A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of Master's Degree in Management from NOVA –School of Business and Economics.

"The call for sailing uncharted seas: motivations and expectations of

recently graduated individuals"

Ana Lopes Catarino, #850

A project carried on the international management course, under the supervision of:

Professor Nuno Guimarães da Costa

Lisbon, December 7th 2013

Abstract

We explore the motivations and expectations that are impacting Portuguese recently graduated individuals in their decision of becoming international managers. Throughout a qualitative analysis over 20 interviews we construct a theoretical framework of recent graduates actual expectations and motivations regarding their international assignments. Accordingly, individuals are conducted by the desire of cultural-diversity experiences, social pressures and challenging environments. Expectations are not a result of a straightforward process; instead, they are dynamic and influenced by the challenges that international managers have to cope with during their international journey. Moreover, expectations and motivations are not mutually exclusive; they produce impact on each other, characterizing a dynamic process of international managers' lives.

Keywords: international managers; recently graduated; expatriates, motivations; expectations; social pressures; challenging environments.

INTRODUCTION

The most recent data regarding workforce reveals that the unemployment rate increases to 11.4% in European Zone and to 15,9% in Portugal in August 2012[1]. Indeed, the current economic conditions have led thousands of individuals to go abroad, and migration flows can be observed either in direction of more prosper economies, inside European Union, or emerging ones, such as Angola and Brazil. Actually, the major portion of Portuguese unemployment rate is represented by young people (below 25 years-old), 35.9% against 22.8% in European Zone[2], but these individuals are the same that have the highest propensity to search for better opportunities abroad. This has triggered an increase in the number of young adults – and often highly educated – that search for a job in another country.

The literature has been prolific in addressing the challenges faced by international managers. Black Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) identified work, host-country nationals and general aspects as the main adjustment dimensions. Expatriates effectiveness (Mol, Born, & van der Molen, 2005) and performance (Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001) have also been matter of discussion. However, the attention paid to the specific segment of young, just graduated ones, appear to be less significant. As such, the purpose of our paper is to develop a framework to explain the impact of motivations and expectations of recently graduated expatriates on their adjustment process as a whole. Concretely, we want to investigate how the condition of being recently graduated influences the modes and dimensions of adjustment. To address this gap in the literature, we interviewed 20 international managers, which are expatriates, flexpatriates, and emigrants, who have just finished their graduation two years ago at most, and are aged between 23 and 25 years old (see Exhibit 1).

---

[1] *Conjecture Indicators, Portuguese Bank* (May 2012)
[2] *"Euro area unemployment rate at 11.0%",* Eurostat newsrelease (June 2012)

We conducted a qualitative analysis to explore international managers' attitudes, motivations, and expectations when they were confronted with the need to become an expatriate. The insights that resulted from the qualitative analysis conducted, as well as a review of the literature, have led us to a deeper understanding of the adjustment issues international managers cope with. Through a codification process, we found behavioural patterns that originated categories, as presented on the discussion section of this paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cross-cultural Adaptation

Whitely and England (1977) found out that similarities and differences of value systems of managers are a function of the industrialization process and culture of a given country. Furthermore, the authors explained that even if common patterns are observed (i.e.: political backgrounds), they do not imply similarities in the value systems and behaviors, which are shaped and must be explained by cultural issues. According to their paper, cultural influences and constraints are environmental and time-specific. This means that international managers are exposed to different cultures, thus raising the question of adjustment.

Cultural adaptation and international managers' adjustment refer to a "(…) social cognitive process that reduces uncertainty and an affective process that reduces anxiety; the [positive] outcomes of cultural adaptation include psychological well-being and satisfaction"; whilst adjustment is associated with individuals' feeling of comfort when they face a new setting (Jun and Hyun, 2001:370). In this sense, the source of adaption is the fit between the individual and the culture of the host country. Additionally, the literature concerning expatriates' adjustment advocates that they have to adapt to new forms of work arrangements, to new ways of interacting with host-country nationals (HCN), and to a variety of factors concerning the expatriate's life, such as general lifestyles, the weather, and

the food habits (Black, Mendenhall and Oddu, 1991). As such, individuals' ability to fit these dimensions will be an effective source of their international adjustment.

Individuals' own characteristics, such as the levels of self-efficacy, perceptional and relational skills will define expatriates' success (Black et. Al 1991). However, there are many other factors which impact the fitting process and are intrinsic to each individual. Jun and Gentry (2001) emphasize the importance of training before expatriation and previous cultural experiences to enable the adjustment process. Shaffer, M., Harrison, D., Gilley, K. (1999), in their review, figure out that role clarity and discretion are the factors affecting positively the international adjustment capacity regarding expatriates' job. Moreover, organizations also have a preponderant role, impacting positively individuals' adjustment by means of socialization and logistical help (Kraimer et al., 2001). Lastly, non-work factors such as the capacity to face cultural novelty and family adjustment issues would also influence the process (Richardson and McKenna 2006).

