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The Expatriate's Experience in China: An Exploration of the Expatriate's Satisfaction in Their International Organization Setting

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The Expatriate's Experience in China:

An exploration of the expatriate's satisfaction in their

international organization setting

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Although my friends and colleagues know I am loathe to refer to my thesis as my journey, I suppose upon reflection it was. I had wanted to complete a PhD and I set out to answer a question posed by my brother, Bill, a businessman in China. Geoff Mallory and the Open University Business School offered me the opportunity not only to pursue my dream, but to live as an expatriate, and I am indebted to them.

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Sadly, Geoff passed away on March 1, 2012, three weeks before my viva, thus I was never able to raise a pint to him and say thank you.

Abstract

This research wanted to know why expatriates left their assignments in China. Since finding expatriates who had quit their international assignment was impossible, to understand why they left, this research used satisfaction as a proxy and asked expatriates 'what affected their satisfaction in their international organization setting.' By understanding what constructs differentiated satisfied and dissatisfied expatriates in their organization setting, insights may be offered about why the expatriate leaves. To achieve this, this research drew upon the Framework of International Adjustment and ASA/PO fit, two frameworks that propose how a person adjusts or fits into their organization.

Much of the research has described the expatriate's adjustment or fit in the organization in reference to culture. The perspective of this research was culture is a factor; however, it is the person interacting with their organization which may offer insights. This research suggested underpinning both frameworks was social cognition; that is, the person's interpretation of their satisfaction in the international organization was the focus. A unique mixed approach consisting of a satisfaction/intention to quit survey, causal mapping, and a semi-structured interview was used. Upon completion of the exploration of what expatriate's identified as important to their satisfaction, this research addressed the second objective. Were the two frameworks describing similar phenomena except from different perspectives? If so, could these frameworks be wed?

Findings from this research suggest the expatriate is often caught between two incompatible solitudes, the home office expectations and the abilities of the China operations, to deliver. Although, most expatriates were satisfied with their situation, what was described in detail is dissatisfaction was often a result of the home office falling short in supporting the expatriate in the field. Interrogation of the two frameworks suggests the frameworks may in fact be presenting similar processes except from different research perspectives. Finally, this research suggests employing mixed methods is a valuable tool in the arsenal of the expatriate researcher. Employing this protocol has allowed their complex story to be revealed which may otherwise remain hidden.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

With more organizations of all sizes engaging in the global economy, more people are

being asked to work *ex patria*. As industry research highlights (Brookfield Global

Relocation Survey, 2011; GMAC Global Relocation Survey (GMAC), 2006; Economist

Intelligence Unit & Stepstone Consulting, 2007), whether from North America or Europe,

these expatriates are a costly but invaluable human resource. However, the number of

expatriates who struggle and leave their assignment prematurely is significant. These

people represent not only direct and indirect financial costs to organizations; potential costs

to the failed expatriate also exist.

Harzing (1995), however, suggests high expatriate failure rates are a myth backed by little

research. Nevertheless, the GMAC (2006) survey of 180 organizations of all sizes from all

corners of the globe discovered an early attrition rate of approximately 24%. This survey

follows trends in international assignments and it notes a year on year concern regarding

costs, performance, and turnover.

With human capital for international assignments at a premium (GMAC, 2006), this thesis

suggests that key to retention or departure is whether a person fits the organizational

environment, that is, adjusts to their new organizational environment. If they fit, they stay;

if not, they leave or perhaps stay and underperform. In contrast, for almost 20 years,

expatriate research has relied on Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou's (1991) Framework of

International Adjustment to address expatriate adjustment. However, during this period the

pre-mature attrition rate remains the same. This suggests the framework may not be

adequately describing the expatriate experience.

Like Bandura (2002), Earley (2006), and Hurn (2006), this thesis suggests that much of the previous literature has been focusing on the wrong level of analysis when trying to better fit people to international assignments, and that this may be a factor contributing to the tenuous findings. As Bandura (2002) notes, "A major part of people's daily life is spent in occupational activities. These pursuits do more than simply provide income for a person's livelihood. Occupations structure a large part of people's everyday reality and serve as a major source of personal identity and self-evaluation" (p. 279).

Exploring the person interacting with their organization, as Bandura (2002), Earley (2006), and Hurn (2006) note, may provide a more appropriate level from which to gain insights about the expatriate's adjustment experience. Therefore, this thesis will offer Schneider's (1987) Attraction Selection Attrition (ASA) framework as an alternate lens that may prove fruitful in exploring expatriate attrition.

When investigating whether a person remains on an international assignment or departs early from it, researchers tend to seat their study using culture as the overarching construct influencing outcomes. This thesis suggests this assumption warrants revisiting, that culture may be the wrong focus. A further concern when researching the expatriate experience is the absence of a concise conceptualization of what an expatriate is. Both of these factors may be contributing to the limited success research has had in addressing the expatriate adjustment / attrition issue.

To address the issue of the expatriate's adjustment or fit to their new international assignment, this thesis will explore two distinct bodies of research which are applicable. First, Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment, which has

characterised research to date and second, Schneider's (1987) Attraction Selection Attrition (ASA) person – organization fit framework, which is a new direction. It will suggest that both frameworks are exploring and describing a similar point. One must adjust to or fit with their circumstance to succeed. Furthermore, both are describing a person's subjective cognitive interpretation of their situation. This social cognition of the person's situation is the underlying concept that binds the two frameworks together.

The thesis begins with a discussion and definition of 'the expatriate'. Following this, extant field research is drawn upon to frame chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 begins by discussing the role of culture in international human resource research. Following the discussion, the seminal framework used to describe expatriate adjustment, Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment will be explored. The chapter will conclude by discussing the research of Bandura (2002), Earley (2006), and Hurn (2006) who suggest that exploring the person as they interact with their organization may provide a more appropriate level from which to gain insights about the expatriate adjustment experience. Thus, in Chapter 3, Schneider's (1987) Attraction Selection Attrition (ASA) framework is offered as an alternate lens that may prove fruitful in exploring expatriate attrition. Chapter 4 will begin with a discussion of the commonalties and differences and then proceed to suggest an alternate methodology that may provide new insights. In Chapter 5, the methods used to explore the expatriate's world will be presented. Included in this chapter will be a discussion justifying why critical realism is an appropriate ontology to seat this research in and why a mixed method strategy was pursued. Following in Chapter 6 the findings will be presented. Chapter 7 will discuss the findings, note unique contributions and shortcomings, and the thesis will be concluded with suggestions for future research.

2 Background

2.1 Background

This thesis aims to examine the factors which expatriates consider most relevant to their satisfaction in their international organization setting. Expatriate research is typically located in the field of international management. Whilst a natural home for studies of this type, international management research typically employs culture as an explanation for framing their research or explaining outcomes. It will be suggested such heavy reliance on culture may be impeding progress in our understanding of expatriate issues.

This research begins by drawing on two frameworks to offer alternative perspectives to seat the expatriate and subsequent research in the international organization setting; Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment and Schneider's Attraction Selection Attrition framework (ASA) and its companion model of Person Organization Fit (PO Fit) as enunciated by Chatman (1989) which is used to explain a person's decision to stay or leave an organization in Schneider's framework.

This research concludes that each perspective alone is incomplete; however, a common thread runs through all the perspectives. This common thread is social cognition or how a person perceives and interprets their situation, in this case their satisfaction in the international organization setting.

Before exploring the two frameworks it is useful to create a backdrop to the world this research will be exploring, the world of the expatriate. Although Harzing (1995) suggests high expatriate failure rates are a myth backed by little research; the Brookfield Global Relocation Survey (2011, NB: formerly GMAC), the GMAC Survey (2006) (considered

the industry standard) and an alternative view, the Talent Management Report (2007) by Stepstone Consulting in conjunction with the Economist Intelligence Unit (TMR) suggest issues exist.

