showed that R<sup>2</sup> of Model 2 (F = 10.035, p < 0.05) was 0.148,

indicating that the independent variable motivation of experiencing and exploring explained 14.8 % of variation of the dependent variable cross-cultural adjustment.

Under the control of the control variables, there was no significant positive impact of motivation of experiencing and exploring on cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = 0.102$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, H5b was not supported.

Further, the impact of motivation of experiencing and exploring on cross-cultural adjustment as three different dimensions were further examined.

The results (see Table 4-48) showed that  $R^2$  of Model 2 ( $F = 8.033$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was 0.122, indicating that the independent variable motivation of experiencing and exploring explained 12.2 % of variation of the dependent variable cross-cultural adjustment general,  $R^2$  of Model 4 ( $F = 8.269$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was 0.125, indicating that the independent variable motivation of experiencing and exploring explained 12.5 % of variation of the dependent variable cross-cultural adjustment interaction,  $R^2$  of Model 6 ( $F = 5.013$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was 0.080, indicating that the independent variable motivation of experiencing and exploring explained 8 % of variation of the dependent variable cross-cultural adjustment work.

Under the control of the control variables, there was a significant positive impact of motivation of experiencing and exploring only on cross-cultural adjustment general ( $\beta = 0.126$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), however, there was no significant positive impact of motivation of experiencing and exploring on cross-cultural adjustment interaction ( $\beta = 0.048$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), and there was no significant positive impact of motivation of experiencing and exploring on cross-cultural adjustment work ( $\beta = 0.086$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), either.

Variable model	Cross-cultural Adjustment General		Cross-cultural Adjustment Interaction		Cross-cultural Adjustment Work	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Step 1 (Control variables)</i>						
Age	0.094	0.073	0.055	0.047	0.133*	0.119
Academic title	0.245***	0.252***	0.235***	0.238**	0.124*	0.129*
Time in China	0.134*	0.138*	0.192**	0.194**	0.147*	0.150*
Previous work experience in China	-0.005	-0.005	-0.061	-0.061	0.022	0.022
<i>Step 2 (Independent variables)</i>						
Experiencing and exploring		0.126*		0.048		0.086
R <sup>2</sup>	0.106	0.122	0.123	0.125	0.073	0.080
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.094	0.107	0.111	0.110	0.060	0.064
F	8.641***	8.033***	10.157***	8.269***	5.676***	5.013***

Note: n=297, \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 4-48 Regression of Motivation of Experiencing and Exploring on Three Dimensions of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

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## Common Method Variance

Due to the fact that the research variable data were collected from the self-reported surveys from the same source - expatriate academics, it is possible that there are common method variances (CMV) (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003; Podsakoff and Organ, 1986), which may exaggerate or weaken the strength of the relationship between the research constructs.

For controlling for common method variance, a few pre and post methods suggested by Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012) and Chang, van Witteloostuijn and Eden (2010) were used.

On one hand, to avoid CMV, during the research design phase, items for independent and dependent variables were inserted into different questionnaire sections and were randomly arranged (not all items were used for this study) so that the participants could not connect the variables in the study. In addition, three items had reverse polarity. In addition, the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were ensured in order to reduce the participants' concerns and biases of societal expectations, according to the suggestions by Podsakoff *et al.* (2003).

On the other hand, a few statistical techniques were adopted to examine whether the data analysis was affected by CMV.

Firstly, CFA was conducted to check the one-dimensional nature of the structure. The high convergent and discriminant validity (see Section 4.2.2) indicated that CMV had no significant impact on our data.

Secondly, Harman’s single factor test loading all variables into the analysis of principal component factors (Podsakoff et al., 2003) was conducted. The results (see Table 4-49) indicated that the eigenvalues of constructs bigger than 1.0 accounted for 72.367 % of the variance, while the first factor only explained a variance 21.197 %. As a result, neither the first factor nor one of the factors explained most of the total variance. Therefore, CMV was not a critical issue.

Factor	Initial Eigenvalue			Sum of Squared Extracted Loads		
	Total	Variance%	Accumulated %	Total	Variance%	Accumulated %
1	9.327	21.197	21.197	9.327	21.197	21.197
2	4.849	11.02	32.216	4.849	11.02	32.216
3	3.519	7.999	40.215	3.519	7.999	40.215
4	3.413	7.757	47.972	3.413	7.757	47.972
5	3.198	7.268	55.24	3.198	7.268	55.24
6	2.151	4.888	60.128	2.151	4.888	60.128
7	1.65	3.751	63.878	1.65	3.751	63.878
8	1.405	3.194	67.072	1.405	3.194	67.072
9	1.283	2.915	69.987	1.283	2.915	69.987
10	1.047	2.379	72.367	1.047	2.379	72.367
..	..	..	..			
44	0.057	0.13	100			

**Table 4-49 Harman Single Factor Test**

Thirdly, a comparison of model fits between single factor model and measurement model for examining whether the model captured different constructs was conducted, following the method by Conger, Kanungo and Menon (2000). The results (see Table 4-50) revealed that the fit of the single factor model was poor, which was significantly lower than the measurement model fit, showing that each construct in the measurement model was distinctive with good discriminant validity. Therefore, CMV was once again proved not to be a serious issue (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

Fit Indices	CMIN/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Single Factor Model	7.619	0.572	0.631	0.150
Measurement Model	2.270	0.836	0.931	0.066

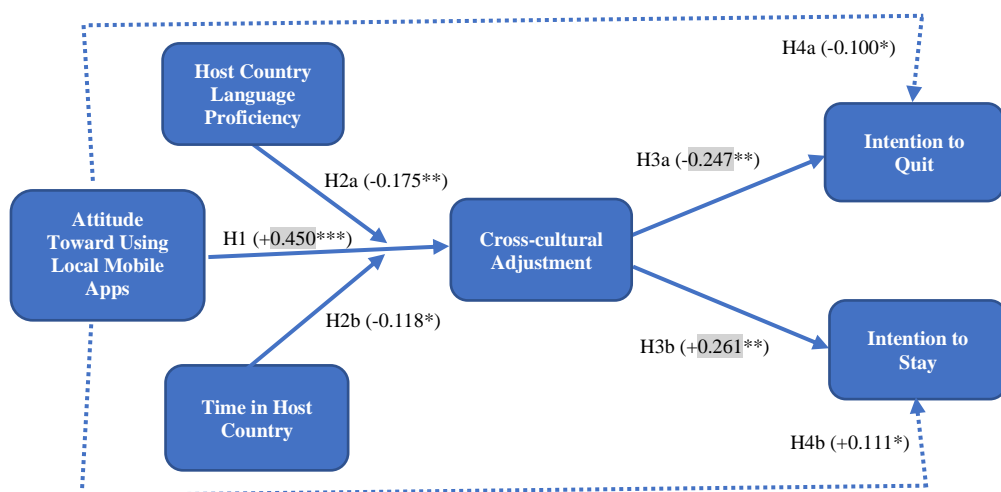
**Table 4-50 Comparison of Model Fits Between Single Factor Model and Measurement Model**

In addition, simple models are more likely to have CMV (Chang, van Witteloostuijn and Eden, 2010). Therefore, the complexity of the model in this study was expected to reduce CMV.

In summary, based on the above tests and description, it could be reasonably concluded that CMV neither affected the results nor biased the explanation of the results.

### 4.3 Summary

It can be concluded from the above results and analyses that among the five hypotheses, three were supported while two were not supported (both moderating effects were significant but in the opposite direction from that expected) (see Table 4-51). The updated conceptual framework with results is as follows (see Figure 4-4).



**Figure 4-4 Updated Conceptual Framework with Results**

No.	Hypotheses	Significance		Results
H1	Attitude toward using local mobile Apps is positively associated with expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.	Yes		Supported
H2 a-b	(a) Chinese proficiency, (b) Time in China positively moderates the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.	(a)	Yes (negatively)	Not supported (in the opposite direction)
		(b)	Yes (negatively)	
H3 a-b	Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE is (a) negatively associated with intention to quit their current organisation, and (b) positively associated with intention to stay in China.	(a)	Yes	Supported
		(b)	Yes	
H4 a-b	Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE mediates the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and (a) intention to quit current organisation, (b) intention to stay in China.	(a)	Yes	Supported
		(b)	Yes	
H5 a-d	Motivations for expatriation including: (a) good benefits, (b) experiencing and exploring, (c) career development are positively associated with, and motivation of expatriation of (d) escaping is negatively associated with the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.	(a)	No	Not supported
		(b)	No	
		(c)	No	
		(d)	No	

**Table 4-51 Results of the Hypothesis Testing**

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## 5. DISCUSSION

This chapter reviews, compares, and discusses the main findings from both qualitative and quantitative studies, and answers the research questions one by one, determining the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE as well as the relationship between expatriate academics' Chinese proficiency, time in China, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment and their future intentions.

### 5.1 Expatriate Academics' Cross-cultural Adjustment

*Research Question 1: What factors affect expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE?*

#### 5.1.1 Key Factors

*Research Question 1a: What are the key factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?*

The key factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment identified in this study were: cultural intelligence, personality traits, Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, family support and networks, organisational support, interaction between HCNs and expatriate academics, and micro governmental support.

#### Individual Dimension

In the individual dimension, the qualitative study identified nine factors of the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics (see Section 3.2). Among them, five



individual level factors - cultural intelligence, personality trait, Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, family support and networks - were highlighted by more than half of the participants. These can be regarded as the most important factors. The quantitative study further confirmed the associations of two factors, Chinese proficiency and attitude toward using local mobile Apps, with cross-cultural adjustment and did not cover the other three factors (see Section 4.2.2).

Four dimensions of *cultural intelligence* - metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ and behavioural CQ - were shown in the qualitative study to have positive impacts on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment. This is consistent with the previously well-established factors (see Section 2.2). Furthermore, willingness to adjust, a sub-factor of motivational CQ related to cross-cultural motivation, was also correlated with the attitude toward using local mobile Apps. Because local mobile Apps were a key part of cross-cultural adjustment for expatriates in a Chinese context, those who had a strong willingness to adjust tended to show a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps.

The qualitative study confirmed the widely-studied association of all five Big Five *personality traits* on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics as well as some other personal traits, such as personal initiative, social initiative, and being realistic. In addition, this study revealed that expatriate academics who possess traits of being positive, independent and patient can adjust better. Some of these traits were also correlated with the attitude toward using local mobile Apps, as those who were open to new things and who had higher levels of initiative tended to show a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps.

The widely-studied positive association of *host country language proficiency* with cross-cultural adjustment was verified, not only due to the fact that host country language proficiency helps expatriate academics access various resources and information, but also because of the crucial role of host country language proficiency in interaction with HCNs (Ljubica *et al.*, 2019; Zhang and Harzing, 2016; Selmer, 2006b).