Motivations

Regardless of the type of expatriation, aspects like motivations, career management issues and work pattern appear to vary considerably among individuals (Suutari and Brewster 2004). Individuals who value their personal development are more likely to have international experiences (Stahl and Cerdin 2004). Career-related issues are also pointed out as a major driver in conducting individuals to go abroad, due to the benefits that they comprise, such as higher salaries and broad skills acquisition (Inkson and Arthur 2001; Suutari and Taka 2004). Recently, Doherty, Dickmann and Mills (2011) established a comparison between expatriates and emigrants. Additionally, they concluded that expatriates give more relative value to location and host reputation, whilst the latter attribute more importance to job specificities, skills development and career impact.

Expectations

Individuals create expectations as long as they are facing new settings. Those expectations are a function of each individual's motivations, since they are the result of conscious choices in order to attain a certain goal (Victor Vroom, 1964). Louis (1980) states that 'changes', under an external perspective, 'contrasts', under an internal perspective, and 'surprise', which is the distance between expectation and reality, have more impact on expatriates than on domestic job changers. Also, career literature advocates that expatriates can be active participants in their own adjustment and their efforts are as critical to their success as organization support (Feldman and Thomas, 1992). Behind such proactive behaviors in the adaptation process is the uncertainty reduction, which facilitates the transition concerning job and culture, and lead to the development of skills and competences needed in their assignments. Indeed, expatriates are expected to observe "explicit efforts at sensemaking whenever the current state of the world is perceived to be different from the expected state of the world" (Weick, Stucliffe and Obstfeld, 2005).

METHOD

In order to provide further insights about factors influencing the motivations, expectations, and cross-cultural adjustment issues among recently graduated international managers, we interviewed 20 individuals. The purpose of these interviews was to collect first hand impressions about their international experience.To achieve a diversified sample, we chose individuals who have been in different places, from different backgrounds, and went through diverse adjustment processes.

The interviews were arranged around specific topics concerning cross-cultural adjustment, motivations and expectations (see Exhibit 2). We asked interviewees to recall events related with their experience abroad. Interviews range from 20 and 40 minutes long and some were

made personally and others via Skype, and were recorded with interviewees' permission in order to perform the transcripts. The interviewee's real names were changed to guarantee their confidentiality.

Data analysis

   After transcribed, interviews were imported to ATLAS.ti, a qualitative analysis software, through which we could organize data, concretely the identification of relevant quotes. The investigation followed the canons of qualitative content by analyzing the correspondents' behaviors, messages, and emotional expressions, which were captured in the researcher's field notes and interview transcripts (Locke, 2001). Hence, by means of close observation, we could identify the meaning of each correspondent's contribution and identify the common patterns among them. The theory of building process (Shrivastava & Hopwood, 2009), enabled us to construct conceptual categories, the fundamentals of our research problem.

   The coding process that we follow can be illustrated throughout the following example, retrieved from Joana's interview: "*The first time it was my boss that suggested me to go to Spain. I thought it would be interesting, because there in the laboratory where I worked they are the best in the world doing the technique that I wanted to learn. So this was really interesting from the point of view of knowledge. I always traveled, even before graduating I went to Barcelona for 4 months with the Erasmus program. So every time I can go abroad, I take advantage of it because I think it is a way to know different cultures. It is a challenge. So not only because of the curriculum or because of things you learn from your specialty, but also the experience it´s really important. I think it was really good.*"

   We started by categorizing this passage as motivations dimension. Afterwards, when we analyzed it in more detail, we were able to identify the professional development approach

"(...) the best in the world doing that technique that I wanted to learn"; the previous international experience category, taking into account the Erasmus program as a source of willingness to go abroad to experience cultural diversity *"(...) it is a way to know different cultures"*; and finally, the desire to be challenged *"It is a challenge"*, coded as challenging environments.

The ultimate goal was the formulation of the framework theoretical components, whose data structure is represented in Exhibit 3. In fact, "the comparative process developed *a priori* was solidifying more and more the theorizing process, as the data incidents are not adding substantial modifications to established categories, and, on other hand, it also allow to delimitate the inference to a particular point of social context under" analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:110).

FINDINGS

The capacity to overcome consecutive challenges and restore the desired level of comfort distinguishes adjusted from unadjusted expatriates. During the interviews, correspondents were asked about their cross-cultural adjustment process. From their contributions, we were able to perceive that the existing adjustment theory formalized as comprising work, interactional, and general dimensions (Black et al. 1991; Mendenhall, & Oddu, 2008) is also verified among international experiences and adjustment processes experienced by our interviewees.

In order to understand correspondents' behaviors and how much their personality and past experiences influence their international assignments, it becomes critical to profile them.