Fundamental to any research project is a concise understanding of the concept under investigation. This chapter begins by creating a sense of the expatriate world and clarifying what an expatriate is within the scope of this project. This chapter concludes with a description of social cognition, the theory this research shall draw on as the common thread.

2.2 *Global Relocation Trends Survey (2006, 2011*)*

The GMAC Survey (2006) of 180 organizations from all corners of the globe with overseas assignments highlights that despite increased alternative forms of assignment, expatriatism (GMAC Global Relocation Survey, 2006; *Brookfield Global Relocation Survey, 2011 [NB: organization name changed]) remains the preferred and growing option. The survey highlights a brewing storm. Organizations are placing more emphasis on international operations as key to their overall strategy; yet, organizations list reining in the cost of expatriatism as a major focus. Furthermore, the availability of expatriates is shrinking. Critical to successful implementation of international strategy is selecting and managing their expatriate human resource appropriately to assure productivity and avoid disruptive and costly attrition.

Although much research consistently pegs the attrition rate of expatriates at around twenty to thirty per cent (Black et al 1991 suggests a failure rate range of between 16 and 40% has been reported in the literature), the GMAC Survey (2006), which is industry based, pegs the attrition rate at 24%.

Other new trends are evident. In the 2006 GMAC survey, respondent organizations reported a sharp increase in the number of females involved in expatriate assignments. The original sharp increase, although speculative, is due in part to gender equity policies in the respective home countries and corporation head office. It is now recognised that female employees have been overlooked as a talent pool, and that there are now not enough male expatriates to fill positions. The 2011 survey indicates the numbers of female expatriates remains consistent.

Finally, given the concerns mentioned by survey respondents, there seems to be a disjunction between the stated policies and reality on the ground. It is not clear how much care organizations invest in identifying their expatriate for the often-challenging position ahead. Although the survey participants indicate that their organizations put a lot of thought and planning into why and whom they will send on overseas assignments, academic research seems to suggest the contrary (Harris & Brewster, 1999). A second concern, although not mentioned directly by the survey authors, expatriates quoted in the survey indicate a high level of frustration over what appears to be a perceived lack of support from their respective organizations. This suggests some survey responses may be suffering from some form of common method bias such as social desirability.

Despite the concerns raised, this survey is important as it represents the responses of 185 organizations from many of Europe and North America's (other parts of the world are included as well but represent a significantly smaller group of responding organizations) more prominent SME and MNE corporations (e.g. Aker Kvaerner, British Airways, Bombardier, Intel Corp.) from around the globe and the respondents were usually senior human resources personnel.

This survey is also important as it represents one of the few pieces of research of any kind that includes SMEs (small medium enterprise) while exploring the expatriate issue. It would have been instructive to either note there are no differences reported as to organization size or highlight differences. It would also have been most valuable to separate out the report's findings by region: Asia, Europe, and North America as researchers such as Scullion and Brewster (2001) suggest the European experience is different.

2.2.1 Global Relocation Trends Survey Update (2011)

Recently available, 2011 Global Relocation Trends Survey (Brookfield Global Relocation Services; NB: Name has changed from GMAC) also highlights the importance of the expatriate. Organizations indicate that 58% of revenues accrue to organizations from outside the head office operation and country. Indications are the number of expatriates seconded on long-term assignment, i.e. greater than one year, continues to increase and China remains one of the top three destinations. Importantly, respondents to the latest survey indicate is China is considered one of the most challenging destinations for an expatriate. As was the case in the previous survey, there remains a desire to reduce costs and the two main options being considered or implemented are reducing the number of western expatriates and their compensation over time or employing expatriates from the region e.g. Taiwan at reduced regional rates. The number of females seconded remains consistent from 2006. Finally, organizations continue with a conflicted message; they indicate they put a lot of effort into the selection, training, in-country support, and repatriation cycle yet they indicate they have no sense of how to measure the expatriate performance.

2.3 Alternative Perspectives:

The Talent Management Report (2007) by Stepstone Consulting in conjunction with the Economist Intelligence Unit (TMR) provides a disaggregation of findings that the GMAC (2006) survey does not offer. Unfortunately, this survey is not nearly as thorough as the GMAC (2006) survey; however, it does provide some interesting insights as to the Europe-North America debate. The TMR (2007) survey affirms the profile drawn earlier from the GMAC (2006) survey; that is, business wants to lower labour costs for overseas assignments, wants and needs more people for foreign assignments, and is having difficulty finding talent.

Researchers in Europe such as Scullion and Brewster (2001) suggest the European experience for international assignments is different from North America. For example, they suggest the formation and expansion of the European Union has changed the nature of international assignments, offering a multitude of short term alternatives. Scullion and Brewster (2001) further suggest Europeans are better suited to international assignments because the countries are smaller and they are more able to adapt to other cultures. Scullion and Brewster's (2001) other major findings are that more European women are employed on foreign assignments in Europe and European organizations have superior planning and performance strategies. This latter point is uncertain when compared against the GMAC (2006) survey.

To conclude this brief portrait of the expatriate, the TMR (2007) survey affirms the profile drawn earlier from the Brookfield Global Relocation Survey (2011) and the GMAC (2006) survey, that is, business wants to lower labour costs for overseas assignments, wants and needs more people for foreign assignments, and is having difficulty finding talent.

Most importantly, these reports from industry underline the importance of understanding the expatriate work experience and their organizational environment. Both surveys, GMAC (2006) and TMR (2007), make it clear that organizations often appear to lack clear objectives and expectations for expatriate assignments, lack a clear talent strategy (selection, career management, repatriation strategy), and lack clear performance measures. Could this lack of clear objectives be contributing to the high turnover of expatriates? This situation could certainly contribute to an increased level of frustration, cognitive dissonance, anxiety and thus stress within the person and an easy way to alleviate these concerns is removal from the stressors: leave.

An important trend noted in the most recent industry survey, the Brookfield Global Relocation Survey (2011) is organizations are focussing more of their international strategy and thus expatriate human resource on China.

2.4 Strategic Human Resources:

The expatriate who has been seconded to China may be explored through the lens of international strategic human resource management. Strategic human resource management (SHRM) is defined as "an approach to the management of human resources that provides a strategic framework to support long-term business goals and outcomes. The approach is concerned with longer-term people issues and macro-concerns about structure, quality, culture, values, commitment and matching resources to future need" (CIPD, 2011).

This research is interested in the international dimensions of strategic human resource management; that is, "human resource management issues, functions, and policies and practices that result from the strategic activities of multinational enterprises and that impact the international concerns and goals of those enterprises" (Schuler, Dowling, & De Cieri, 1993, p. 422).

Research in SHRM has identified the satisfaction of expatriates as an issue because the current situation of a continued drive to lowered costs coupled with a shortage of the skilled people necessary is impeding many organization's international strategies, thus retaining their skilled expatriate employee is important (Brookfield Global Relocation Survey, 2011; GMAC, 2006; and Stepstone Consulting, 2011). Exacerbating the issue of available expatriates to organizations is that more expatriates are declining the international option especially as more are required to go to high risk locations such as China or Africa (Farndale, Scullion, and Sparrow, 2010). Although alternatives such as using local talent or self-patriates, that is, people who have embarked upon international careers on their own volition and not seconded by an organization has been explored by organizations, however, the preferred option is still the traditional expatriate. Local talent is often in very short supply and concern exists over the self-patriate's loyalty and thus retention as they arrived on their own. It is for these reasons that industry studies (Brookfield Global Relocation Survey, 2011; GMAC, 2006; and Stepstone Consulting, 2011) identify the satisfaction of their expatriate secondees as important.