In addition, the qualitative study showed some evidence supporting the view in the previous study by Zhang, Harzing and Fan (2017) that it was sufficient to have only a certain understanding of host country language to meet the daily life and work needs of expatriates.

Moreover, the qualitative study presented some evidence consistent with another study in the United Arab Emirates by Adrienne and Forseth Whitman (2013) which showed no support for the significance of host country language proficiency on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. China's expatriate academic TNE environment has similar features with that in the United Arab Emirates. Expatriate academics in both China and the UAE could perform well in their daily work even if they barely understood host country language due to the fact that in TNE, the teaching and working language was English. In their daily life, communication in English was available in China, while the use of English in UAE is even more common than in China, as in the UAE, English had become the common language as well as Arabic due to the diversity of its population (Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013).

In addition, the qualitative study shed additional light on the difficulty in Chinese learning. Three main reasons were:

- 1) Chinese was difficult, especially reading and writing;
- 2) It was not easy for adult expatriates to learn a new language;
- 3) At the time of the study, Chinese learning lacked continuity and practice due to the pandemic.

*Family support and networks* were undoubtedly positively correlated with expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in the qualitative study, as expatriate academics could get practical and psychological support from their families and be exposed to more HCNs, having more opportunities and support through continuous expansion of the family networks. In addition, the spillover effect on cross-cultural adjustment between expatriate academics and their spouses (Takeuchi, Yun and Tesluk, 2002) was also confirmed.

A major new finding identified for the first time was that *attitude toward using local mobile Apps* plays a very significant role in the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. In retrospect, this was not too surprising based on China's recent digital transformation. In the context of change in traditional life and work patterns through the digitization of basic daily activities in China, compared with expatriate academics in other countries, digital transformation has become much more important part for expatriate academics in adjusting to their daily life and work with using local mobile Apps playing a very important role (see Section 1.1.3). It was conceivable that in China, which was so heavily dependent on mobile technology, the attitude toward using local mobile Apps severely affected the cross-cultural experience of expatriate academics in China. What is surprising was that no previous research had revealed the association between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. One important reason was that mobile Apps were recent

phenomena which did not exist before. Another crucial reason was that as shown previously (see Section 1.1.3), in contemporary China, the level of digitalization, including mobile and web delivery, and level of integration and information required for mobile App use, such as bank card and ID, was much higher than elsewhere in the world.

In addition, another factor, *cultural distance*, although not covered explicitly in the qualitative study, was highlighted in the quantitative study. The quantitative study revealed that expatriate academics from countries with larger cultural distances from China had better cross-cultural adjustment. But the results were not surprising, as the impacts of cultural distance on cross-cultural adjustment had previously been controversial (see Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3). This might be due to expatriate academics with smaller cultural distances believed that they had similar cultures between their home country and China, thus paying insignificant attention to the difficulties in cross-cultural adjustment, resulting in insufficient psychological and practical preparation and inability to adjust well. Especially when the difficulties of cross-cultural adjustment exceeded their expectations, this could lead to feelings of frustration, anxiety, and resistance, making it even more difficult for them to adjust well. On the contrary, expatriate academics with larger cultural distances knew that their own cultures were very different from Chinese culture, so they were fully prepared for the difficulties they faced in cross-cultural adjustment. As a result, they tried their best to adjust, making them adjust better and easier.

## **Organisational Dimension**

In the organisational dimension, the qualitative study identified four factors of the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics (see Section 3.2). Among them, three

factors - organisational support, type of organisation, and expatriate population size of the organisation - were highlighted by more than half of the participants. The quantitative study did not cover organisational support but did not support the associations between type of organisation and expatriate population size of the organisation with cross-cultural adjustment (see Section 4.2.2).

The widely-studied positive association of *organisational support* for expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment was supported in the qualitative study. In addition to the specific types of support for expatriates identified previously, this study identified six other types of organisational support which played important roles in cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics (see Table 5-1). Compared to the previously identified types of organisational support, these findings particularly emphasized the organisational support for expatriate academics in a Chinese context as well as addressed supporting expatriate academics from the perspective of supporting and training students.

Previously Identified	Newly Identified
Providing support for daily routine	Providing multi-dimensional support for grant applications
Providing induction, training on language and culture	Allocating assistants
Caring for women, children and spouse	Opening channel for communication
Facilitating international, local connections and each other	Enhancing international accessibility
Increasing role clarity	Providing training on academic English and culture for students
	Providing psychological support

**Table 5-1 Different Types of Organisational Support**

The impacts of the *type of organisation* and the *expatriate population size of the organisation* on cross-cultural adjustment reported in the qualitative study were not supported in the quantitative study. This might be because although larger size of expatriate population might provide more information about differences in social interaction norms (Zimmermann, Holman and Sparrow, 2003), which was a useful

source of information for understanding local conditions and culture, the large size of expatriate population also provided opportunities for expatriates to avoid trying to understand the local environment and interact with HCN, which might hinder cross-cultural adjustment (Brewster and Pickard, 1994; Selmer and Shiu, 1999). Furthermore, in organisations with different sizes of expatriate academic population, there were people who were willing to interact with other expatriate academics, as well as those who were willing to interact with local Chinese. However, the general trend in both types of organisations with different numbers of expatriate academics was that once the number of expatriate academics in an organisation reached a certain number, they tended to gather together and interact less with local people. This number was not necessarily to be large to dozens or hundreds, perhaps only around five, as long as there were some expatriate academics around who would like to interact with each other. Moreover, in both types of organisations, expatriate academics could communicate in English in their work. The intuitive view that the less expatriate academics in an organisation, the better their cross-cultural adjustment might not necessarily be correct.

The reasons why in the international-centred universities rather than in the China-centred institutions or programmes, expatriate academics believed that they had few needs to adjust basically only in their work might be:

- 1) They could communicate in English as they had used to before;
- 2) The operational environment and systems of the university were similar to the system they had been used to before.

In regard to another factor highlighted by only about one-third of the participants is the *location of the organisation by level of internationalisation*. Shanghai was revealed as the easiest city for cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in the qualitative

study. The reason is that Shanghai is a highly internationalised cosmopolitan city, with an international style and less different from other international cities, which could be supported by the evidence in previous literature that smaller cultural distance contributed to better cross-cultural adjustment (see Section 2.2.2). However, the quantitative study did not support this result. The reason might be that, there were no expatriate academics from small cities and the cities where expatriate academics are located are predominantly large and medium-sized cities. Although these cities cannot be compared with those cosmopolitan cities like Shanghai in terms of internationalisation, they also had resources and facilities that could provide good living conditions for expatriate academics. Specifically, the following issues identified in previous studies no longer pose a serious problem in these cities: a relative lack of Western cuisine (Zimmermann, Holman and Sparrow, 2003); limited opportunities for leisure activities, entertainment, and shopping that prevent expatriate academics from maintaining their past habits (Selmer and Shiu, 1999); the impact of some Chinese' poor cleanliness and behaviour on expatriate academics' personal comfort, such as openly burping and spitting, staring at foreigners and closely observing their behaviour (Zimmermann, Holman and Sparrow, 2003); substandard healthcare facilities and severe financial shortages of healthcare facilities (Forney, 2003). Therefore, the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in these cities was not fundamentally different from that in highly internationalised cities like Shanghai.

### **Social Dimension**

In the social dimension, the qualitative study identified two factors of the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics (see Section 3.2). Only one factor - interaction

between HCNs and expatriate academics - was highlighted by more than half of the participants.

The qualitative study confirmed that the successful interaction between HCNs and expatriate academics has important strategic significance to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. Actually, the core of these different factors was about support. As for expatriate academics' attitude and behaviour toward HCNs, first, the willingness to interact with Chinese HCNs contributed greatest to their cross-cultural adjustment, although expatriate academics from international backgrounds could also support each other, such as expatriate academics who had similar cultural backgrounds could share something in common and help each other; second, the willingness of expatriate academics to ask for help from HCNs was another important factor of their cross-cultural adjustment, because expatriates who were willing to seek support from HCNs were regarded to benefit more from it and therefore adjust better (Van Bakel, 2019; Mahajan and Toh, 2014; Farh *et al.*, 2010); third, ethnocentrism of expatriate academics also had an influence on their cross-cultural adjustment, because expatriate academics with low ethnocentrism were likely to get more support from HCNs. As for HCNs' attitude and behaviour toward expatriate academics, HCNs' willingness to offer support and HCNs' categorization of ingroup both resulted in expatriate academics receiving help from HCNs, which was beneficial to their cross-cultural adjustment.

Another factor emphasized by only about one-third of the participants is *community support and networks*. Community support and networks can be either support from local HCN communities or support from various communities within expatriates, which can also provide information support, emotional support, instrumental support and



social networking for expatriate academics to facilitate their cross-cultural adjustment in the host country.

## **Governmental Dimension**

In the governmental dimension, the qualitative study identified two factors of the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics (see Section 3.2). Only one factor - micro governmental support - was highlighted by more than half of the participants.

*Micro governmental support*, such as facilitation of international travel, programmes for integration, clarity of government requirements, compatibility of identity system, bilingual service, support for daily service are the effective measures to provide a more friendly environment for expatriate academics, and break down social and cultural barriers, making them feel like being in their own countries instead of feeling like being foreigners, thus having an easier and better adjusted life and work in the host country.

Another factor emphasized by only two participants is *macro governmental support*. It affirms and emphasizes the status and role of expatriate academics in the host country from the perspective of national policy. Policies such as vigorously attracting and recruiting expatriate academics indicate the positive attitude of the host country government toward welcoming expatriate academics, guiding the whole society to have an active public opinion on expatriate academics, encouraging HCNs to provide them with more help, and making them feel valued in the host country, thereby promoting them adjust to the life and work in the host country faster and better (see section 2.2.2).

## 5.1.2 Demographic Factors

*Research Question 1b: What are the demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?*

The demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment were: previous experience, Chinese ethnicity of spouses or partners, time in China, age, and academic title.

### Previous Experience

The qualitative study revealed those who had previous experience adjusted better than those who had no previous experience, both internationally and in China. The quantitative study did not cover previous international experience, and only confirmed the positive association of previous work experience in China with cross-cultural adjustment but not previous educational experience in China. However, it did reveal that previous educational experience in China had a significant impact on Chinese proficiency, indicating that previous educational experience in China might indirectly have an impact on cross-cultural adjustment through Chinese proficiency.