International Managers Profile

First, it was noted that social relationships are highly valued. Indeed, all correspondents make reference of friends they meet abroad: "*I felt good in that city and I made some*

friends, so I think I could take out the pressure that situation could impose me" (Mariana, London); *"We are a large group with a great relationship. There is always a time for fun not to get depressed or despaired"* (João, Angola). Therefore, the relationships they are building outside Portugal are a source of comfort in their adaptation process; they want to make new friends, and feel them as a substitute for the ones who they leave in their home countries, i.e., family, friends or someone who they have maintained an amorous relationship. In fact, they are more detached from home relationships when compared with older international managers, for whom family adjustment is an important driver in their international adaptation process (Black, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1991). Still, our correspondents consider that by interacting with new people, they will be closer to their new cultural environment, as Pedro argued: *"[You] meet new people who wide your horizons"*.

Second, we can characterize international managers as impulsive. Such impulsivity is verified when they accept proposals almost suddenly in order to explore opportunities and, subsequently, they have no kind of previous preparation: *"I honestly threw myself [to Angola]. I just finished my degree, started sending CVs and when this opportunity came up I thought: 'here in Portugal I'll not get my chance... let's do it and I'm here"* (Maria). Notwithstanding, such impulsivity is counterbalanced by the rationality they show behind their choices, as can be evidenced throughout expatriate in Angola interview: *"I think the most important is never stressing in the critical moments when you're abroad, you should always judge the best options and ponder situations properly"*. Thus, whilst they are impulsive when they decide to go abroad, they appear to be more rational when they have to take decisions against the events they are coping with during their international assignments. Then, their ability to *"ponder situations properly"* will facilitate their adjustment process.

Third, international managers are dynamic individuals in the sense that they are seeking for dynamic and challenging environments, as Francisca mentioned: *"Here in Brazil is completely [different], is expansion, expansion, expansion of new markets, is completely different"*.

Forth, motivations are related to their own career management and prospects. They show a desire to succeed professionally, to have job functions which involve high responsibility and to be recognized as good professionals. In fact, opportunities abroad are seen as the driver to achieve such objectives. According to a quote retrieved from Manuel's interview *"I worked in a country [Romania] that has a different language and I was the youngest employee of the bank and furthermore [I] was the one who had more responsibilities at the bank"*.

Fifth, flexibility is another feature that characterizes recently graduated individuals. They are able to adapt with relative ease, by being open to other cultures and new professional environments. Indeed, they characterize themselves as belonging to a generation where there is a clear desire to experience new cultures and obtain challenging jobs. As a matter of fact, when Francisca was questioned about the outcomes of his international experience, he mentioned*: "I think it is an experience that makes you more flexible and willing to adapt to [work] rhythm and accept the opportunities"*.

Creating expectations

Before facing new situations, individuals form expectations about them. When our interviewees were asked about this theme, they refer that when they go abroad in order to explore opportunities which appear almost suddenly, they have no time to organize themselves and, in that case, they always refer *"I had no time to create expectations. I did not prepare myself, I would if I had had time [...]"* (Jorge interview); however, expectations are always there – for instance, Jorge referred that he formulated no expectations, and at

same time, he mentioned: *"People are different than I have imagined, despite Nordic, they are more open"*. Therefore, it is possible to infer that expectations are always present even if people do not realize that. In addition, we perceived that expectations formed previously are a source of reference, as mentioned by Manuel: *"I had no expectations, my expectations was my grandmother's expectations regarding those people [Romanians]"*.

Additionally, challenges can match expatriates' expectations, or can be above or below them, which results in different meanings and reactions to events that occur during international assignments. Thus, the process of forming expectations and, in particular, accurate expectations was identified as fundamental to achieve success in international assignments.

Francisca's experience can be accounted as an illustrative example of this process. In the first phase of her interview, she reveals that she does not conceive an anticipatory diagnostic about what would be her experience in Brazil, she only shows uncertainty regarding her professional competence in a more challenging assignment: *"I didn't have expectations, I was only a bit eager to know if I would be able to perform what was supposed, but I did"*. However, when she became involved in the new environment, the sensemaking process took place – *"In that sense, it was fun to observe how they work and to be in an emergent economy, because it is really dynamic and for us it is very good [...] Being selected to go there was a strong vote of confidence to me, since only one person was chosen to go there"[...] But yeah, I would repeat it undoubtedly"*. Thus, Francisca started to create expectations in an in-country phase. After all, it is possible to figure out that the process of creating expectations is being reformulated as long as an individual is in touch with the host country reality – in the case described, Francisca was raising the bar, becoming more demanding. Then one question remains: what is driving those individuals without

expectations? Throughout her assertion, it is possible to see that Francisca values the confidence that their superior gave her, and it is all about her career management and prospects. Afterwards, despite of the absence of previous expectations, she told us, enthusiastically, her pretension in repeat the experience in Brazil.