Menzies and McDonnell (2012) identify the challenges Australian organizations face in managing their strategic talent in China. Firstly, the Australians in their sample face institutional impediments such as the hangover of the communist attitude towards work. Second, like other international organizations they faced the problem of retaining quality expatriates in Tier 1 cities such as Shanghai because the highly talented expatriate's skills are always in high demand... a supply/demand issue. The organizations had difficulty in finding expatriates willing to go to Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities in China (e.g. Dalian or Chengdu). What was also identified is the desire by Australian firms for western expatriates because they felt the locals did not have the requisite skills to an advanced

enough level, nor did they necessarily share the western (Australian) orientation. Importantly, whether from an American (Schuler, Jackson, & Tarique, 2011), Australian (Menzies & McDonnell, 2012), or United Kingdom (Farndale et al, 2010) perspective, the issues identified are the same and the academics sit in consort with the research from the field (Brookfield Global Relocation Survey, 2011; GMAC, 2006; Stepstone Consulting, 2007).

This collision of stresses which has led to a deficit of human resource talent has led Farndale et al (2010) to suggest rather than viewing the challenge as a sourcing issue, better management and retention strategies are required. Thus the issue of quality international human resource has been defined as the strategic integration of resourcing and development at the international level which involves the proactive identification and development and strategic deployment of high performing and high potential strategic employees on a global scale (Farndale et al, 2010, p. 162) or Global Talent Management (GTM).

All researchers are identifying the core of the issue which is as Capplelli (2008) suggests, organizations appear to have the desire to view the human resources as just one more component in a complex global supply chain; that is "how employees advance through development jobs and experiences are remarkably similar to how products move through a supply chain" (in Collings & Mellahi, 2009, p. 77). This thesis will dispute this suggestion.

Collings and Mellahi (2009) indicate there is a shift from top management and elite management to "management of talent specifically suited towards the management of talent specifically suited to wards today's dynamic environment. "(p. 305). Thus they bind the strategic HRM function tightly to the organization's overall strategy.

What is succinctly summarized by Boxall and Purcell (2008) is "the emphasis of HR practices should be on building the motivation, commitment, and development of those in the talent pool, and shift from a short-term 'transactional' psychological contract towards a more long-term 'relational' psychological contract" (Collings & Mellahi, 2009, p. 309).

However, Pate and Scullion (2009) suggest the opposite may be occurring. They suggest the expatriate appears to be redefining their role and obligations in the psychological contract with their organization in response to the current economic situation and opportunities for themselves. What is important is whereas, the organization conceived the relationship as transactional, the expatriate saw the interaction as a relationship; importantly there appears to be a shift in the expatriate's perception of the relationship. They appear to be viewing this relationship in a transactional frame as well.

Pate and Scullion's (2009) research suggests there may be issues with the conceptualization of Global Talent Management because it appears organizations want a high quality talent pool at their disposal; however, the high talent expatriates recognize their value and can make decisions appropriate to their self interest.

Person organization fit (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al 2005, Piasentin & Chapman, 2007) research may offer insight as organization fit suggests a person will remain with an organization if they fit with the organization. This research will return to this topic after a discussion of an alternate option, Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou's Framework of International Adjustment (1991). Pate and Scullion (2009) may fit with the meta-analysis of Bhaskar- Shrinivas et al (2005) and their evolution of the Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991) Framework of International Development which is

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discussed immediately and followed by a discussion of person organization fit. However, a concise definition of the expatriate is first presented.

2.5 *Expatriate – a definition*

The expatriate's experience on an international assignment is represented by a large body of research spanning several decades. Noteworthy throughout the research literature is that the term of reference, expatriate, is never explicitly defined except in one paper. Brewster and Scullion (2007) define expatriates as, "…employees transferring from one country to another – …." (p. 32). Although, this matches closely the Merriam-Webster definition of expatriate, "to leave one's native country to live elsewhere" (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary), it lacks precision when trying to delineate the factors that affect the expatriate experience. This lack of a working definition may be a contributor to the limited findings of the past decades.

Bhaskar-Shrinivas , Harrison, Shaffer, and Luk's (2005) meta-analysis of the international (expatriate) adjustment literature underscores the need for a more precise definition when they suggest time in the new country and thus experience with the new environment affects an expatriate's adjustment. When Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) reanalyzed the time – adjustment relationship using a more robust methodology, polynomial regression, they found adjustment was not a U-shaped process as previously suggested by (Curmi, Stone, Schneider, Spudich, & Mendelson, 1985), rather it was an inverted S-shaped curve and the first inflection point of their polynomial regression curve (inverted S) appeared to occur at approximately 12 months. At approximately12 months, the expatriate moved from a positive state of adjustment/adaptation into a rapidly decreasing state of adjustment. A second point Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) raised was expatriates, depending on their expected length of international tenure may employ different coping strategies; those who face short terms may simply 'put their shoulder to the grindstone and tough the assignment

out' whereas expatriates facing longer term deployment may engage in a 'rethinking' process.

Finally, the Brookfield Global Trends Relocation Survey (2011) and GMAC Survey (2006), which is considered by custom the pre-eminent industry report on expatriate trends, appears to reinforce 12 months as an approximate benchmark which helps delineate the expatriate assignment from other forms of international assignment. Collings and Scullion (2007), Selmer and Lauring (2011), and Suutari and Brewster (2000) present alternative forms of international assignments; for example, short-term project assignments, commuter assignments and self-initiated expatriate assignments.

The reasons mentioned above emphasize the need for a concise definition of 'expatriate' as a unique form of international assignment. Because the lack of a concise definition of expatriate in the literature is systemic, the definition of expatriate that this research will use is: an expatriate is *a citizen who has been assigned to work and live in another country for a prolonged period [a minimum of at least one year] at the behest of their organization with an intention of leaving.* This definition adopts a more precise meaning of expatriate and attempts to delineate the sent expatriate as a unique international assignment option.

With a clearer understanding of what an expatriate is, this thesis will briefly introduce two psychological concepts that will thread through this research and be drawn upon to unite seemingly disparate ideas, social learning and social cognition.

2.6   *A brief description of social learning and social cognition*

To enhance our understanding of Black et al (1991) and Schneider's (1987) respective frameworks, two psychological concepts that are critical to this research will be described,

social learning theory and social cognition. These concepts underpin both of the

frameworks.

Social learning theory was a response to learning theorists such as Skinner who viewed

learning simply as a series of responses to environmental stimuli which when reinforced

over time shaped a person's behaviour; learning was viewed as an external, mechanistic

process. Because learning theorists were achieving quantifiable outcomes, they saw little

value in trying to understand the 'black box' that is the mind, of ascribing meaning to

behaviour. As a rejoinder to this mechanistic view of learning where the person was a

passive receptor of environmental stimuli, learning theorists such as Bandura (1977)

challenged this widely held view. Bandura (1977) suggested behaviour was a continuous

reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental influences; just

as the world influences the person; the person also influences their environment (see

Figure 2-1). The key difference between traditional learning theory and social learning

theory is the active involvement of the person.
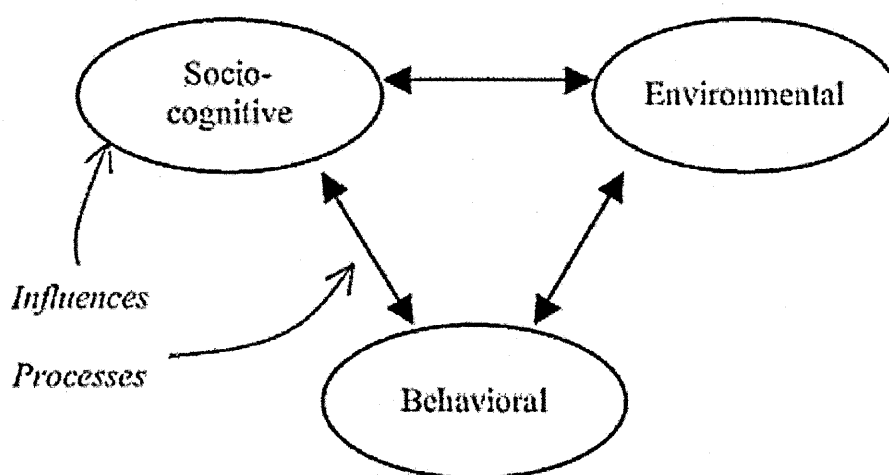
Figure 2-1: Wood and Bandura's (1989) social learning model

Whereas social learning is focused on an individual's active involvement with their

environment to learn, social cognition is a broader rubric that studies the individual within

a social or cultural context and focuses on how people perceive and interpret information they generate themselves (intrapersonal) from others (interpersonal). Social learning and social cognition are often used interchangeably and Bandura's theories fall within the rubric of social cognition.