Three major reasons for the significance of previous experience were:

- 1) *Awareness of and openness to cultural differences*, both previous international experience and experience in China helped them gain awareness of different cultures and made them become more open to cultural differences between China and their home countries;
- 2) *Knowledge about China*, both previous international experience and experience in China helped them gain knowledge about Chinese society,

system and Chinese people;

- 3) *Skill preparation*, both previous international experience and experience in China helped them prepare necessary skills for their cross-cultural adjustment in China.

### **Chinese Ethnicity of Spouse/Partner**

The qualitative study found that Chinese ethnicity of spouses or partners of expatriate academics had correlation with their cross-cultural adjustment. Compared to those with Chinese spouses or partners, expatriate academics with non Chinese spouses or partners might be slow in their cross-cultural adjustment. This might largely be due to Chinese spouses or partners providing expatriate academics with practical support such as local language, social networks and information.

Slightly different from the result in the qualitative study, the results in the quantitative study confirmed only the positive association of Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner with interaction adjustment, indicating that the main impact of Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics was on the interaction dimension. This finding was reasonable because ethnic Chinese spouses/partners might provide expatriate academics with more opportunities to meet and interact with HCNs, such as their own Chinese friends, thereby enabling them to better integrate into the local social network. At the same time, ethnic Chinese spouses/partners could also function as bridges to break language and cultural barriers for expatriate academics in interacting with HCNs. However, in terms of general dimension, those expatriate academics whose spouses/partners were ethnic Chinese might rely much on their spouses/partners in their daily life in an environment full of Chinese people and Chinese characters, and therefore might not be able to develop their

own general cross-cultural adjustment so well. In addition, as for work dimension, spouses/partners hardly participated in the work of expatriate academics, so it was also reasonable that Chinese ethnicity of spouses/partners was not significantly associated with work cross-cultural adjustment.

Furthermore, quite surprisingly, the qualitative study found that there was a tendency for single expatriate academics to show greater cross-cultural adjustment in China than those with non-Chinese spouses/partners. Although the results of the quantitative study did not support the significance of marital status, they did show a statistically significant difference in interaction adjustment among these three groups (those with ethnic Chinese spouses/partners, those who were single, and those with non - ethnic Chinese spouses/partners). It supported the finding of the qualitative study that those with ethnic Chinese spouses/partners were the best adjusted, then single ones, while those with non - ethnic Chinese spouses/partners were least adjusted.

This might be due to the fact that married expatriate academics needed to consider the feelings of their spouses, regardless of whether their spouses were with them or not. According to the spillover effect (Takeuchi, Yun and Tesluk, 2002), for those whose spouses were with them, if their spouses were unable to work in China due to work permit restriction, their spouses might encounter great difficulties in adjusting to the life in China. Even if their spouses were able to work in China, their spouses might not adjust well to their work and life. Both situations might have negative influences on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in China accordingly. For those whose spouses were not with them, expatriate academics' feelings of longing for their spouses and guilt toward their families could also affect their cross-cultural adjustment in host countries. On the contrary, for single expatriate academics, they were "free" individuals

who did not have to consider the feelings of their spouses, and without missing or feeling guilty about their spouses or families, they could adjust better. In addition, single expatriate academics were likely to have more opportunities and spend more time interacting with HCNs, which helped them adjust better.

### **Time in China**

For time in China, both results in the qualitative study and the quantitative study showed consistency with the many previous studies arguing that time in China played a significant role in cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. The longer time that expatriate academics stayed in China, the better they adjusted cross-culturally.

This was not surprising as, over time, expatriate academics became more familiar with various aspects in work, life and interaction, thereby reducing the difficulties in cross-cultural adjustment and adjusting better. It was very likely that, as time passed, many expatriate academics who could not adjust well had already left, hence were not included in the sample.

### **Age**

As for the age upon expatriation, the qualitative study revealed that younger expatriate academics tended to have better cross-cultural adjustment. The major reasons were that younger people were generally more energetic, felt it easier and faster to learn new things, especially the host country languages and digital technologies. Moreover, younger people had not fully established their life patterns and had fewer expectations, therefore, were more likely to accept differences between cultures of their home and the host country. Quite interestingly, the results in the quantitative study yielded a contrary result, as the older the expatriate academics were, the better they adjusted cross-

culturally. This might be because as expatriate academics' age increased, their knowledges, skills, abilities and experience had also increased, which helped them deal with various difficulties encountered in cross-cultural adjustment. Moreover, as expatriate academics' age increased, they tended not to quitting their current organisation (see Section 4.2.1) due to the fact that in China, work permits were directly tied to jobs, and it might be difficult for older expatriate academics, especially those over 60 to obtain jobs and work permits from other organisations. Therefore, for older expatriate academics, they had fewer opportunities to transfer to other organisations, thus, tended to try their best to adjust to their current life and work.

It was not surprising to see these results because the impacts of age on cross-cultural adjustment had always been a controversial topic and the previous literature had already drawn very contradictory conclusions (see Sections 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.4.3). The different conclusions might result from the different sample groups in different contexts.

As for the age upon exposure to multiple cultural environments, the qualitative study found that apart from third-culture kids and adult third-culture kids (see Section 3.2.1), people's early exposure to a multicultural environment also had huge influence on their cross-cultural adjustment. The major reason was that people' life patterns and formation of values, attitudes, beliefs and norms in their early age was still unestablished, the early exposure to multiple cultural environments helped them become more open to cultural differences, and therefore were easier to adjust cross-culturally.

## **Academic Title**

The qualitative study did not cover explicitly academic title, while the quantitative study revealed that the more senior academic titles expatriate academics had, the better they adjusted cross-culturally.

This might be because expatriate academics with senior academic titles were likely to have a high degree of enthusiasm and professionalism, basically satisfied with their work (Wilkins and Neri, 2019), and meanwhile tended to get higher income economically and get long-term contracts, they might enjoy their life and work more and therefore adjust better in the host country.

In addition, results in the quantitative study showed that those with senior academic titles were generally senior in age, and the older the expatriate academics were, the better they adjusted cross-culturally. Therefore, another possible reason would be that expatriate academics with senior academic titles were older and usually had richer experience in dealing with various difficulties encountered during their cross-cultural adjustment. Moreover, as stated above, expatriate academics who were older tended not to transfer to other organisations (see Section 4.2.1) and tended to make every effort to adjust to their current life and work.

### **5.1.3 Motivation for Expatriation**

*Research Question 1c: What is the relationship between motivations for expatriation and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?*

Motivations for expatriation had no significant association with expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment identified in this study.

The results in the qualitative study indicated that there seemed to be some correlations between motivations of good benefits, experiencing and exploring, career development of expatriate academics and their cross-cultural adjustment. However, the results in the quantitative study did not support these correlations. There was no evidence on motivation of escaping in the qualitative study as no sample belonged to this category. Perhaps some expatriate academics did belong to this category, but they were not prepared to admit it. Therefore, the association between motivation of escaping and cross-cultural adjustment was not supported in the quantitative study.

This result was not surprising, as there were only a few conflicting related outcomes on the association of motivations for expatriation with cross-cultural adjustment. A possible reason was that expatriate academics were a special group whose motivations might not be closely related to their cross-cultural adjustment, such as expatriate academics might be less interested in monetary achievements than expatriates in other industries (Vijayakumar and Cunningham, 2016).

Additionally, the results in the quantitative study shed light on the differences of demographic factors showing significant differences on different motivations for expatriation (see Table 5-2).

Motivation for Expatriation	Demographic Factors
Experiencing and exploring	Gender*
	Type of organisation*
Good benefits	Chinese ethnicity***
	Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner***
	Accompanying children*
	Previous work experience in China*
	Time in China*
	Nationality***
Career development	Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner**
	Age***
	Time in China**

Note: Qualitative Study (n=31), Quantitative Study (n=297), \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001



**Table 5-2 Demographic Factors Affecting Motivation for Expatriation**

For *motivation of experiencing and exploring*, females were more driven by motivation of experiencing and exploring to work in Chinese TNE than males. Expatriate academics in Sino-foreign joint programmes/institutions were mostly driven by motivation of experiencing and exploring to work in Chinese TNE, and the last was in Sino-foreign universities and Chinese universities/ institutions. This might be due to that for those with motivation of experiencing and exploring, the combination of Chinese and international systems was more attractive than relatively pure Chinese or international system.

In terms of *motivation of good benefits*, expatriate academics with Chinese ethnicity were more driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those with non Chinese ethnicity. This might be related to the generous treatment provided by the Chinese government and universities for senior Chinese expatriate academics. Another related reason might be that Chinese expatriate academics believed that returning to the country where their ancestors and extended families were located was a major benefit. Expatriate academics with spouses/partners of Chinese ethnicity were less driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those with non Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner. This might be because many Chinese spouses/partners were more willing to live abroad and wish their spouses to build international careers, which had an intangible impact on expatriate academics. Expatriate academics with accompanying children were more driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those with no child(ren) companion. This may be because these expatriate academics believed that in China, their children could benefit a lot in terms of learning of Chinese language and some basic disciplines, such as math, physics. Expatriate academics with previous work experience in China were

less driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those without previous work experience in China. This was because expatriate academics with work experience in China had already reaped many benefits in China, such as having made some Chinese friends and learnt some Chinese. The motivation of good benefits was strongest for those who were in China for 1-4 years while weakest for those who were in China for more than 7 years. However, due to the fact that the decision of expatriation was made before arriving in China, time in China did not make sense here. However, it might indicate the changes of expatriate academics' motivation as time went by. The motivation to achieve good benefits reached its peak one year after arriving in China, but gradually weakened over time. Expatriate academics from under developing regions (Asia and Africa) were more driven by motivation of good benefits to work in Chinese TNE than those from developing regions (Australia, America, and Europe). This was because relatively speaking, incomes of academics in developing regions were lower while those in developed regions were higher.

As for *motivation of career development*, expatriate academics with spouses/partners of Chinese ethnicity were less driven by motivation of career development to work in Chinese TNE than those with non Chinese ethnicity of spouse/partner. This was consistent with the reason mentioned previously that many Chinese spouses/partners were more willing to live abroad and wish their spouses to build international careers, which had an intangible impact on expatriate academics. Generally speaking, those expatriate academics who were younger (from under 30 to 49) were more driven by motivation of career development than those who were older (from 50 to above 70) to work in Chinese TNE. This was because overall, the youth were in a period of career advancement and were more eager to make achievements in their careers. The motivation of career development was strongest for those who were in China for 1-4

years while weakest for those who were in China for more than 7 years. However, due to the fact that the decision of expatriation was made before arriving in China, time in China did not make sense here. However, it might indicate the changes of expatriate academics' motivation as time went by. The motivation to achieve career success reached its peak one year after arriving in China, but gradually weakened over time.