Recently Graduated Individuals' Motivations

One of the main purposes of the present research was to infer what is motivating recent graduates' international flows. Indeed, correspondents point out several reasons clearly: *"Economically, Portugal is not in a good phase, so people are trying to succeed internationally. Secondly, I think that students are seeking work outside because it enhances their curriculum and adds value to get permanent employment posteriorly. I think that it will be advantageous to have a strong component of new international experience abroad. Still, I think that having new experiences is extremely important for each of us"*. Carlos' opinion is shared by the rest of the correspondents and states the Portuguese conjecture and subsequent need to explore opportunities outside as key drivers. Accordingly, international experiences foster personal and professional development – they fit the personal desire for cultural diversity experiences and, at same time, can be an opportunity to levarege their career.

Also associated with individuals' professional development, it is possible to observe situations in which they are conducted by compulsory issues, such as it was described by João, a strategic consultant, who has been in Copenhagen: *"there was nothing that motivated me, my manager sent me and I went"*. Notice that this was not a situation observed regularly, and in that case, they refer monetary reasons *"however I'd like to repeat the experience [at Denmark] because the end of month is very nice"*. Additionally, we found out another compulsory issue related with educational development, such as CEMS MIM, a master that requires some international working experience (i.e.: three months internship,

approximately). Eduardo is one of the correspondents in such conditions; he started to work in a Portuguese bank before finishing his master degree and told us how it was his experience at Poland: *"CEMS required a three months internship, and so I asked my bosses at the bank to arrange me a destination to work outside"*. However, this situation should be perceived as an investment in one's professional development, rather than a compulsory reason to become an international manager.

In addition, individuals interviewed reveal their intent to come back to Portugal in the long run. The purpose behind this is to enrich their knowledge outside and then put in practice the value added they believe that international experience gives them. This argument can be observed throughout a quote retrieved from Daniel's interview, an expatriate who has been in Luanda: *"My goal was never to be an emigrant, my prospect is to gain experience, learn about other things and then return to Portugal to improve my career in better conditions, but in Portugal"*. Notwithstanding, correspondents also state that their return can be constrained by *"personal life evolution" (i.e.: to get married outside)*, but their initial purpose is always to come back.

Furthermore, we found out that recent graduates have particular motivations, such as challenging environments and social pressures, which are explored below.

Challenging Environments

Besides the natural drivers of professional development, anchored with the lack of opportunities at home, there are other motivations, such as challenging jobs, cultures, and environments. Yet, Filipa, an expatriate in a European consulting company in Barcelona, provided us with an insight that confirms the previous argument: *"I think that nowadays Portuguese young people want challenging jobs and awesome life experiences really make*

the difference. More important than the unattractiveness of the Portuguese labor market, is the personal side, I mean, the opportunities outside are much more challenging".

In the same line, recently graduated individuals express a clear desire to *"have new cultural experiences"*, as mentioned by Antonio. Therefore, they seek for cultural diversity experiences and to be challenged by all the host country cultural differences that shape the surrounding environment of their international assignments.

Social pressures/ Social Networks

Opinions, lifestyle and choices' taken by individuals' peers can be an effective driver when individuals decide to be international managers: *"if in your circle of friends, people are working abroad, your propensity to go will be higher"*. Hence, Pedro describes recently graduated international flows as a result of a social trend of this particular age group. Indeed, cultural diversity experiences have become ordinary to this recently graduated generation, e.g. international experiences such as exchange programs and inter-rails. Carlos' example demonstrates this assertion: *"I have travelled alone since I was fourteen due to surf competitions, and therefore I was prepared to face new realities and new cultures [...] and, I think that when an individual goes abroad without previous international experience, he would have a cultural shock since [he] will not be prepared to work with different people"*. Additionally, this ability to interact with others was referred by all the interviewees as a critical variable in their international experience:*"I made lots of friends"; "the team welcomed me well";* and *"proximity between colleagues is critical in moments of stress"* are common quotes among young respondents.

Afterwards, the sharing of international experiences inside each individual's group of friends fosters their decision to be an international manager. Indeed, by having similar experiences, individuals are able to maintain their "status quo" inside their group of friends.

DISCUSSION

In the findings section, we profiled international managers, described their process of creating expectations, and identified their motivations, emphasizing the role of challenging environments and social pressures. In this section, we will build the theoretical framework, which aims to fulfill the gap on the topic concerning recently graduates and is based on the qualitative research results and on the existing literature.

A Framework of just-graduates' Expectations and Motivations

The evidence, retrieved from interviews, suggests that still in the home country, individuals develop motivations to become international managers. During their international experiences, international managers build expectations, which are an ongoing process. Indeed, beyond the natural sensemaking process, which has been matter of expatriation literature, we found out that challenging environments are a key element in the process of creating expectations. When individuals are able to overcome barriers and face novelties properly, they will set higher standards and consequently their expectations become also higher. As a consequence of the process of creating expectations, international managers grow new motivations concerning new experiences as international managers. These new motivations and experiences depend on individual's self-efficacy and rationality, as they lead to an effective response.

At the end, the dynamism associated with this process, represented in figure 1, will be positively correlated with the outcome of international assignment (Exhibit 3).