In the introduction to this section, both Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment and Schneider's (1987) ASA framework of person – organization fit, share social cognition as a foundation theory. More specifically, Black et al (1991) seat their framework in social learning theory, the pre-cursor to social cognition. Schneider (1987) draws on interaction psychology especially Lewin's (1935) concepts, which Fiske and Taylor (1991) note falls within the rubric of social cognition (pp. 4, 5). Crucially, both frameworks talk of the individual actively interacting and interpreting their environments. Social cognition thus occurs at the individual level of analysis and focuses on the way individuals make sense of their social world. It is an iterative process and an interpretative process that is always changing in response to information received (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

With this brief detour, two alternate frameworks which underpin the expatriate's experience in their international organization setting will be presented; Black et al (1991) Framework of International Adjustment and Schneider's (1987) Attraction Selection Attrition (ASA) framework. However, the appropriate level of analysis also needs to be identified. Both perspectives seek to understand the person in an organization, in a social setting, indicating a person level perspective or individual level of analysis.

3 Literature Review I

3.1 Framework of International Adjustment

This chapter begins with a discussion of level of analysis and will be followed by a discussion of Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment, the seminal framework in expatriate research. Then, a brief discussion of the person level, the individual expatriate will occur. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a suggestion that it is the person interacting with the organization, which is important; the organization just happens to be located in a foreign environment and a more appropriate lens through which to understand the expatriate experience may be Schneider's (1991) Attraction Selection Attrition framework and companion model Chatman's (1989) Person Organization Fit (PO fit), discussed in chapter four. It will be suggested that both frameworks are incomplete although they have a common thread running in that they base their approaches on social cognition and focus on the individual level of analysis.

3.2 Levels of Analysis Issue

Rousseau (1985) argues: "Level of measurement refers to the unit to which data are directly attached ... [whereas] the level of analysis is the unit to which data are assigned for hypothesis testing and statistical analysis." (p. 1387). This is a critical issue in international management research. Whether exploring the person in relation to the foreign country, the foreign culture, or the organization, as Gelfand (2007) notes,

"Level of analysis confusion continues to abound in the cross-cultural Organization Behaviour (OB) literature. The individual-level bias is still strongly entrenched at both the level of theory and measurement, and research continues to blindly apply culture-level theory to the individual level and vice

versa. Future research needs to be explicit in defining the level of analysis being examined in cross-cultural OB studies" (p. 496).

Levels of analysis thus becomes important when values, constructs, findings, or any quality from one level are inappropriately ascribed onto a different level (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Ostroff & Judge, 2006; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003; van de Vijver, van Hemert, & Poortinga, 2008).

Because this research is about an international issue researchers often focus on culture as an/or the explanation for their research. Earley (2006), as moderator of a special issue that focused on the Hofstede - Globe debate, notes in his review that theories such as Hofstede (Globe as well) are inappropriate because "both entangle levels (individual, collective) for purposes of analysis, constructs and applications" (p. 923). Both Hofstede and Globe inappropriately give an aggregate meaning to survey data measured at the individual level but are attempting to capture the collective level construct. Secondly, Earley (2006) summarizes culture definitions and conceptualizations as a 'quagmire" (p. 925). Bailey and Spicer (2007) raise a final concern about theories such as Hofstede when they suggest national environments are what researchers are usually interested in and this can be different from culture. In this project the appropriate level is the person as this research seeks to understand the person's perception of their international assignment.

The thesis will now explore Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment, the framework that has been a seminal framework to research the expatriate and how they adjust to foreign postings.

3.3 Framework of International Adjustment

'[P]aying expatriates two to three times higher than their local counterparts,' (Alan Zhang, Mercer's Human Capital Product Solutions in PeopleDaily.com 2006) yet enduring high early attrition rates (Brookfield Global Relocation Survey, 2011; GMAC Global Relocation Survey, 2006), coupled with frustration over the anecdotal nature of international adjustment research at the time, and the view that management was a universal skill, led Black et al (1991) to develop their Framework of International Adjustment (Figure 3-1).

To create this framework, Black et al (1991) first reviewed the domestic adjustment literature and selected research from relevant domains (e.g. socialization, cognitive dissonance, sense making). Next, they selected 'main themes' from the underdeveloped international adjustment research. Finally, they amalgamated the two bodies of research together to create their Framework of International Adjustment.

Black et al (1991) noted the common thread of the bodies of literature was a person's desire to reduce uncertainty in a new situation. International adjustment was reduction of uncertainty; it was a social learning process (pp.301, 302).

3.4 Description of Framework of International Adjustment

Black et al's (1991) framework (Figure 3-1) outlines a comprehensive set of pre-entry and in-country constructs that influence one's eventual adjustment on a foreign assignment.

Adjustment, in an international setting, is a two-fold concept. First, the mode of adjustment or how a person adjusts to the work role change is drawn from domestic work role adjustment research and is predicted to have an important role in the international arena. Will the expatriate change to fit the new situation or will they change the situation to fit

themselves? Black et al (1991) suggest work role discretion, role novelty, and socialization tactics affected the person's mode of adjustment. Having the flexibility to change work roles will lead to adjustment vis a vis reducing anxiety by changing work roles to something the expatriate is more comfortable with. However, the novelty of the work situation had a differential influence on a person's work role adjustment. Very novel situations led a person to changing themselves whereas low novelty led to an adjustment of the work role. The format of socialization to the new work role also was predicted to lead to different strategies. Their framework postulated that an orderly sequential induction–socialization process leads to an individual changing themselves to adjust or fit to the new work role; whereas, a disjointed induction –socialization process leads to the person changing the work role.

ª Numbers in parentheses indicate the numbered facet(s) of adjustment to which the specific variable is expected to relate.
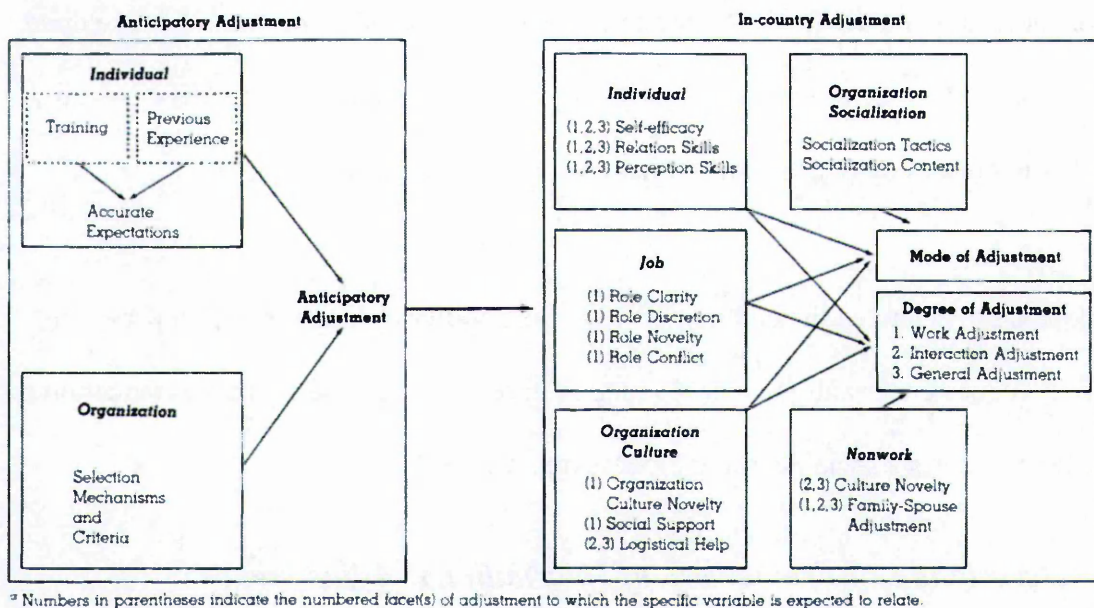
Figure 3-1: Framework of International Adjustment

The second type of adjustment is the degree (amount) of adjustment and is drawn primarily from the international adjustment literature. This literature suggests three forms of adjustment occur: adjustment to one's work environment, interacting with the locals adjustment, and a general environment adjustment which are differentially influenced by individual factors, job factors, organization culture factors and non-work factors.