## **5.2 Relationships Between Variables**

*Research Question 2: What is the relationship between Chinese proficiency, time in China, expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment and their future intentions?*

### **5.2.1 Demographic Factors**

**Research Question 2a:** What are the demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, and intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China?

#### **Chinese Proficiency**

The five demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' Chinese proficiency identified in this study were: Chinese ethnicity, Chinese ethnicity of spouses/partners, previous educational experience in China, previous work experience in China, and time in China.

The results in the quantitative study revealed that expatriate academics of Chinese ethnicity, those with spouses/partners of Chinese ethnicity, those with previous

educational and work experience in China, and stayed in China had higher Chinese proficiency.

### **Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps**

There was no demographic variable significantly associated with expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps. Counterintuitively, the results in the quantitative study revealed that people over 70 had the most favourable attitude, while those below 30 had the least favourable attitude. One possible reason might be the small sample sizes, with only 3 people per group.

### **Future Intentions**

The only demographic factor affecting expatriate academics' intention to quit current organisation identified in this study was age, while the two demographic factors showing significant differences on expatriate academics' intention to stay in China were the type of expatriate and academic title.

The results in the quantitative study revealed that the older they were, the less they intended to quit their current organisation. The reason was stated above (see Section 5.1.2). Self-initiated expatriates were more likely to stay in China than organisational expatriates. This was because AEs had a psychological expectation that they would return to their home country at the end of a specified period in China. However, SIEs spontaneous motivation to China might motivate them to actively learn Chinese language and culture, and establish social networks with the HCNs, making them more capable of adjusting to the environment and inclined to stay in China. Those full/chair professors had the greatest intention to stay in China, while associate professors/ senior lecturers had the least intention to stay in China. This might be due to the fact that

associate professors/ senior lecturers were in a good period of career advancement, and they had bigger ambition to develop academic careers in different countries compared to the most senior ones, and they had higher ability to develop academic careers in different countries compared to those with junior academic titles.

Additionally, according to the data, among respondents who had intention to quit current organisation (N=47, 15.8%, IQ $\geq$ 5), around half had no or little intention to stay in China (N=26, 8.8%, IS $\leq$ 3) and only a few had intention to stay in China (N=8, 2.7%, IS $\geq$ 5); among respondents who had intention to stay in China (N=157 52.9%, IS $\geq$ 5), the majority had no or little intention to quit current organisation (N=111, 37.4%, IQ $\leq$ 3), and still a few had intention to quit current organisation (N=8, 2.7%, IQ $\geq$ 5).

This indicated that the concepts of intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China in this study were not complete opposites. Those expatriate academics who had intention to quit their current organisation might no longer stay in China or might still stay in China. Those expatriate academics who had intention to stay in China might continue working in their current organisation in China, and also might quit their current organisation. Furthermore, this supports both organisational and host country factors in expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment may have an impact on the future intentions of expatriate academics (see Section 4.1.1).

## **5.2.2 Role of Chinese Proficiency and Time in China**

*Research Question 2b: What is the role of Chinese proficiency and time in China on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?*

Chinese proficiency and time in China were identified as negative moderating roles on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment.

### **Chinese Proficiency**

Consistent with the hypothesis that Chinese proficiency has a moderating effect on the association between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, the results in the quantitative study supported this moderating role of Chinese proficiency. Further, the results confirmed that although the analyses suggested that Chinese proficiency supported a direct impact on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics ( $\beta = 0.195^{***}$ ), the direction of the moderating effect was negative, indicating that Chinese proficiency hindered the positive relationship between attitudes toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment.

The role of Chinese proficiency for expatriate academics is as follows. First, with a less favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, when Chinese proficiency was at high level, the level of cross-cultural adjustment was high, confirming that expatriate academics could benefit from their high level of Chinese proficiency on their cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, being proficient in Chinese was one solution for their cross-cultural adjustment. Second, with a more favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, the levels of cross-cultural adjustment were similar between high and low levels of Chinese proficiency, indicating that Chinese proficiency might not be so crucial for expatriate academics on their cross-cultural adjustment once they had high level of attitude toward using local mobile Apps. Therefore, having a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps was an alternative solution for their cross-cultural

adjustment. Third, when expatriate academics had a high level of Chinese proficiency, the positive impact of their attitude toward using local mobile Apps on cross-cultural adjustment weakened, indicating that the impact of attitude toward using local Chinese Apps on cross-cultural adjustment was stronger for those expatriate academics whose Chinese proficiency was lower. Therefore, especially for those who were not proficient in Chinese, as an alternative solution, having a favourable attitude toward using local Chinese Apps was particularly important for their cross-cultural adjustment.

### **Time in China**

Consistent with the hypothesis that time in China had a moderating effect on the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, the results in the quantitative study supported this moderating role of time in China. Further, the results confirmed that although the analyses suggested that time in China supported a direct impact on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics ( $\beta = 0.221^{***}$ ), the direction of the moderating effect was negative, indicating that time in China hindered the positive relationship between attitudes toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment.

The role of time in China for expatriate academics are as follows. First, with a less favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, when time in China was at high level, the level of cross-cultural adjustment was high, confirming that expatriate academics could benefit from their longer time in China on their cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, staying for a long time in China was one solution for their cross-cultural adjustment. Second, with a more favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, the levels of cross-cultural adjustment were similar between high and low levels of time in China, indicating that time in China might not be so crucial for expatriate

academics on their cross-cultural adjustment once they had high level of attitude toward using local mobile Apps. Therefore, having a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps was an alternative solution for their cross-cultural adjustment. Third, when expatriate academics stayed for a longer time in China, the positive impact of their attitude toward using local mobile Apps on cross-cultural adjustment weakened, indicating that the impact of attitude toward using local Chinese Apps on cross-cultural adjustment was stronger for those expatriate academics who were newcomers in China. Therefore, especially for those who were newcomers in China, as an alternative solution, having a favourable attitude toward using local Chinese Apps was particularly important for their cross-cultural adjustment.

These findings were both interesting and surprising, as no previous study was found that analysed the moderating mechanism of host country language proficiency and time in host country on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment.

More surprisingly, the impact of Chinese proficiency and time in China on cross-cultural adjustment presented as a double-edged sword effect. Double-edged sword is something that has or can have both favourable/positive and unfavourable/negative consequences (Webster, 2023). Although the analysis showed that Chinese proficiency was positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = 0.195^{***}$ ) and time in China was positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment ( $\beta = 0.221^{***}$ ), expatriate academics' higher Chinese proficiency and longer time in China weakened the positive effects of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on cross-cultural adjustment. In fact, in the previous literature, when negative moderating effects have been identified, the double-edged sword effect is not uncommon. For example, the positive impact of



expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment on their intention to stay weakens when perceiving strong organizational support for future career (Chang, Chen and Chau, 2023).

Two possible reasons can contribute to the double-edged sword effect. The first reason which is most likely was information overload related to information and communication technology. Information overload is defined as the cognitive and emotional state that occurs when people are confronted with more information than they have cognitive ability or time to handle, i.e. when their information processing ability exceeds their information processing needs (Karr-Wisniewski and Lu, 2010; Eppler and Mengis, 2004), and unable to effectively process and retrieve information related to or transmitted by these technologies (Karr-Wisniewski and Lu, 2010; Rutkowski, Saunders and Hatton, 2013; Saunders *et al.*, 2017). A finding on information overload by previous evidence has shown support -- the negative impact of information overload is related to the use of different social media applications (Matthes *et al.*, 2020). The detailed explanations are as follows.

First, information overload is considered based on the amount of information received (Blair, 2010; Berghel, 1997). Expatriates who have high host country language proficiency are likely to experience fewer challenges and difficulties in accessing the Chinese interfaces of local mobile Apps (Luna, Peracchio and de Juan, 2002), which may make them more willing to use and enable them gain more information when using local mobile Apps. Expatriate academics who stay longer in China have also been identified in this study to have higher Chinese proficiency ( $F= 7.026$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), therefore may make them more willing to use and also obtain more information when using local mobile Apps. In addition, in today's China, a highly digitalized country,

mobile phones, desktops, and laptops are ubiquitous in people's daily lives, especially mobile phones. People carry their phones with them and almost always have a wide range of App interactions (Saunders *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, expatriate academics who have higher host country language proficiency and who stay longer in China are likely to obtain excessive information through using a wide variety of local mobile Apps.

Second, previous evidence has indicated that excessive supply of the environment may hinder and interfere with individuals' cross-cultural adjustment to the environment (Harvey, Blouin and Stout, 2006; Edwards, 1996). For example, proactive individuals are less likely to recognize the necessary information to initiate changes when being overloaded by the excess information obtained from social media usage (Hu *et al.*, 2020). Over time, information overload may reduce people's self-esteem, make them feel painful (Chen and Lee, 2013), depressed (Baker and Algorta, 2016), psychologically stressed (Reinecke *et al.*, 2017; Lee, Son and Kim, 2016), fatigued (Cao and Sun, 2018), anxious (Bawden and Robinson, 2009), negatively affected (LaRose *et al.*, 2014), resulting in a decrease in their work performance (Karr-Wisniewski and Lu, 2010; O'Reilly, 1980; Eppler and Mengis, 2004), a decrease in their perseverance, confidence, and willingness to participate in cross-cultural adjustment, as well as a loss of control over the situation (Lichtenstein and Brush, 2001; Lewin, 2009). Therefore, checking and verifying the large amount of information received from multiple local mobile applications and striving to distinguish useful and irrelevant information, and reflecting on it may take up expatriates a lot of time and other resources, confuse them, affect their ability to set priorities, and make them more difficult to recall previous information (Schick, Gordon and Haka, 1990), and ultimately slow down their cross-cultural adjustment.

Third, the assumption that host country language proficiency always has a beneficial impact on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment has already questioned in the previous literature. For example, the higher host country language proficiency, the better the relationship with HCNs is just a hypothetical assumption that people take for granted, yet is not necessarily correct, such as the 'too good' host country language proficiency of expatriates violates the clear internal group boundaries between HCNs and expatriates, creating an identity threat (Peltokorpi and Pudelko, 2021). Another example, those who are proficient in the host country language are more aware of the conflicting needs between the HCNs and expatriates, while those who are not proficient in the host country language may not even notice these conflicting signals (Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999).

Fourth, the qualitative study of this research has also shown further support for the view that host country language proficiency does not always have a beneficial influence on expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment.