Figure 1: Framework of recently graduated individuals' expectations and motivations
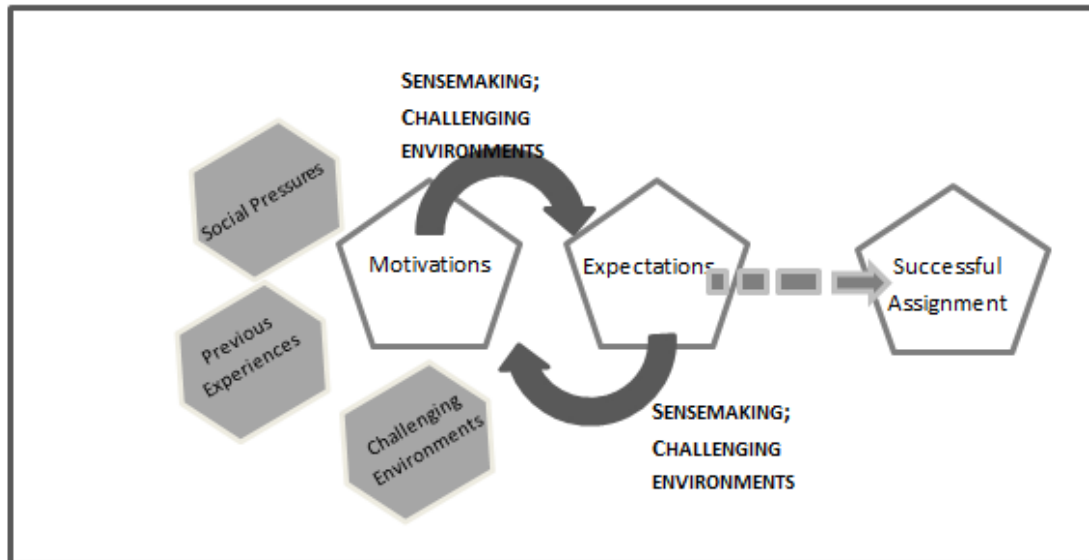
Expectations

In accordance to our findings, expatriates are forming expectations as they face new challenging situations. In addition, if challenges fit expectations or are below them, expatriates have more time to search for meaning and cope with novelties. However, it depends on how individuals are able to cope with "changes", "surprises", and "contrasts", which for Feldman and Thomas (1992) is the major source of challenges facing international managers. Previously held expectations become a reference. The more positive is the reference, the higher will be the expectations towards the future; the opposite relation is also true (Norem & Cantor, 1986).

When individuals overcome the challenges associated with the new settings, they get comfortable in their adaption process, and consequently, they become involved and enthusiastic about the new environment, which results in an increase of their expectations. Thus, the evidence retrieved from interviews suggests that there is a virtuous circle – the

greater the challenges, the higher the dynamism associated with process of creating expectations. As challenges impact expectations, each individual's personal and professional goals might change as a result of the change in expectations towards the international assigment. For instance, if an international manager is able to overcome a new challenge, then he will want to achieve a new target. Thus, he will create a new expectation regarding this issue, and consequently, associated motivations will also change. Using an example given by one of the interviewees, who has been in Singapore mainly to experience cultural diversity and was able to get completely adjusted after all the challenges that such experience implies. Due to this successful adjustment, his expectations changed and he decided to stay in the country, but his motivations changed from cultural experience, his first purpose, to professional development.

Motivations

As mentioned previously, career-related issues and exploration of professional opportunities are the main drivers to perform an international assignment (Inkson and Arthur 2001; Suutari and Taka 2004) concerning expatriates. On the other hand, emigrants value more personal development, given by the adventure, broad skills acquisition and the opportunity for discovery that an international experience can offer (Inkson and Myers 2003).

The motivations of this generation of recently graduated individuals to go outside include both professional and personal factors. The personal characteristics, which prolife recently graduated individuals, are at the core of the latter. Indeed, as they are dynamic people, they find challenging life experiences more attractive than a more stable lifestyle. Regarding professional experiences, recently graduated individuals are in a discovery phase in their life as they entered in work market recently. Thus, they ambition jobs with high responsibilities

and discretionary roles associated, aiming to be recognized as good professionals, talented people, and after all, to be able to launch their careers effectively.

Furthermore, we found another factor impacting recently graduates' choice of becoming international managers – social pressures. Indeed, international experiences are a societal trend that defines this age group. In fact, the interviewees also mentioned that "*my friends and colleagues are going abroad, so my propensity to leave Portugal is increasing*". Moreover, the relationships inside a circle of friends are constructed throughout the ideas, desires, expectations, and sharing of experiences, which form the patterns of identification inside the group[3]. Dunphy (1963) confirms the influence of peer group as having as impact as family and school on individuals.

In this sense, it is possible to infer that 'peers pressure' assumes relative importance on individuals' decision to become an expatriate; subsequently, more and more recent graduates are going abroad, forming what we define "social pressures" as the source of reference to individuals, and an effective driver of engaging in international experiences. Nonetheless, these motivations are dynamic, due to the process of creation of expectations, as aforementioned. In fact, when a first international experience is successful, an international manager can change his expectations, which will lead him to grow motivations to have more international experiences.