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Once on the international posting, four factors and their facets are considered critical to one's 'degree of adjustment'; however, they differentially influence the three facets of degrees of adjustment. Black et al (1991) suggests the variables subsumed within the job and organization culture factors will influence work adjustment whereas variables within the non-work factor will influence general adjustment and interaction adjustment. In the preliminary presentations nothing is said about the relation of variables within the individual factor.

Variables that constitute the factors and influence adjustment are extensive and drawn from both the domestic and international adjustment literature. Individual qualities of self-efficacy, relational skills (ability/willingness to interact with host nationals), and perceptual skills (ability to learn how to behave in the new nation) are proposed to influence one's degree of adjustment in all facets. These individual qualities are important to a person's adjustment as they provide person qualities that encourage learning. Learning is the key to reducing anxiety and thus increasing one's adjustment.

Job factors considered important include job role clarity (Why are they there?), role discretion (freedom to adapt the post to novel situations), role novelty (how different from previous roles is this foreign post?) and role conflict (conflicting signals between the home and host organization) and are posited to influence one's adjustment in the work adjustment sphere.

Essential organizational culture factors include organization culture novelty (How similar is the new organization culture to the home one), social support from co-workers and superiors, and logistical support (day-to-day living). It is suggested that organization

culture novelty and social supports impact on work adjustment. A great culture distance will create anxiety which must be reduced to improve one's adjustment at work. Support will positively aid one's adjustment in the organization setting. Logistical support will have a most direct bearing on one's interaction and general adjustment.

Finally, two non-work factors, family adjustment (how well the family is adapting to the new environment) and cultural novelty (similarity between the two countries' customs/behaviours) influence one's degree of general adjustment and their willingness and ability to interact with the locals. Family adjustment is considered important to all aspects of one's adjustment.

Besides the aforementioned individual, job, and organization cultural factors, a fourth factor, organization socialization also contributes to the expatriate's mode of adjustment. Organization socialization consists of socialization tactics, that is, how the expatriate is socialized into the new environment by the organization. This process can be either an ordered or disordered and chaotic process. Black et al (1991) suggests an ordered approach will lead to the person changing; whereas, a disordered approach will lead to the person adjusting their work role. The other factor contributing to organization socialization is socialization content such as information from the organization on what is expected or how one is to behave in their new position.

Figure 3-1 indicates that this adjustment process begins by reducing anxiety through appropriate pre-departure selection and training. Also hypothesized as necessary is previous experience because previous experience would suggest familiarity with the environment and this would reduce anxiety about the change.

It is important to reiterate that Black et al's (1991) framework is concerned with reducing

uncertainty (which influences stress and anxiety) and thus increasing adjustment on an international assignment. To achieve uncertainty reduction, Black et al (1991) suggests adjustment is a social process.

Although Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment has formed the basis for much of the expatriate research to the point of being an uncontested theory (Thomas & Lazarova, 2006); it is not without its issues. In the next section, Black et al's (1991) framework is critiqued and weaknesses noted. Upon conclusion of this evaluation, an alternate perspective and framework will be suggested.

3.5 Critique of the Framework of International Adjustment

Black and Mendenhall (1991) and Black et al (1991) are very clear; the process of international adjustment is a social learning process. That is, it falls under the rubric of social cognition, and thus is considered an active interpretation of one's environment (and as will be suggested shortly, this is a commonality with Schneider's Attraction Selection Attrition framework). Furthermore, this suggests an acceptable level of analysis is the person.

This framework was an attempt to describe the adjustment process of the expatriate in general; however, researchers such as Scullion and Collins (2006) and Scullion and Brewster (2001) from Europe and Stenning and Yu (2006) from Asia/Australia are concerned that because the framework was developed by Americans it is American centric and may not reflect the European or Asian (Australian) expatriate experience. This may be an overstated concern because as was noted by the industry surveys, GMAC (2006) and TMR (2007), no meaningful differences seemed to be appearing between the European and American expatriate experience. Of greater concern are Thomas and Lazarova's (2006) suggestion that the complete framework has not been verified, yet somehow it has come to

be considered the pre-eminent framework in this research domain. Because of the concerns

raised by Thomas and Lazarova (2006), this thesis relies on the findings of two meta-

analyses of the components of Black et al's (1991) framework, Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al

(2005) and Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen (2003) to draw conclusions.

When Black et al's (1991) framework of expatriate adjustment is evaluated, the only

variable important to adjustment that emerged in both studies was 'social factors' (role of

family and spouse, role clarity and relational skills) (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al 2005,

Hechanova et al 2003). Upon closer exploration of the findings of the two meta-analyses,

adjustment factors suggested by Black et al (2001) may or may not emerge as significant

from the respective analyses. In the Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) meta-analysis

'relational skills' and 'job clarity' emerge as important to success; in the Hechanova et al

(2003) study they did not. However, Hechanova et al (2003) saw 'self-efficacy' emerge as

an important factor in success; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) did not. Thus Black et al's

(1991) conceptualization of the expatriate adjustment experience must be viewed with

caution. Concerns noted by the authors of the meta-analyses suggest several reasons why

there may be limited support for the framework.

Both studies followed similar procedures to select studies for inclusion into their respective

meta-analysis. Both used only true expatriate studies. Often the samples used in expatriate

research are not expatriates. For example, Hudson and Inkson (2007) used people who are

in training for an overseas assignment but have not yet departed. Graf and Harland (2005)

used MBA students from a mid-western USA university.

Both meta-analyses appear to follow the methods outlined by Hunter and Schmidt (1990)

in creating their outputs, yet different outcomes occur. Exploration of the two underlying

samples used to create their respective meta-analysis shows a limited overlap in the studies used. Some studies used in the Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) would not have been published for inclusion in the Hechanova et al (2003) study; these sample differences may be a contributing factor to the different findings.

Upon closer investigation of their results both Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003) expressed concern over the small number of studies included, eight of the 37 or 42 studies respectively. Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003) both raised concerns about common method variance problems, that is, 'variance attributable to measurement method rather than the constructs the measures represent.' (Podsakoff et al, 2003, p. 879). A second concern raised was many of the underlying studies composing the meta-analyses had no control groups so it was not clear what the results were describing. A third concern was the issue of commitment. Both Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003) noted that they were not sure whether commitment meant commitment to the local organization or to the parent organization. A final concern raised by both of these studies was, although adjustment is a process and therefore occurs over time, almost all of the research was cross-sectional in nature; yet, longitudinal designs are indicated to be more appropriate for the research subject matter.

Given the limited support for Black et al's (1991) framework by both Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al's (2005) and Hechanova et al's (2003) meta-analyses, closer examination of the individual studies that make up the respective meta-analyses often reveal weaknesses in the research designs and these design weaknesses may be contributing to the tenuous support for the framework. Very few studies that constitute the meta-analysis attempt to explain why or how they selected their expatriate sample and this raises a concern as to how representative their samples used are. In addition, few studies included female expatriates,

although this may be partially due to the smaller numbers in the population (Brookfield Global Trends Relocation Survey, 2011; GMAC Global Relocation Trends Study, 2006). Stening and Yu (2006) raise a final concern regarding sample issues in this field of research. Research typically employs survey methods, but, they note 10 - 15 % is the typical return rate. Such a low response rate raises concerns about the quality of the underlying data set such as; how does such a low response rate affect the representativeness or randomness of the sample, the statistical power and effect size and thus the conclusions that are drawn? Could such low response rates represent a 'certain' sub-population that could lead to inaccurate conclusions?