*I've long held a thesis that ignorance in terms of language can sometimes be beneficial. I don't know this is something that I've got or a sort of academic and opinions for this, but I find when I go back to the U.K., it becomes very frustrated with a lot of the background chatter that I hear. So, people complain in about just small things day to day life like in public areas. In China, I have none of that because I can switch off the language completely. <A4>*

However, an alternative reason might be that expatriates with high host country language proficiency and with a long time in China could directly benefit from their high language proficiency (c.f. Kim and Slocum, 2008; Peltokorpi, 2008; Puck, Kittler and Wright, 2008; Salgado and Bastida, 2017; Selmer and Luring, 2015; Selmer, 2006b; Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002) and staying long time in China (c.f. Luring and Selmer, 2018; Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013; Selmer, 2002b) on their cross-cultural adjustment through various channels, having a favourable attitude toward using

local mobile Apps to develop cross-cultural adjustment becomes less obvious or less important.

### **5.2.3 Role of Cross-cultural Adjustment**

*Research Question 2c: What is the role of expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment on their attitude toward using local mobile Apps and their intention to quit their current organisation and intention to stay in China?*

Expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment was identified as full mediating role on their attitude toward using local mobile Apps and their intention to quit their current organisation, and partial mediating role on their attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to stay in China.

The results in the qualitative study identified the significance of attitude toward using local mobile Apps on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics. The results in the quantitative study supported the hypothetical relationship that the attitude toward using local mobile Apps was negatively correlated with cross-cultural adjustment and intention to quit current organisation, positively correlated with intention to stay in China, and cross-cultural adjustment mediated the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China.

These findings were both interesting and surprising, as no previous study was found on how attitude toward using local mobile Apps affected intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China, as well as on the mediating mechanism of cross-cultural adjustment on the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile

Apps and expatriates' intention to quit their current organisation and intention to stay in the host country.

What could explain the reason why expatriate academics with favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps adjusted better cross-culturally, thus had less intention to quit their current organisation and had more intention to stay in China was as follows. As suggested by the Theory of Person Environment (P-E) Fit (Edwards, 1996), individual level outcomes result in the interaction between the attributes of person and environment, and in a complex cross-cultural environment which is full of unpredictability and uncertainty, individual cognition, attitude and behaviour are impacted by both internal and external factors of individual characteristics (Hu et al., 2017). Therefore, expatriates with a favourable attitude toward using local Apps may be helped to develop their cross-cultural adaptability and meet the needs of the environments. Expatriate academics who had a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps were likely to accept and learn new things, demonstrate a high degree of personal initiative, exhibit positive motivations and psychological preparations, actively understand and interact with the new environment, and receive a large amount of resources and information support, and were willing to invest more efforts toward staying in their current organisation in the host country, which not only promoted their cross-cultural adjustment process, but also further enhanced their favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, thereby reduced their intention to quit the current organisation and increased their intention to stay in the host country.

### **5.3 Summary**

In summary, in regard to *factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese TNE*, the first qualitative study identified eight key factors:

cultural intelligence, personality traits, Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, family support and networks, organisational support, interaction between HCNs and expatriate academics, and micro governmental support. The second quantitative study further focused on and verified two factors: Chinese proficiency and attitude toward using local mobile Apps. In addition, the qualitative study identified four demographic factors showing significant differences on expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment: previous experience, Chinese ethnicity of spouses or partners, time in China and age. The quantitative study further verified three factors: previous work experience, time in China and age, and another factor which was not found in the qualitative study, academic title. Moreover, motivations of good benefits, experiencing and exploring, career development and escaping, which showed some clues on cross-cultural adjustment but were not fully determined in the qualitative study, were proved not associated with cross-cultural adjustment. Moreover, demographic factors showing significant differences on different motivations were reported. Regarding *the relationship between Chinese proficiency, time in China, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, and their future intentions*, in the quantitative study, demographic factors showing significant differences on Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, and future intentions were revealed. Chinese proficiency and time in China were identified to act as negatively moderating roles on the relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment. And cross-cultural adjustment was found to play as mediating roles on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China.

The results of the second quantitative study basically showed consistency with the results of the first qualitative study, with only two factors, previous educational

experience in China and location of the organisation by level of internationalisation yielding inconsistent results, and another one factor, age, yielding contradictory results regarding the factors affecting cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics.

However, through the further quantitative study, many results of the qualitative study had been further refined. For example, it was found that the significant impact of previous experience on cross-cultural adjustment was mainly on previous work experience, the impact of Chinese ethnicity of spouses or partners on cross-cultural adjustment was mainly on interaction cross-cultural adjustment, and different demographic factors, such as time in China and age, had varying degrees of impact on cross-cultural adjustment. Moreover, as stated above, results that were not obtained from the qualitative study were revealed in the quantitative study, such as the impact of academic title on cross-cultural adjustment, the moderating role of Chinese proficiency and time in China as well as the mediating role of cross-cultural adjustment.

The results of the research questions in this research are summarised as follows (see Table 5-3).

Research Questions		Approach	Results
1 What factors affect expatriate academics' CCA in Chinese TNE?	1a What are the key factors affecting expatriate academics' CCA?	Qualitative	Cultural intelligence
			Personality traits
			Chinese proficiency
			Attitude toward using local mobile Apps
			Family support and networks
			Organisational support
	Quantitative	Chinese proficiency***	
		Attitude toward using local mobile Apps***	
	1b What are the demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment?	Qualitative	Previous experience
			Chinese ethnicity of spouses or partners
			Time in China
			Age
Quantitative		Previous work experience*	
		Time in China***	
		Age**	
		Academic title**	
1c What is the relationship between motivations for expatriation and expatriate academics' CCA?	Qualitative	Motivation of good benefits, experiencing and exploring, and career development seem to be positively associated with CCA.	
	Quantitative	Motivations of experiencing and exploring, good benefits, career development and escaping are not associated with CCA.	
	Chinese proficiency	Quantitative	Chinese ethnicity***



2 What is the relationship between Chinese proficiency, time in China, expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps, CCA and their future intentions?	2a What are the demographic factors affecting expatriate academics' Chinese proficiency, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, and intention to quit their current organisation and intention to stay in China?		Chinese ethnicity of spouses/partners***
			Previous educational experience in China***
			Previous work experience in China***
			Time in China***
		No significant difference	
	Attitude toward using local mobile Apps	Age*	
	Intention to quit	Type of expatriate*	
	Intention to stay	Academic title*	
	2b What is the role of Chinese proficiency and time in China on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriate academics' CCA?	Quantitative	Chinese proficiency**: negative moderating role
			Time in China*: negative moderating role
2c What is the role of expatriate academics' CCA on their attitude toward using local mobile Apps and their intention to quit their current organisation and intention to stay in China?	Quantitative	Intention to quit current organisation**: full mediating role	
		Intention to stay in China**: partial mediating role	

Note: Qualitative Study (n=31), Quantitative Study (n=297), \*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

**Table 5-3 Results of the Research Questions**

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## 6. CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the contributions of this research both for theory and practice. This chapter provides a critical overview on the context, sample, method, and content of this research and also provides suggestions for future research and draws conclusions.

### 6.1 Contributions

This research is one of the first studies to combine the fields of expatriate, cross-cultural adjustment and information systems research, responding to the calls for further research in linking cross-cultural research with information systems (Hoehle and Venkatesh, 2015; Gera, Chadha and Ahuja, 2020), especially a more unified understanding of digital elements for expatriates (Pan and Froese, 2023; Selmer et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2022), a more unified understanding of the role of these digital elements in supporting expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment (Nardon, Aten and Gulanowski, 2015; Pan and Froese, 2023; Selmer et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2022) to reveal and provide a broader view on the evolving role of digital transformation on cross-cultural adjustment in the context of global mobility.

This research determines the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment in a major centre of TNE and reveals the counter-intuitively negative moderating role of host country language proficiency and time in host country and identifies the potential mediating mechanism of cross-cultural adjustment. The theoretical model (see Figure 6-1) on the relationship between host country language proficiency, time in host country, attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions developed through the qualitative and the quantitative studies of expatriate academics, specifies the practical applications of

information technology in international human resources from the perspective of expatriate academics, not only provides insights for universities and institutions involved in TNE, governmental policy-makers but also gives strategies and solutions for expatriates themselves.

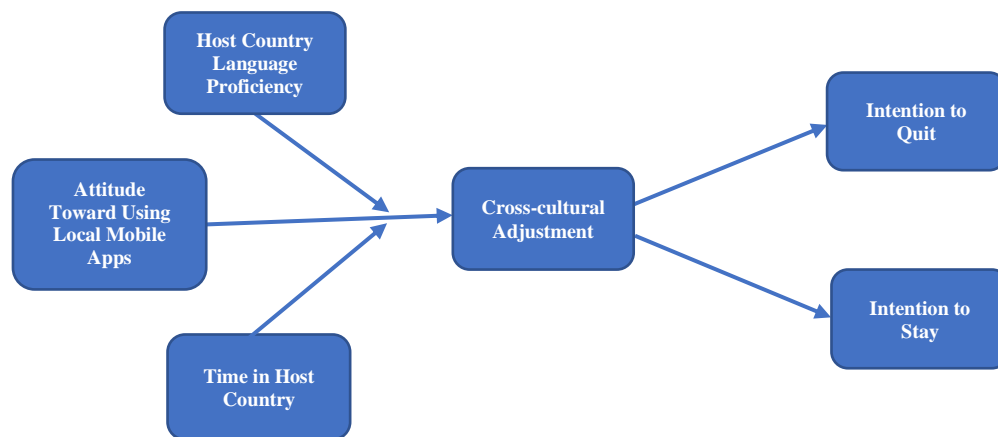


Figure 6-1 Theoretical Model

### 6.1.1 Theoretical Contributions

First, this research *identifies the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions*, taking expatriate academics in Chinese TNE as a sample, theoretically contributing to the existing literature in relation to information systems, cross-cultural adjustment and expatriates, especially expatriate academics. A major new finding identified in this research is that attitude toward using local mobile Apps is positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in China nowadays. In addition, several other new factors are identified: willingness to adjust as a separate factor from cross-cultural motivation, being positive, persistent, proactive, realistic, independent and patient; planned time, age upon exposure to multicultural environments, host country ethnicity of spouses or partners; multi-

dimensional support for grant applications, allocation of assistants, open channel for communication, enhancement of international accessibility, training on academic English and culture for students, psychological support, HCNs' categorization of ingroup or outgroup, community support and networks as a separate factor, and micro governmental support and macro policy toward TNE and EA.

Moreover, this research identifies that expatriate academics' motivations of experiencing and exploring, good benefits, career development are not associated with their cross-cultural adjustment, however, does not support the view of Vijayakumar and Cunningham (2016) that motivation of experiencing and exploring is positively associated with cross-cultural adjustment while motivation of good benefits is negatively associated with interaction and work adjustment, neither supports the view of Selmer and Luring (2013a) that motivation of escaping is negatively related to cross-cultural adjustment.