After all, we found that recently-graduates: (a) have expectations triggered by their specific-profile that feed a sensemaking process; (b) have particular motivations, and (c) expectations are the result of an ongoing creating process that feeds a dynamic motivational process.

---

[3]Article from Jornal Mundo Jovem. Almeida, Renato (2010). O grupo como vivência social para o jovem. 403, 16.

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this paper was to construct a theoretical framework able to explain Portuguese recently graduated motivations and expectations when they decide in favor of overseas assignments. Hence, in accordance to results presented and posterior discussion, it is possible to distinguish three main outcomes from our research.

First, we could conclude that we are facing a trend to go abroad inside the generation under analysis. Then, this societal trend should also be perceived as an effective reason, which has conducted young expatriates to go abroad. Thus, we expect to observe the number of recently graduated international managers to increase due to 'peers pressure' – it is expected that the flow of new international managers increases, since the choice of going to overseas assignments taken by a certain group of individuals should influence others with the same characteristics, i.e., background, lifestyle, ambitions, physcological characteristics. Therefore, we can point out social pressure as an effective driver when individuals are deciding about going abroad.

Second, we found that recently graduated individuals are searching for dynamic and challenging environments both in personal and professional terms. During international assignments, individuals adjust their expectations towards a succession of challenging events, thus expectations should be understood as an ongoing and constructive process; if they feel challenged in a positive way, then they will raise the bar and, subsequently their expectations. The accuracy of expectations assumes a preponderant role on the outcome of the adjustment process, since it can result in a successful job assignment, and even advance the continuity or, in opposition, can compromise the ability of perform it well, leading to the exit.

Finally, these variables and components are highly correlated to each other, meaning that the process of creating and changing expectations influences motivations, and vice-versa. Hence, young expatriates' expectations and motivations cannot be analyzed separately as they are impacting each other and are the result of a dynamic process.

REFERENCES

Adler, N.J., Graham, J.L. (1989). Cross-Cultural Interaction: The International Comparison Fallacy? *Journal of International Business Studies*, 3 (20), 515-537.

Bartlett, Christopher A. (2005). GE's Two-Decade Transformation: Jack Welch's Leadership. *Harvard Business School*, 1-23.

Black, J.S., Mendenhall, M., Oddu, G. (1991). Toward a Comprehensive Model of International Adjustment: An Integration of Multiple Theoretical Perspectives. *The Academy of Management Review*, 2 (16), 291-317

Bonache, J. Brewster, C.,Suutari, V. (2001). Expatriation: A Developing Research Agenda. *International Business Review*. 43 (1), 3-20.

Doherty, N., Dickmann, M., Mills, T. (2011). Exploring the motives of company-backed and self-initiated expatriates. *International Journal of Human Resources Management.* 22 (3), 595-611

Dexter C. Dunphy (1963). The Social Structure of Urban Adolescent Peer Groups. *Harvard University*. 26 (2).

Feldman, D., Thomas, D. (1992). Career Management Issues Facing Expatriates. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 2 (23), 271-293

Feldman, D., Tompson, H. (1993). Expatriation, Repatriation, and Domestic Geographical Relocation: An Empirical Investigation of Adjustment to New Job Assignments. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 3 (24), 507-529

Forster, N., & Johnson, M. (1996). Expatriate management policies in UK companies new to the international scene. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 7, 179-205.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. 1967/1999. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter

Hall, D. T. (1996). Protean careers of the 21st century. *Academy of Management Executive*, 10, 8–18.

Haslberger, Arno, Brewster, Chris (2009). Capital Gains: Expatriate Adjustment and the Psychological Contract in international careers. *Human Resource Management*, 48, 379-397.

Inkson, K., Heising, A., Rousseau, D. (2001). The interim manager: Prototype of the 21st-century worker? *Human Relations*, 54: 259-284.

Inkson, K., Myers, B (2003). "The big OE": self-directed travel and career development. *Career Development Journal*. 8(4), 170-181.

Kraimer, M. L., Wayne, S., and Jaworski, R. (2001). Sources of Support and Expatriate Performance: The Mediating Role of Expatriate Adjustment. *Personnel Psychology*, 54 (1), 71-99.

Lee, Y., Larwood, L. (1983). The Socialization of Expatriate Managers in Multinational Firms. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 4 (26), 657-665

Johnson, P., Buehring, A.Cassell, Symon, G. (2007)- Defining Qualitative Management Research: an empirical investigation. *Qualitative Research in Organization and Management.* 2(1), 23-42.

Jun, S., Gentry, J.W., Hyun, Y.J. (2001). Cultural Adaptation of Business Expatriates in the Host Marketplace. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 2 (32), 369-377.