A further reason why the two meta-analyses find so little in common may rest with the Black et al (1991) framework itself. To develop their framework of international adjustment, Black et al (1991) first reviewed the literature for articles on domestic and overseas adjustment and then suggested a link to social learning theory; with time, expatriates learn or adjust to their new environment. Many of the foundation studies (e.g. Lysgaard (1955) measured Fulbright Scholars and Ruben and Kealey (1979) asked expatriates to recall their adjustment to their posting retrospectively) have weaknesses and these weaknesses may be affecting the outcomes and creating differential outcomes.

Further issues with the samples used for the foundation of the framework exist. This is a framework focused on international business, yet 15 of the 18 studies that make up the review of the international adjustment literature rely on students as their sample. Although many of the studies in Black and Mendenhall (1990) used international students (e.g. Lysgaard (1955) measured Fulbright Scholars) as opposed to business expatriates as their sample, the issue of validity remains; is the student experience the same as the expatriate's? The editors of the Journal of International Business Studies (JIBS) address in

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their editorial concern over the use of students as proxies for expatriate businesspeople (Bello, Leung, Radebaugh, Tung, & van Witteloostuijn, 2009). Second, many of the studies consisted of interviews upon departure or return with participants often asked details of their adjustment well after the fact. An example of this concern is Reuben and Kealey (1979) who asked 14 Canadian International Development Agency aid workers (similar to VSO in the UK) and their spouses who had been in Africa for one year to recall retrospectively their level of adjustment during the first weeks, at three to four months, and at present (Black and Mendenhall, 1991, p. 230). An individual's ability or willingness to recall accurately must be considered when using the findings to underpin further research. Third, although most studies included statistics, only one study reached statistical significance yet conclusions are drawn from the 'almost significant' results. This represents a fundamental error. Finally, expatriate is not defined and as has been suggested by Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) different outcomes may occur depending on the assignment length.

Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) suggest that if an assignment is relatively short, an expatriate may 'soldier on'; however, if facing a long-term tenure, they may be more inclined to contemplate an early departure. In the Black et al (1991) frame work, it seems not only unclear as to what an expatriate is but also what adjustment (beyond anxiety reduction) actually is.

In their attempt to provide an all encompassing framework of the expatriate's adjustment Black et al (1991) have mixed success. Before this research presents an alternate framework drawn from the organization level, it is important to emphasise the unit of interest is the person. Exploring the person in relation to international assignment will bridge the two frameworks.

3.6 Personality, gender and expatriatism

In addition to a focus on Black et al's (1991) framework, several studies have attempted to explore which personality traits of individuals are critical to satisfaction on a foreign assignment.

3.6.1 Personality traits

Johnson, Kristof-Brown, Van Vianen, De Pater and Klein (2003) explored the relationship between social ties, personality antecedents, and their relation to type of adjustment as outlined by Black et al (1991). To evaluate the personality characteristics relevant to expatriate success, Johnson et al (2003) administered the International Personality Item Pool scale, Rosenberg's (1965) 10-item scale, and the Expatriate Adjustment Scale (Black, 1988; Black and Stephens, 1989; Gregersen and Black, 1990) to expatriates working for a Dutch MNE. They found that core self-evaluations or how the individual feels about themselves (self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and emotional stability) but not extraversion or breadth and depth of relationships affected work adjustment. In particular, relationships with host country nationals affected an expatriate's overall adjustment.

Studying Americans working in Taiwan, Huang, Chi, and Lawler (2005) found the extraversion and agreeableness measures of the Big 5 personality factors (Costa & McCrae, 1992) related to the interaction adjustment criterion of Black et al's (1991) framework and the openness to experience factor of the Big 5 personality factors related to the work adjustment criterion. Researchers such as Costa and McCrae (1992) concluded that five factors, openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism provided a parsimonious and robust encapsulation of personality.

Hudson and Inkson (2007) used the Big 5 personality factors to measure New Zealanders

who were in the pre-departure training phase for volunteer development assignments

overseas (similar to VSO) and found openness and agreeableness will influence one's

success in the expatriate environment. Dalton and Wilson (2000) measured the

personalities of a non-studied expatriate group, Arabs in the west and discovered expatriate

performance was related to the conscientiousness and agreeableness scale of the Big 5

Personality measure.

Graf and Harland (2005) were interested in understanding the role of intercultural and

interpersonal competence to an expatriate's success. To measure these relationships, Graf

and Harland (2005) administered the Behavioural Assessment Scale for Intercultural

Communication Effectiveness and the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale and three

Interpersonal Competence measures, the Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire, the

Social Problem-Solving Inventory-Revised: Short Version, and the Self-Monitoring Scale

to a sample of mid-western part-time MBA students. The MBA students were asked to

provide hypothetical responses to questions regarding working on international

assignments.

Although the findings from the studies above appear to add to the emerging profile of a

successful expatriate, caution must be exercised when deciding the acceptability of the

contributions.

Both the Hudson and Inkson (2007) study and the Graf and Harland (2005) study use

proxy samples of expatriates, not true expatriates. Hudson and Inkson's (2007) sample

consisted of New Zealand volunteers (VSO type service) who were in training for overseas

development projects but had not yet departed. Participants in the Hudson and Inkson

(2005) sample had not yet been deployed, so whether they would successfully complete their assignment is/was unclear. Graf and Harland (2005) measured MBA students at a mid-western American university. Drawing conclusions about the personal characteristics of successful expatriates using the results from expatriates-in-training or student samples, without validation of their equivalence, is problematic (JIBS, 2009).

Two studies, Huang et al (2005) and Johnson et al (2003) specifically explored personality variables in relation to the Black et al (1991) framework. Huang et al (2005) found support for extraversion and agreeableness affecting adjustment. Johnson et al (2003) found support for core self-evaluations or how one feels about themselves (self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and emotional stability) but not extraversion affecting work adjustment. As mentioned each study employs different personality measures, thus making comparisons or drawing conclusions difficult because one cannot be certain of the equivalence of the concepts between measures.

Although the Johnson et al (2003) study was well designed, they used a variety of scales other than the Big 5 to measure personality; therefore, comparisons with the other studies are difficult. Finally, two issues with the Dalton and Wilson (2000) study of Arab expatriates exist. Firstly, it is not clear whether the Big 5 measure has been validated on an Arab population; if not, they break a fundamental rule of psychometrics, using a measurement on a population it was not designed or validated for (Anastasi, 1982, Chen, 2008). Second, the sample is small and because of confidentiality arrangements, assessment of the sample is limited. Dalton and Wilson attempt to link the Big 5 measure to performance.

With all of the above research exploring the successful expatriate personality, a serious concern remains; have the psychometric tests used been properly validated for the respective populations: Saudi Arabia, New Zealand and Holland? As (Dahl et al., 1985) points out, when doing cross-cultural research, it is imperative that researchers are not comparing 'Chopsticks with Forks'. Also noted again are the twin issues of poor samples and lack of clear definitions of what an expatriate is. Based on the personality literature of the expatriate, drawing conclusions is very difficult given the issues highlighted above.

3.6.2 Gender

As the GMAC (2006) survey suggests the number of women on foreign assignments is increasing and more organizations intend to send even more women on international assignments; however, the Brookfield Global Trends Relocation Survey (2011) indicates the number of female expatriates has remained static since GMAC (2006). Very few studies have explored the female expatriate's experience. Hutchings, French, and Hatcher (2008) suggest that female expatriates deployed to China receive differential treatment, real or perceived, from their male counterparts. They suggest women tend to feel they receive less support. In contrast to Hutchings et al (2008), Napier and Taylor (2002) who were also researching the female expatriate experience in China, suggest western expatriate women in general face no particular difficulties in adjustment. When Hechanova et al's (2003) meta-analysis examined the relation of gender to each of the types of adjustment posited in the Black et al (1991) Framework of International Adjustment they found correlations between adjustment and gender that were not statistically significant. These mixed findings suggest that there is no clear understanding of the relation between gender and adjustment.