Furthermore, this research shows consistency with the positive association of cultural intelligence (Han *et al.*, 2022; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmailzadeh, 2017; Abdul Malek and Budhwar, 2013), personality traits (Han *et al.*, 2022), host country language proficiency (Nolan and Liang, 2022; Peltokorpi, 2008; Puck, Kittler and Wright, 2008; Salgado and Bastida, 2017; Takeuchi, Yun and Russell, 2002), previous experience (Black, 1988; Liu and Shaffer, 2005; Mezas and Scandura, 2005; Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Shaffer, Gilley and Harrison, 1999; Kim and Slocum, 2008; Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013), family support and networks (Abdul Malek, Budhwar and Reiche, 2015; Caligiuri, Joshi and Lazarova, 1999; Caligiuri *et al.*, 1998b; Sambasivan, Sadoughi and Esmailzadeh, 2017), time in host country (Luring and Selmer, 2018; Adrienne and Forseth Whitman, 2013; Selmer, 2002b) with cross-cultural adjustment of

expatriate academics and supports the counter-intuitive association of age (Selmer and Lauring, 2013b; Wechtler, Koveshnikov and Dejoux, 2015) and cultural distance (Hemmasi and Downes, 2013; Fenech, Baguant and Abdelwahed, 2022; Selmer and Shiu, 1999; Selmer, 2002a; Selmer, Ebrahimi and Mingtao, 2000a) with cross-cultural adjustment. Moreover, this study supports the negative association of cross-cultural adjustment with intention to quit a job in the organisation (Akhil and Liu, 2019; Bhaskar-Shrinivas *et al.*, 2005; Siers, 2007) and return home (Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso and Werther, 2012; Siers, 2007; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2005), and the positive association with intention to stay abroad (Black and Gregersen, 1991a).

By identifying the new and important factor of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment which has not been investigated by the previous literature, revealing the results which are conflicting with the previous literature, and supporting the results identified the previous literature, this study expands the extant literature on the antecedents of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions in the era of digital transformation.

Second, this research *reveals a counter-intuitive negative moderating role of host country language proficiency and time in host country* on the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, theoretically enriching the literature in relation to information system, cross-cultural adjustment and expatriates, especially expatriate academics. This study is the first study revealing that when host country language proficiency and time in host country interact with attitude toward using local mobile Apps, they both hinder cross-cultural adjustment. Given the previous literature has been limited to the moderating effects of host country language proficiency on expatriates' efforts (Bell and Harrison, 1996), role conflict (Shaffer,

Gilley and Harrison, 1999) and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment, by identifying this new and negative moderating effect of host country language proficiency and time in host country, this study expands the extant literature on the moderating roles in the relationship between antecedents related to digital elements and cross-cultural adjustment in the era of digital transformation.

Third, this research *identifies the potential mediating mechanism of cross-cultural adjustment* underlying the relationship between the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in a host country, theoretically extending the literature in relation to information systems and international human resource management. This research is the first study revealing that cross-cultural adjustment can be an effective channel through which attitude of using local mobile Apps plays a role in expatriate academics' intention to quit current organisation and stay in host country. Given that previous literature focused on the mediating mechanism of cross-cultural adjustment in the relationship between other factors and withdraw intention, such as the Five Factor Model (FFM) (Harari et al., 2018), motivational CQ (Akhil and Liu, 2019), protean career attitude (Cao, Hirschi and Deller, 2013), and between resilience and intention to stay in the host country (Davies, Stoermer and Froese, 2019), by identifying this new mediating effect, this study expands the extant literature on the mediating role of expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in the relationship between factors related to digital elements and expatriates' future intentions in the era of digital transformation.

## **6.1.2 Practical Contributions**

### **For Universities and Institutions Involved in TNE**

This research provides insights for universities and institutions involved in TNE, particularly Chinese TNE, to help design human resource management interventions and develop successful strategies to enhance cross-cultural adjustment and retention of expatriate academics (see Table 6-1).

When recruiting and selecting, in order to screen out those who perform well in the domestic environment but may not be able to successfully engage in cross-cultural interaction, and to place suitable individuals in appropriate positions to reduce unnecessary costs caused by international dispatch failures (Jyoti and Kour, 2017), and enhance expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment and retention, human resource management should prioritize candidates of some specific features, such as high cultural intelligence, certain personality traits, high host language proficiency, a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, supportive family and networks, previous experience in the host country, being longer in the host country, senior in age, senior academic titles, and spouses or partners of host country ethnicity. If organisations cannot exclude specific candidate groups due some reasons for the sake of maximizing talent, thereby limiting their talent pool (Paik and Vance, 2002), human resource management should be fully prepared to provide more support for those who do not have these specific features. It should be noted that cultural dissimilarity with the host country culture should not be a concern. On the contrary, organisations should provide the same organisational support to those who have cultural similarity to the host country culture and those who do not. Prior to departure, human resource management of universities

and institutions can enhance the cultural knowledge and host country language of expatriate academics through pre assignment training on cultural knowledge and host country language. Post arrival, human resource management should provide support on some key aspects, such as providing support for daily routine, induction, training on language and culture, multi-dimensional support for grant applications, caring for children and spouse, facilitating international and local connections, and allocating assistants.



Stakeholders	Suggestions and Recommendations			
Universities and institutions involved in TNE	Criteria for recruiting and selecting		High cultural intelligence	
			Certain personality traits, such as open-minded, flexible and curious, positive and stable emotions, compassionate, good at listening, easy-going, good at communication, independent, persistent, proactive, realistic, independent, and patient	
			A favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps	
			Supportive family and networks	
			Previous experience in the host country	
			Being longer in the host country	
			Being senior in age	
			Senior academic titles	
			Spouses or partners of host country ethnicity	
	Strategies on facilitating cross-cultural adjustment	Prior departure training	Providing pre assignment training on cultural knowledge and host country language	
		Post arrival key support	Providing knowledge, personalized consultation and training on using local mobile Apps	
			Providing support for daily routine	
			Providing induction, training on language and culture	
Providing multi-dimensional support for grant applications				
Caring for children and spouse				
Facilitating international and local connections				
Allocating assistants				
Governmental policy-makers	Strategies on facilitating cross-cultural adjustment	Promoting foreign friendly local mobile Apps	Attaching importance to cross-cultural differences	
			Offering multilingual interfaces	
		Key support	Introducing favourable policies for TNE and EA	
			Facilitating international travel	
	Providing programmes for integration			
	Clarifying government requirements			
	Expatriates	Strategies on developing cross-cultural adjustment		Cultivating a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps
				Learning the basic knowledge of the host country language, including both Mandarin and local dialects
Improving cultural intelligence				
Cultivating personality traits				
Winning families' support and establish family networks				
Being willing to interact with Chinese HCNs				
Being willing to ask for help from HCNs				
Being low ethnocentric				

**Table 6-1 Suggestions and Recommendations**

What is particularly important for human resource management is to cultivate a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps. Human resource management should offer expatriates the knowledge of local mobile Apps, give them personalized consultation and training on using local mobile Apps, to cultivate their favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps and to integrate the use of local mobile Apps into their daily work and life, especially for newcomers and those who are not proficient in the host country language. Furthermore, human resource management should attach great importance to the training on the host country language, even local dialects to help expatriate academics better and quickly adjust to new environments.

Moreover, human resource management should attach special attention and support on expatriate academics who are young, AEs and those with academic title of associate professor/senior lecturer, because the youngest ones have the most intention to quit their current organisation compared to others, AEs are less willing to stay in the host country compared to SIEs, and those with academic title of associate professor/senior lecturer had the least intention to stay in the host country compared to others.

### **For Governmental Policy-makers**

This research offers insights for governmental policy-makers to better support and cater to the needs of expatriates from various cultural backgrounds to enhance their cross-cultural adjustment and retention (see Table 6-1).

Governmental policy-makers should highlight the importance of TNE and the position and role of expatriate academics in China from a national policy perspective and introduce favourable policies for TNE and expatriate academics. Although China has formulated and implemented many policies to attract and recruit expatriate academics,

there are few policies on how to retain, motivate, and cultivate expatriate academics. The role of expatriate academics in national policies is ambiguous and has not received enough attention from governmental policy-makers (Li and Xue, 2021). Governmental policy-makers need to introduce more specific national policies, provide a more friendly environment, break down social and cultural barriers, actively encourage and strengthen the integration of expatriate academics in China into the Chinese environment. Specific national policies are as simplifying the application and approval procedures for residence permits, work permits, and social and medical insurance as well as enhancing compatibility of identity systems. In addition, a long-term and sustainable career development mechanism and incentive system for expatriate academics should be established not only to attract but also retain them in the long term. In addition, governmental policy-makers should offer expatriates support on some other key aspects, such as facilitating international travel, clarifying government requirements, providing support for bilingual service and providing good daily service.

Most importantly, given the huge expatriate population size in China, the importance of local mobile Apps for expatriates, and the significance of a good international reputation for local mobile Apps, governmental strategies on promoting foreign friendly local mobile Apps to cater to the needs of expatriates from various cultural backgrounds not only help attract expatriate users, cultivate their favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, retain them, and encourage them to recommend their preferred Apps to others, thus to gain competitive international marketing advantages, but also manifest the social inclusion of Chinese government for non-native cultural individuals and non-native speakers.

Attaching importance to cross-cultural differences and offering multilingual interfaces are two main strategies. To avoid cross-cultural neglect of foreign users by the host country of the Apps caused by behaviour models built using locally designed systems (Hoehle, Zhang and Venkatesh, 2015), as well as the negative impact of culture on the successful implementation and adoption of information technology (Leidner and Kayworth, 2006), ultimately to cater to the cultural preferences of expatriate users, attract more expatriate academic users, and enhance their favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps, governmental policy-makers should fully consider the impact of cultural differences on users' attitude toward using local mobile Apps. It is a good strategy to customize the interfaces more comprehensively based on the cultural backgrounds of expatriate users in specific countries. For example, while maintaining Chinese cultural elements, adjusting appearance of mobile Apps, modifying a few components of mobile App interfaces, such as formats of date, time and language, and developing mobile Apps with local cultural elements and symbols (Reinecke and Bernstein, 2013). In addition, to avoid processing barriers represented by second language texts, such as decreased attention concentration, decreased perceptual control of interaction, and increased navigation difficulty (Luna, Peracchio and de Juan, 2002), especially the challenges and difficulties of accessing Chinese web pages, ultimately to cater to the language preferences of expatriate users, enable them to interact with the website in their mother tongue, and attract more expatriate users, and to enhance their positive attitude toward using local mobile Apps, as people have a more favourable attitude toward using the website if they can interact with the website in their native language (Nantel, Senecal and Mekki-Berrada, 2005), government decision-makers should fully consider the difficulties in understanding and learning the host country language interface. They can promote the practice of some leading Apps, such as

WeChat, JD, Taobao, Alipay, and Didi, including different language options in local mobile Apps and present cultural values consistent with the languages of expatriate users to make it easy to browse, select, download, and interact in their native languages, as well as providing details and information in their native languages to ensure and enhance their confidence (Wang and Dai, 2020).