Mendenhall, M., Oddu, G. (1985). The dimensions of expatriate acculturation – a review. *Academy of Management Review*, 10 (1), 39-47.

Mezias, J., Scandura, T. (2005). A needs-driven approach to expatriate adjustment and career development: a multiple mentoring perspective. 36, 519-538.

Nicholson, N. (1984). A Theory of Work Role Transitions. Administrative Science Quarterly, 29:172-191.

Norem, J., & Cantor, N. (1986). Defensive pessimism: Harnessing anxiety as motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, (6): 1208-1217.

Oberg, W. (1963). Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Management Principles. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 2 (6), 129-143.

Olekalns, Mara, Weignart, R. Lauries, (2003). Think Globally, Act Locally: Towards an Adaptative Model of Dyadic Negotiations in Organizations, 103-149.

Redfield, R., Linton, R., Melville, J. H. (1936). A Memorandum for the study of acculturation. 38 (1), 149-152.

Richardson, J. and McKenna, S. (2006). Exploring relationships with home and host countries: A study of self-selected expatriates. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 13(1), 6-22.

Selmer, J. (1999). Effects of Coping Strategies on Sociocultural and Psychological Adjustment of Western Expatriate Managers in the PRC. *Journal of World Business*, 1 (34), 41-51

Selmer, J. (2001). Psychological Barriers to Adjustment and How They Affect Coping Strategies: Western Business Expatriates in China. *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, 2 (12), 151-165.

Senge Peter M., Sterman John D. (1990). Systems thinking and organizational learning: Acting locally and thinking globally in the organization future". Sloan School of Management, MIT, 1007-1023.

Shaffer, M., Harrison, D., Gilley, K. (1999). Dimensions, Determinants, and Differences in the Expatriate Adjustment. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 3 (30), 557-581.

Stahl, G.,Cerdin, J (2004). Global Careers in French and German multinational corporations. *Journal of Management Development*. 23(9), 885-902.

Shrivastava, P., Hopwood, N. (2009). A practical interative Framework for qualitative data analysis. *Journal of Qualitative Methods.* 8(1), 76-84.

Tams, Svenja, Arthur, Michael B. (2010). New directions for boundaryless careers: Agency and interdependence in changing world, 31, 629-646.

Whitely, W., England, G.W. (1977). Managerial Values as a Reflection of Culture and the Process of Industrialization. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 3 (20), 439-453.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: Interviewees' characteristics

Interviewees Proflie	
20 Recent Graduates (11 men, 9 women)	Aged between 20-25 years old
	Just finish their degree (i.e.,graduation or master until 2 years ago)
Two groups	Individuals who are having the experience right now.
	Individuals who alreagy returned to Portugal
Types of international experience	Expatriates
	Flexpatriates
	Self-initiated Expatriates (i.e., by their own volition)
Different Backgrounds	Management consultancy; Geology; Bank; Marketing Solutions
Different Countries	Angola, Singapure, Romania, Brazil, London, Polonia, Spain, Denmark

Diversity increases the range of perspectives and, subsequently, the propensity of getting feasible results becomes also higher, as well as the capacity to extrapolate the sample results to the population under analysis (Carsten, 2010).

Exhibit 4: Topics for interview

1. Como caracteriza a sua experiência? Correspondeu às suas expectativas prévias?
2. Quais foram as principais motivações que o levaram a aceitar a proposta?
3. Conte-me um episódio que considere crítico, durante o período de ajustamento.
4. Já se deparou com alguma situação díficil?
5. Teve algum tipo de formação prévia?
6. Já tinha tido experiências internacionais? (i.e.: trabalho vs erasmus)
7. É a primeira vez que está a contactar com a realidade desse país?
8. Repetia a experiência? Porquê?

Exhibit 3: Data Structure

International Managers' Profile

Motivations

Recently graduated are flexible and have relative ease to adapt to new realities, as they have been in touch with international experiences since early times of their lives.

Recently graduated individuals are dynamic and impulsive when decide to go abroad.

Once they are abroad, they reveal rationality in decision-taking.

Challenging Environments

Cultural experiences are more and more demanded;

Recently graduated are driven by dynamic and Challenging Environments;

They aim professional, personal development, and career prospects.

Social Pressures

Recently graduated attribute special importance to meet new friends outside;

They are more detached from 'home country relationships' than the older ones;

Friends they made overseas are like a substitute for those they left at home country.

International management is a societal trend of this particular age group;

International experiences' sharing is observed inside circle of friends;

If recently graduated peers are going abroad, then their propensity to become international manager will increase.

Expectations

No previous expectations are created.

Expectations are created in an **in-country phase**, as long as they are being challenged by the surrounding environment.

If the overcome new settings positively, **new expectations are created**;

As they are dynamic, recent-graduates want to be challenged by new settings;

Expectations are triggered by challenges. At this time, their initial purposes, motivations changed.

Accurate expectations will imply to perform their assignment well, being challenged by the surrounding environment and challenging themselves.