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A final point on the role of gender in expatriate adjustment; research findings are clear about the important role the female spouse plays in the male expatriate's success (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al, 2005). However, to this researcher's knowledge no information exists about the influence the accompanying male spouse has on his partner. Do they share the same experiences as the female spouse of an expatriate?

To summarize, it appears the candidate who will successfully complete an overseas assignment is an agreeable, confident person who is open to new experiences (meeting new people) and has a strong social support network.

This research has explored the expatriate experience through the seminal framework elucidated by Black et al (1991) which focused on an individual's adjustment. Because this framework drew upon social learning as the driver; it offered this current research promise; however, as discussed, it appears to have limited capabilities to explain the expatriate's adjustment. This research thus turned to explore the individual expatriate's personality traits in its quest to understand the expatriate's experience; again explanations appear elusive.

Given the concerns outlined above, this research suggests following the lead of Bandura (2002), Earley (2006) and Hurn (2006) who note that exploring the person interacting with their organization may provide new insights. To address this suggestion this research will explore the person organization interaction through the lens of Schneider's ASA framework and its companion model, Chatman's PO fit.

4 Literature Review II

4.1 Person Organization Fit / Attraction Selection Attrition

The previous chapter concluded by suggesting that focusing on the person as they interact with their organization might prove more fruitful in understanding the expatriate experience. Schneider's (1987) Attraction Selection Attrition Framework offers such a lens; however, this framework is inextricably linked with Chatman's model of Person Organization Fit (PO fit). Whereas, Schneider (1987) describes a theoretical process of a person interacting with an organization; Chatman (1989) suggests an explanation of the person organization interaction and eventual outcomes: a why people stay in or leave an organization.

This chapter begins with a brief description of Schneider's (1987) ASA framework and its companion concept of Person Organization Fit (PO Fit) as enunciated by Chatman (1989) and O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991). The ASA framework and PO fit model are then evaluated. The issue of attrition is further expanded upon and then the limitations of culture as an underlying concept for international research are examined. It is suggested that an over-reliance on culture may be stifling progress in understanding the complex world of the expatriate. The chapter concludes with the research question.

4.2 What is Person Organization Fit (PO fit)?

Since Schneider's original elucidation of his framework for understanding organization behaviour in 1987, it has been developed in many directions by researchers. Schneider, suggested that the people who are attracted to, select into, and eventually decide to stay or leave organizations are fundamental to its success. In short, the people make the place and it is about the person fitting the organization (Dapra & Schneider, 1985). Building on the

conceptualization of PO fit described by Schneider it is suggested that PO fit could occur in two ways. PO fit is *complementary*, that is the person or organization adds something unique to help the other fulfil its needs; alternatively, PO fit is *supplementary*, that is, the person and organization share similar characteristics and values.

In 1996, Kristof further expanded the concept of PO fit when she suggested complementary fit is a two-sided relationship and Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) had been describing one side: *demands-abilities fit*; that is, an individual's skills, abilities, knowledge etc. add to the environmental or organizational needs. However, as Kristof (1996) noted, another side of complementary fit exists: *needs-supplies fit;* that is, an individual's needs are met by the environment or organization. Key to this issue is the question of whose needs are being met.

Chatman (1989) describes a method to measure the critical ingredient in Schneider's ASA framework, PO fit. Both Schneider (1987) and Chatman (1989) are interested in exploring an interaction that occurs between the person and the organization which can lead to a decision by a person to stay or leave (Schneider, 1987) based on a person's fit (Chatman, 1989). To measure an individual's fit Chatman first cast around the literature looking for a person construct and an organization construct that could be measured at the same level. Values provided such a construct. If the respective value sets matched, a person would be inclined to stay with an organization.

An important point and of particular relevance to this research which will be returned to in the methods section was Chatman's desire to identify a method that would provide the flexibility to plumb the idiographic perspective or measurement within the person yet also

allow for a nomothetic approach, that is comparison between people. Template matching based on the Q sort (Chatman, 1989; Caldwell, Chatman, & O'Reilly, 2007) offered such a method.

The Q sort was formalized into the Organizational Culture Profile (O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell, 1991) which asked a person to rank 54 constructs based on there importance to them. This sorting and ranking created a unique individual organization culture profile. For example, one might select competitive environment as an important dimension in the organization environment whereas another person may identify a cooperative environment as important. This individual person's profile was then matched against an organization culture profile. A high degree of match between the organization and individual profiles meant a good fit.

Chatman (1989) suggested "values are a type of social cognition that facilitates a person's adaptation to his or her environment and values." (p. 339). This point is crucial in binding the frameworks together; because in referring to social cognition and adaptation, Chatman may be suggesting something similar to Black et al (1991). PO fit and what underlies its conceptualization is described by Chatman (1989) thus,

> [T]he person organization fit model treats organization values and norms as the
> situational side of the model. On the person side, individual values and some
> personality characteristics are examined. Higher levels of person organization
> fit exist when there is congruence between the norms and values of
> organizations and the values of persons. Selection and socialization processes
> are seen as the antecedents to person organization fit. Once person organization
> fit is assessed, predictions can be made about specific outcomes, global

behavioural outcomes, and changes in organization norms and values. (Chatman, 1989, p. 335).

To measure PO fit, traditional research methods would measure a single construct of the person and a single construct of the organization on an outcome. For example, drawing on constructs from the Framework of International Adjustment, a person variable such as self efficacy would be measured, then an organization variable such as adjustment to international organization setting would be measured and an outcome predicted, for example, intention to quit. However, as Caldwell et al (2007) note, the issue of fit is far more complex; it is multidimensional.

A method to accommodate this concern was presented by Caldwell et al (2007), Chatman (1989), and O'Reilly et al (1991), a 'q sort' followed by template matching. Markoczy (1994) and Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) suggest an alternate method when measuring expatriates, causal mapping.

Importantly, this method presented by the Chatman research team offered a semi-idiographic approach (idiothetic) to understanding the person organization interaction. The value of a semi-idiographic approach (also known as idiothetic) is because one is trying to create and compare multidimensional profiles, traditional methods assume for a situation characteristics being assessed are equally relevant to all individuals (Caldwell et al, 2007). However, different characteristics may not be of equal importance. Drawing on an example from the expatriate research, family support and well being are considered important to one's satisfaction in a foreign country (Black et al, 1991). The differential influence of family will be seen in this project; family is important if the expatriate has family in country.

Schneider (1987), Chatman (1989), O'Reilly et al (1991) offer different options to explore

the expatriate within the organization; however, researchers have raised concerns about the

concepts.

4.3 Critique of PO fit

4.3.1 Structural issues

A complex measurement web that leads to different outcomes has emerged from the

research (Hoffman, & Woehr, 2006; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, &

Johnson, 2005; Piasentin & Chapman (2006, 2007); Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003) and

this may suggest a lack of clarity of the underlying concepts. If the underlying concepts are

unclear, inappropriate conclusions or comparisons may be drawn.

Besides the fundamental descriptions of PO fit mentioned in the previous section,

researchers have spawned numerous other levels of fit: Person - Person; Person - Job,

Person - Group, Person - Environment, Person – Organization Culture and what is of

interest to us: Person – Organization (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006). To add to the

confusion regarding definitions, fit can be viewed as a subjective interpretation that can be

directly perceived by the individual, fit can be a subjective interpretation that can be

indirectly measured, or fit can be objectively measured. This issue of definitions reaches its

peak of complexity with Edwards' (2007) model that delineates 45 varieties of fit. With so

many combinations of fit, as Billsberry, Ambrosini, Moss-Jones, and Marsh (2005) and

Kristof-Brown et al (2005) both note, terminology is an enormously confounding issue

when measuring PO fit.