### **For Expatriates**

This research also gives expatriates themselves a comprehensive understanding of various factors affecting their cross-cultural adjustment and retention issues during their expatriation and offers strategies and solutions to actively develop cross-cultural adjustment (see Table 6-1).

What is of particular importance is to cultivate a favourable attitude toward using local mobile Apps as much as possible. On the other hand, expatriates should be moderate in using local mobile Apps, avoid excessive or prolonged use of local mobile Apps, and selectively and critically accept various information to avoid information overload.

In addition, expatriates must be aware that learning the basic knowledge of the host country language should be considered as part of the task (Dolainski, 1997). Especially in China, it is crucial to recognize that although Mandarin is the official language, local dialects may be the preferred choice for daily communication in many parts of China, especially in the daily interactions with HCNs (Selmer, 2005c; Selmer, 1998). Therefore, if one can understand both Mandarin and local dialects, they may be in a better position (Selmer and Shiu, 1999). While being aware of the importance of speaking the host country language, expatriates must enhance their willingness to speak the host country language and make full use of every opportunity to increase their host country language

proficiency. Indeed, as pointed out by Selmer (1999), many Chinese believe that the willingness of foreigners to speak Chinese is more important than their actual proficiency.

Furthermore, expatriates should take the initiative and consciously understand the local culture, customs, and values of the host country, cultivate their cultural awareness, and enhance their cultural intelligence. Especially for expatriates with Chinese ethnicity and from countries with similar cultures with China, it is important to never assume that it is easy for them to adjust in China. In addition, expatriates should try to cultivate those personality traits which benefit to their adjustment and win their families' support and establish family networks. Furthermore, expatriates should be willing to interact with HCNs, ask for help from HCNs and try to be low ethnocentric. Meanwhile, it is crucial for them to be fully aware that experiencing culture shock in the host country and being temporarily unadjusted is a normal phenomenon, and there is no need to feel too nervous and worried. As time in the host country increases, their culture shock will gradually weaken, and will be better adjusted to the host country.

## **6.2 Limitations and Future Areas of Research**

Although the good coverage of expatriate academics in Chinese TNE and the relatively large scale of the samples in this research enhance the representativeness of the research results, and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted before questionnaire survey, this research also has some limitations.

First, as for geographical generalizability, the response rate of the quantitative study was around 20%, which may lead to non response bias. Some expatriates who have not adjusted in China might be unwilling or unable to participate, or may have already left

and therefore did not respond in this study. The responses of these expatriates to the questionnaires may be different from those expatriates who have participated, so the sample may not represent the entire population of expatriate academics in China. It is noted that the response rate of this study compares favourably with the typical response rate with about 15% suggested by Shaffer et al. (2006) for direct contact with expatriates. However, it is not possible to give a definite answer about the nature of the impact. In addition, this research only examines the expatriate academics in Chinese TNE. Living environments, customs, cultures, and levels of economic development, especially availability and connectivity of Internet and popularization of smartphones and mobile Apps vary in different countries. For example, in most countries in regions such as Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa, the average speeds of fixed broadband and Internet connection are far behind those in most countries in regions such as North America or Asia Pacific (Cisco, 2020). Accordingly, the impacts of digitization on expatriates may vary depending on the levels of digitization in different host countries. For example, in China, digitization has reached a stable and widespread level, creating a digital society that allows people to engage in virtual interactions (Kraus et al., 2022), and as a result, expatriates living in China are more likely to feel the impact of digitization on their daily life and work than those living in countries with lower levels of digitization. Therefore, the validity in other countries with underdeveloped levels of digitization needs to be further investigated. It is suggested that future research consider expatriates in different contexts, and also look at trends even if not as clear a picture as in China, for generating more comprehensive insights into expatriates in different contexts and providing better suggestions for expatriate selection and management.

Second, from the perspective of *types of expatriates*, in the qualitative study, the sample population was only SIE, while in the quantitative study, the sample size of AE was

only 19, accounting for only 6% of the total. Considering the differences between AEs and SIEs in term of cross-cultural adjustment (see Section 2.2.1), conclusions which are based mainly on SIEs may not be applicable to AEs. In addition, this study was conducted among expatriate academics in higher education, which is a unique industry. As expatriates in this unique industry, expatriate academics are unique in many aspects (see Section 2.2.1). In different contexts, there may be different understandings of the factors influencing cross-cultural adjustment (Selmer and Luring, 2013b). Moreover, this qualitative study identified some factors particularly relevant to cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics, such as multidimensional support for funding applications, recruitment of master's or doctoral students, and academic English and cultural training for students. This quantitative study (see Section 4.2.1) also reported a factor that is particularly relevant to expatriate academics and had a significant impact on their cross-cultural adjustment, namely academic titles. However, previous studies (see Section 2.2.2) have also provided support for the similarities between expatriate academics and other types of expatriates in many aspects, such as their need to communicate and work with HCNs (Chou, 2020), trying to effectively manage in new cultural environments (Richardson and McKenna, 2000; Mendenhall, 1996), having authority over HCNs, and being evaluated based on performance (Mendenhall, 1996). Moreover, the literature review (see Section 2) and the qualitative research results (see Section 3.2) indicate that expatriate academics and other types of expatriates do not exhibit fundamental differences in the factors influencing their cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, the findings of this study are likely to be valid in other industries. It would be interesting to do further investigation to compare SIEs with AEs, and to examine expatriates in other countries and expatriates from other industries to get more comprehensive and convincing findings.



Third, regarding *research methodology*, this research uses a self-reporting questionnaire from a single source to evaluate all variables, which may generate common method variances and affect the relationships between variables. Meanwhile, this study adopts a cross-sectional analysis that reflects the situation during a certain period, rather than a longitudinal analysis. The limiting of the research results to specific time points does not represent the dynamic evolution process of the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, nor does it test causal relationships. In addition, a previous meta-analysis has shown that over time, the cross-cultural adjustment trajectory of expatriates showed a U-shaped pattern (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005). Therefore, adopting longitudinal design allows researchers to capture changes in research variables, potentially providing richer details on the progress of cross-cultural adjustment. Although a few pre and post measurement methods (see section 5.2.1) were used to prevent common method variances from affecting the research and the results also confirm that common method variances do not affect the research, future research could use multiple raters to evaluate, such as supervisors, spouses, close friends of expatriates or HCNs. An alternative approach is to undertake a longitudinal study to track their behaviour dynamics during the whole process of cross-cultural adjustment though measurement could affect the phenomenon, to overcome the above limitations and reveal the relationships between variables more comprehensively.

Finally, in terms of *research content*, this quantitative study only examines cross-cultural adjustment as a mediating mechanism on the association between the attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in a host country. It is recommended that future research further investigate the attitude or the actual adoption of some specific local mobile Apps instead of the general attitude toward using local mobile Apps, which may be over-generalised. In addition,

future research can further explore some particularly unexpected but interesting antecedents unintentionally revealed in this qualitative study, such as willingness to adjust as a separate factor, being positive, persistent, proactive, realistic, independent and patient, planned time, age on early exposure to multicultural environments, multi-dimensional support for grant applications, allocation of assistants, open channel for communication, enhancement of international accessibility, training on academic English and culture for students, psychological support, HCNs' categorization of ingroup or outgroup, community support and networks as a separate factor, and micro governmental support. Furthermore, for the factors which are found to yield inconsistent or even contradictory results regarding the impacts on cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate academics in the qualitative study and the quantitative study, such as age, previous educational experience in China, and location of the organisation by level of internationalisation, it is recommended that future research conduct more empirical studies to further examine the impacts of these factors on the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriate groups with different characteristics to gain a deeper understanding and more insights for expatriate selection and management.

In conclusion, with the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese TNE has gradually returned to a period of continuous development. The demand for global expatriate academics from Chinese TNE has further increased. Since expatriate academics are of great importance in the talent strategy of TNE and yet with many problems, recruiting, motivating and retaining expatriate academics is a major challenge for human resource management of TNE.

This research is one of the first studies to combine the fields of expatriate, cross-cultural adjustment and information systems research, giving a comprehensive picture of

expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions in Chinese TNE. Based on the interview data from 31 expatriate academics in China, foremost, this research identifies the factors affecting expatriate academics' cross-cultural adjustment, and then based on the survey data from 297 expatriate academics in China, for the first time, this research develops a model linking attitude toward using local mobile Apps, cross-cultural adjustment, intention to quit current organisation and intention to stay in China, revealing a negative correlation between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to quit current organisation, and a positive correlation between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and intention to stay in China, both mediated by cross-cultural adjustment. In addition, this research identifies the negative interactive effect of expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps and Chinese proficiency, as well as the negative interactive effect of attitude toward using local mobile Apps and time in China on cross-cultural adjustment. Chinese proficiency and time in China weaken the positive relationship between attitude toward using local mobile Apps and cross-cultural adjustment.

This research gives novel and important insights and raises awareness of the crucial roles of expatriate academics' attitude toward using local mobile Apps, host country language proficiency, and time in host country on cross-cultural adjustment and future intentions, not only clarifying the necessity for human resource management of universities and institutions in Chinese TNE to ensure smoother cross-cultural adjustment for expatriate academics, helping them provide better support for expatriate academics, but also enabling governmental policy-makers to better understand and meet the needs of expatriate academics in China. In addition, this research provides valuable suggestions for expatriates themselves. Finally, this research encourages researchers to conduct interdisciplinary research with wider geographical generalizability and types of

expatriates, research methodology and content to further explore new solutions to cross-cultural issues.

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# APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM OF INTERVIEWS FOR QUALITATIVE STUDY

## Participant Consent Form of Interviews

**Project title** Expatriate Academics' Cross-cultural Adaptation and Future Intentions in Chinese Transnational Higher Education

**Researcher's name** Yuling Wang

**Supervisor's name** Martin Lockett, Abby Zhou, Jingcai Dong

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that the interview/data collection will be recorded/filmed.
- I understand that data will be stored in accordance with data protection laws.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require more information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Sub-Committee of the University of Nottingham, Ningbo if I wish to make a complaint related to my involvement in the research.