Otherwise, the adaption process could be compromised, and the intention to remain an international manager can become compromised.

Exhibit 4: Supporting data for data structure

Themes	Data supporting Concepts
Previous International Experiences	"I have travelled alone since fourteen years old due to surf competitions, and therefore I was prepared to face new realities and new cultures [...] and, I think that when an individual goes abroad without previous international experience, he would have a negative cultural shock since [he] will not be prepared to work with different people". "Yes, it is like water to wine, are very very different realities. But I think yes, I think all the experiences that we have abroad help us look at things differently, otherwise, and although I have been in England and perhaps be one of the supra-quality juices life and during the months that I've been there, tried that and you can walk freely, you can go anywhere, you have culture, you sport, you have everything and here is a more controlled environment. But I am also of the opinion that for more experiences you have abroad, for more vivid realities that everything goes mental construction that you do about the place you are going. I think it has everything to do with it, I could even have already been working in an African country, and have more or less the notion of reality that would meet and come here with another kind of spirit do not know. I think it all depends on the way you perceive the challenges and do a fixed idea in advance before living things, but of course the experience abroad despite being in a completely different country entirely help the way you look at other challenges " [comparing his last international experiences with his actual experience in Angola].
Previous Preparation and Expectations	"I have no time to create expectations. I do not prepare myself, I would if I had been time [...]"; "People are different that I have imagined, despite Nordic, they are more open"; "I had no expectations, my expectations was my grandmother's expectations regarding those people [Romanians]" "Perhaps the few years in which I have lived alone has contributed to some agility in that sense, it was not one thing that scared me because I had already done it before" "My idea was a country that was a level of development equal to Portugal or even the other countries of Western Europe, but even for some surprise on my part, Poland has been having a very positive development and is no longer so far in terms of income, is a very safe country, is a country in which older people do not speak English, but the younger generation and already speaks well and are open, they want to meet people from other cultures and other countries and want be Europeans are much more facing the West than to the Russian side, which is historically the country that most influenced them "
Individuals' Characteristics	"In addition, when I had to make a decision affecting their future, I always tried to speak with them first, to ensure [their] involvement and approval regarding

	what I was doing, my plans, and so everything went well".
	"[I] love my job, it was much more complex, and they gave me much more freedom".
	"Also what I tried to do was also where I had to make a decision which would affect them [host colleagues] would do in the future or what they would do in the present, always tried to speak with them first, to try to ensure their involvement and whether they would approve of what I do, my ideas and my plans and everything went so well"
	"At personal level, it was an amazing experience, I was in London as it is like being at home; but professionally, I had performed expectations, it would fell short them".
Social Support	"In terms of personal comfort, having two or three people with whom you feel right among twenty co-workers is very important"
	"I made lots of friends"; "the team welcomed me well"; and "proximity between [work] people is critical in moments of stress"
Organisational Culture	"[…] the team welcomed me well, [they] helped me a lot with my orientation and I would like to return [to Poland] in the short-term".
	"[…] it's a quite different reality, such as wine and water. I think that regardless the number experiences you have been abroad, everything depends on your own mental construction of each situation, although each experience changes the way you look for new challenges"
Dynamic Expectations	"(1) I didn't have expectations, I was only a bit eager to know if I would be able to perform what was supposed, but I did. […] (2) In that sense, it was very fun to observe how they work and being in an emergent economy, because it is really dynamic and for us it is very good, for them is the day-to-day business and this is also cute […] (3) Being selected to go there was a strong vote of confidence to me, since only one person was chosen to go there […] But yeah, I will repeat undoubtedly"
Motivations	"Portugal economically is not in a good phase, so people are trying to go in other ways, to be succeeded internationally. Secondly, I think that students are seeking work outside because it enhances their curriculum and it adds value to get permanent employment posteriorly. I think that it will be advantageous to have a strong component of new international experience abroad. Still, I think that having new experiences are extremely important for each of us"
	"there was nothing that motivated me, manager sent me and I did"
	"however I'd like to repeat the experience [at Denmark] because the end of month is very nice".
	"CEMS required a three months internship, and so I asked to my bosses at bank to arrange me a destination to work outside".

	"My goal was never to be an emigrate, my prospect is to gain experience, learn about other things and then return to Portugal to improve my career in better conditions, but in Portugal" "personal life evolution"
Challenging Environments	"I think that nowadays Portuguese young people want challenging jobs and awesome life experiences, that really make the difference. Despite the fact of Portugal does not have an attractive labor market I think, in first place at personal level as opportunities outside are much more challenging" "have new cultural experiences"
Social Networks	"if in your circle of friends, people are working abroad your propensity to go will be higher". "I have travelled alone since fourteen years old due to surf competitions, and therefore I was prepared to face new realities and new cultures [...] and, I think that when an individual goes abroad without previous international experience, he would have a negative cultural shock since [he] will not be prepared to work with different people" "I made lots of friends" "the team welcomed me well" "proximity between [work] people is critical in moments of stress"