**Signed** ..... (participant)

**Print name**..... **Date** .....

### Contact details

Researcher: Yuling.Wang@nottingham.edu.cn

Supervisor: Martin.Lockett@nottingham.edu.cn

Abby.Zhou@nottingham.edu.cn

djc@zufe.edu.cn

UNNC Research Ethics Sub-Committee Coordinator:

Joanna.Huang@nottingham.edu.cn

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# APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR QUALITATIVE STUDY

## Interview Questions

### 1. General Background Information

- 1) What is your nationality and second culture?
- 2) What is your age?
- 3) Do you have your spouse or children with you?  
  
 in this city in China  in other city in China  overseas  no, single
  - What is the ethnicity and nationality of your spouse?
- 4) What is your current role?
  - Title:  Teaching fellow  Assistant professor/ lecturer  Associate professor/ senior lecturer  Full/Chair professor  Other
  - Focus:  Teaching  Research  Teaching and Research
  - Management  Other
  - Management/not:  Department level  Faculty level  University level  No
  - How much discretion do you have in your current role over what you do and how you do it?
- 5) What is your level of Chinese language?  HSK(1-6)  Basic/intermediate/advanced/native
- 6) Do you have previous working experience as an expatriate  in China  other countries?
  - How long?
  - What was your age when you began your first international expatriation?
- 7) How long have you been here?
- 8) What is approximate number of expatriate academics in your current organisation?
- 9) What encouraged you to work as an expatriate academic in this transnational university in China?

### 2. Adaptation

- 1) Please describe:
  - Your expectations before you came to China
  - The feelings when you first arrived
  - Your feelings as an expatriate academic here now
- 2) How do you assess your adaptation, fast or slow?
- 3) In general, do you enjoy living and working here in Chinese TNE?

*General Adaptation:*

- 1) In terms of living here as an expatriate academic in Chinese TNE, what are the areas where you need to adapt to social life and cultural environment?
  - What are most difficult areas in adapting? Please give one or two examples.
- 2) What knowledge, skills, and abilities if you have may help you to adapt to the life here better?
- 3) What support if you can get may help you to adapt to the life here better?
  - Organisation—What support have you and your family got from your organisation?
    - ◇ How would you assess the support for your adaptation?
  - Spouse and children--What support have you got from your spouse and children?
    - ◇ How would you assess the support for your adaptation?
  - Local Chinese people-- What support have you got from local Chinese people?
    - ◇ How would you assess the support for your adaptation?
  - Other?

*Interaction Adaptation:*

- 1) How would you describe your social life (life after work hours) here?
- 2) How would you describe the interaction between you and
  - your colleagues on this campus at work and outside work
    - ◇ your local Chinese colleagues?
    - ◇ your colleagues of the same cultural background with you?
    - ◇ your colleagues from other different cultural backgrounds?
  - people outside this campus
    - ◇ other local Chinese people outside?
    - ◇ other people of the same cultural background with you outside?
    - ◇ other people from other different cultural backgrounds?
- 3) Would you like to interact and make friends with local Chinese people, why and why not?
- 4) What is the approximate proportion of work and non-work time you spend with local Chinese people and non-Chinese people?
- 5) Do you know any business expatriates in China?
  - In terms of adaptation in China, what are the different aspects between you as an expatriate academic and them as business expatriates?

*Working Adaptation:*

- 1) In terms of working here as an expatriate academic in Chinese TNE, what are the areas where you need to adapt?

- What are most difficult areas in adapting? Please give one or two examples.
- 2) What knowledge, skills, and abilities if you have may help you to adapt to your job better?
  - 3) What support if you can get may help you to adapt to your job better?
    - Organisation—What support have you and your family got from your organisation?
      - ✧ How would you assess the support for your adaptation?
    - Spouse and children--What support have you got from your spouse and children?
      - ✧ How would you assess the support for your adaptation?
    - Local Chinese people-- What support have you got from local Chinese people?
      - ✧ How would you assess the support for your adaptation?
    - Other?

### **3. Performance**

How would you assess your work performance here in Chinese TNE with your previous work performance?

- Why?

### **4. Intention to Stay**

- 1) How long will you intend to be in your current organisation?
  - Why or why not?
- 2) If you move to another organisation in the future, how likely would it be that it is still in China?
  - Why or why not?

### **5. Closing Questions and Suggestions**

- 1) For expatriate academics in Chinese TNE, what are the most important aspects for cross-cultural adaptation?
- 2) What suggestions (knowledge, skills, and abilities) can you give for new comers who are planning to work in Chinese TNE in order to better adapt?
- 3) What do you think organisations can do to make it easier and faster for expatriate academics to adapt in Chinese TNE?
- 4) What other things I haven't covered you want to tell me regarding your cross-cultural experience

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# APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY FOR QUANTITATIVE STUDY

## Survey: Expatriate Academics' Cross-Cultural Adaptation and Future Intentions in China

Q1 Consent Form

**Dear Participant,**

You are invited to participate in an online survey on the cross-cultural adaptation experiences of expatriate academics in China. This research is conducted by Yuling Wang, a doctoral candidate at the University of Nottingham Ningbo.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the study is to develop a model of the factors affecting the cross-cultural adaptation of expatriate academics in China. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only for the researcher's doctorate degree at the University of Nottingham Ningbo China.

### **Benefits**

The potential benefits of participating in this study are to provide universities and other institutes with a better understanding of the factors affecting the cross-cultural adaptation of expatriate academics in China. This will give a better understanding of how to prepare, support and facilitate the adaptation and retention of expatriate academics in China. A summary of the results will be sent to you if you wish -- please leave your email at the end of the survey.

### **Procedures**

The questionnaire should take you 8-10 minutes to complete. You will be asked to answer questions and respond to statements about being an expatriate academic, based on your experiences of living and working in China.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

This survey is absolutely anonymous and does NOT request any information that will personally identify you or the organisation you work for. All information will remain confidential, be reported as group data and will have no influence on your employment.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty.

### **Contact Information**

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher's supervisor: Martin.Lockett@nottingham.edu.cn, Abby.Zhou@nottingham.edu.cn, and djc@zufe.edu.cn, or the UNNC Research Ethics Sub-Committee Coordinator: Joanna.Huang@nottingham.edu.cn. Researcher: Yuling.Wang@nottingham.edu.cn.

Please select the "Agree" option if you have read the above information and understand the nature and purpose of the research project and agree to take part. Please select the "Disagree" option if you do not wish to participate in the research project.

- Agree
- Disagree

*Skip To: End of Survey If Consent Form= Disagree*

**Part one: Demographics**

Q2 How old were you on your last birthday?

- Under 30
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- Over 70

Q3 Are you male or female?

- Male
- Female

Q4 What is your current nationality?

Q5 Are you ethnic Chinese?

- Yes.
- No.

Q6 Are you currently married/in a stable partnership?

- Currently married/in a stable partnership
- Single

*Skip To: Q10 If Are you currently married/in a stable partnership? = Single*

Q7 What is the current nationality of your spouse/partner?

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Q8 Is your spouse/partner ethnic Chinese?

- Yes.
- No.

Q9 Is your spouse/partner with you in China?

- Yes.
- No.

Q10 Do you have children with you in China?

- Yes.
- No.

Q11 In total, how long have you lived in China, including your current job?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-4 years
- 4-7 years
- More than 7 years

Q12 In which province/municipality in China is your current job based?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q13 What is your current position?

- Instructor/Research/Teaching Assistant/Fellow
- Assistant Professor/Lecturer
- Associate Professor/Senior Lecturer
- Full/Chair Professor
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Q14 What is your discipline?

- Business
- Humanities and social science and languages

- Natural, applied science and engineering
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Q15 Have you had any educational experience in China? If yes, what is the highest level of educational experience?

- Yes, Chinese UG degree.
- Yes, Chinese Master degree.
- Yes, Chinese PhD/Postdoc.
- Yes, other, e.g. exchange to China/short programme in China.
- No.

Q16 Did you have work experience in China before your current job in China?

- Yes.
- No.

Q17 Are you an organisational expatriate (OE) or self-initiated expatriate (SIE)?

- Organisational expatriate (OE) (transferred within your organisation)
- Self-initiated expatriate (SIE) (recruited direct to China)

Q18 What is the type of your current organisation?

- Sino-foreign university
- Sino-foreign joint institution/programme
- Mainland China-Hong Kong university/institution
- Chinese university/institution
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Q19 How many expatriate academics are currently in your current organisation in China?

- Less than 5
- 5-20
- 21-50
- More than 50

**Part Two: Attitude Toward Using Local Mobile Apps**



Q20 Please rate the following statements based on your attitude toward using local Chinese Apps in China.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Using local Chinese mobile Apps is a good idea.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using local Chinese mobile Apps is a foolish idea.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like the idea of using local Chinese mobile Apps.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using local Chinese mobile Apps would be pleasant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Part Three: Motivation for expatriation

Q21 Think back to when you decided to come to China. Please rate the following statements based on your feelings at that time.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I hoped to save a large amount of money.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I needed a well-paying job for my family.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted to see more of the world.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I desired an adventure/challenge.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted new experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I desired to enhance my career prospects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted to do the right thing for promotion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I thought it might do my career some good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted to escape from my situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was bored with my home country.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted something new.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Part Four: Chinese Proficiency

Q22 Please rate the following statements based on your Chinese proficiency. I feel confident in:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Using Chinese in general	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing in Chinese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaking Chinese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading and understanding Chinese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening to Chinese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Part Five: Cross-cultural Adaptation

Q23 Please rate the following statements based on how unadapted or adapted you are in China.

	Very unadapted	Unadapted	Somewhat unadapted	Neutral	Somewhat adapted	Adapted	Very adapted
Living conditions in general	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of living	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health care facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socializing with host nationals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day basis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interacting with host nationals outside of work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaking with host nationals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific job responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performance standards and expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supervisory responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q24 Do you currently work in China?

- Yes.
- No, I have already left China.

*Skip To: End of Survey If Do you currently work in China? = No, I have already left China.*

### Part Six: Intention to Quit

Q25 Please rate the following statements based on your current organisation in China (you may find it's easier to enter if you turn your phone sideways).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am actively looking for a job outside my current organisation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave my current organisation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am seriously thinking about quitting my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often think about quitting my job at my current organisation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think I will be working at my current organisation five years from now.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Part Seven: Intention to Stay in China

Q26 Please rate the following statements about your intention to stay in China (you may find it's easier to enter if you turn your phone sideways).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
In the near future, I will continue to live and work in China.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recently, I have been seriously considering the option of leaving	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Q27 This is the end of the survey. Would you like to get the summary of the results after the survey is finished? If yes, please enter your e-mail address.

- Yes, please. \_\_\_\_\_
- No, thanks