Further complicating the issue of conceptualizing fit is, depending on what and how PO fit is measured the results may lead to different outcomes. The first concern is, what is the criterion being measured? Is it a behaviour outcome e.g. quit or is it a cognitive intention e.g. intention to quit (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006; Verquer et al, 2003)? Hoffman and Woehr (2006) also suggested the method used to measure outcomes (Objective, Perceived or Subjective fit) will influence the findings of a study. A final issue to consider is highlighted by Kristof-Brown et al (2005) who noted that many studies use values measures while others use personality traits to explain fit and this also affects the measurement methods and outcomes of a fit study. Despite the meta-analyses by Verquer et al (2003) and Hoffman et al (2006), which form of fit, subjective or objective, is a superior measure remains unclear.

With such a fundamental weakness - the lack of clear definition or conceptualization - how is a researcher to measure fit? The answer seems to hinge on whether fit is conceived as a subjective interpretation as Piasentin and Chapman (2006) describe it or fit is conceived as a construct that can be objectively measured vis a vis values such as Chatman (1991) suggests. How fit is conceptualized has measurement and eventual interpretation concerns.

4.3.2 Methodological issues

An important concern affecting the fit debate that all researchers must address is methodological in nature. Two main and distinct methodological approaches are pursued in fit research. One approach adopts a whole measure such as a profile comparison/distance score (correlation) while the other approach considers measures that can be partialled into main effects and interactions (surface response methods/polynomial regression). The former methods are suggested to better reflect the reality and wholeness of the situation; the latter methods allow for the accounting of more statistical variance. Billsberry et al

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(2005) has explored a causal mapping approach to understand fit; however, he is unique on this front.

Schneider (1987, 2001), and Judge and Kristof-Brown (2004) are clear that PO fit is a concept that should be looked at in its entirety, whose main effects and interactions cannot be parcelled out. Researchers such as Chatman (2007); O'Reilly, et al (1991) and Judge and Kristof-Brown (2004) argue for the use of whole measures because "it represents real life... This is genuinely a question about person-situation congruence, not main effects" (O'Reilly et al, 1991, p.511). Although whole measures create common method bias issues, the issues can be addressed if one is aware of the problems. The alternative approach, surface response (polynomial regression) methods whose chief proponent is Edwards (2007) have its own concern; these methods require large samples and are very difficult to replicate (Judge, 2007, p.437). Thus, this issue represents a significant decision and trade-off for the researcher when designing a study.

In this review of the issues with fit research, this researcher suggests given the confusion over what is fit and thus findings, the more prudent route is to return to the foundations laid out by Schneider in 1987. In his early work, Schneider was consistent; PO fit is a subjective interpretation. This point, that fit is a subjective interpretation, is reinforced in Judge's concluding chapter (Judge, 2007) when he suggests fit is a subjective individual perception and thus exploration should be moving to methodologies that allow such an exploration (Judge, 2007). Billsberry et al (2005) have made a first attempt with their use of causal maps to explore employees' fit at a large British university.

Finally, Piasentin and Chapman (2006) in their review reinforce the view that subjective PO fit is a legitimate conceptualization. Their desire to measure multiple types of fit simultaneously is of particular relevance to the expatriate experience as the international assignee would appear to be a person where accommodating multiple types of fit is not uncommon. For example, the expatriate manager may be providing knowledge transfer to Chinese employees (demand-ability), yet, working in China as an expatriate is providing the person with an opportunity to develop their job portfolio (needs-supply). Piasentin and Chapman (2006, 2007) provide insights which may be of particular relevance to the expatriate thus they are discussed separately.

4.3.3 Piasentin and Chapman (2006, 2007)

Four conceptualizations of PO fit have been presented, supplementary, complementary, needs-supplies and demands-abilities; the latter two are sub-categories of complementary fit. Piasentin and Chapman (2006), suggested the framework has not been tested in its entirety, and conclude, "the accuracy of the framework is debatable." (2006, p.209)

Furthermore, most of the research undertaken has used the supplementary perspective of PO fit. In their review, 78% of the 46 studies in their review used values to measure PO fit, the balance measure PO fit in relation to personality, goals, and KSA (Piasentin & Chapman, 2006). Piasentin and Chapman (2006) were aware of only one study that measured perceptions of complementary fit.

Given the potentially confounding conceptualizations of complementary PO fit, Piasentin and Chapman (2006, 2007) suggest returning to a more general conceptualization of complementary fit as originally described by Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) where an individual makes whole or complements the existing environment. Piasentin and Chapman

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(2006, 2007) suggest Kristof (1996) has spawned a plethora of meanings which may be contributing to mismeasurement. This current research suggests the participants in this sample identify both types of fit occur within their experience and therefore, returning to a more general view for expatriates might prove fruitful.

Piasentin and Chapman (2007) further develop the concept of complementary fit and specify two important criteria that distinguish complementary fit from other types of fit:

"... first, an individual must perceive that he or she is dissimilar to existing organizational characteristics on important criteria (e.g. abilities, knowledge, personality traits); second, the individual must also perceive that this dissimilarity makes him or her unique in the organization and, therefore, of value to the organization. Thus, we define complementary fit as occurring when an individual possesses unique characteristics that are perceived to be different from other employees' characteristics, yet valuable to the organization..." (p.342)

This current research begins to address the issues raised regarding PO fit by Piasentin and Chapman (2006, 2007). It also provides tentative evidence for *complementarity* fit; a type of fit which has been subjected to minimal empirical investigation and what entails a 'complementary' fit remains elusive (Kristof, 1996).

This research also begins to address the issues identified by Piasentin and Chapman (2006),

"One of the benefits of capturing multiple forms of fit in a single study is that it makes it possible to generate hypotheses about the relative importance of certain

types of fit for different individuals. There may be individual differences in whether employees focus on certain types of fit over others." (p.212)

In the previous sections the ASA and PO fit framework and model have been presented. This research suggested the two were inextricably intertwined. Both were interested in the outcome of the person interacting in their organization; if they fit they stay; if they do not fit they leave. At the heart of the issue was social cognition and this is a psychological perspective that also underpins the framework of international adjustment. Just as Chatman's PO fit model has been drawn upon to explain and measure fit, the process of attrition appeared incomplete beyond: a person fits and stays or misfits and leaves.

4.4   PO fit - Attrition

As Holtom et al (2005) note, attrition is an expensive proposition to organizations and their research reinforces the findings from the international literature presented in earlier chapters. Little is said in the PO fit literature on attrition (Smith, 2008), therefore this section will begin by discussing attrition in relation to the ASA framework and its companion concept of PO fit as elucidated by Chatman (1989), and further developed by O'Reilley, Chatman et al (1991). This research therefore briefly presents the Job

Embeddedness model (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee & Sablynski, 2001; Mitchell & Lee, 2001) as

a possible enhancement of the PO fit attrition link. The latter framework may address

limitations of Schneider's ASA framework and PO fit.

4.4.1   ASA – PO fit

The final stage of the ASA framework is attrition; that is, the person's departure from the

organization. Although much research has explored the two precursors in the employment

cycle, attraction and selection, little is said about the attrition component of Schneider's

framework (Smith, 2008).

From a theoretical perspective, attrition in the ASA framework and its companion concept

PO fit suggest two outcomes, outcomes that appear to be in conflict. Attrition of people

who don't fit the organization leads to homogeneity of people who remain and this

homogeneity leads to a narrowing of the range of views (Dickson, Resick, & Goldstein,

2008) and thus ossification of the organization. Yet, homogeneity also leads to lower

turnover because the individuals share more values in common and lower turnover may be

positive vis a vis lower recruitment, selection, and retention costs for example (Brooks et

al, 2005). A valuable consideration is the ASA framework may lead to lower attrition

because people 'pre-select' during the attraction and selection phase. During these phases

the person has the opportunity to evaluate their personal 'fit' with the organization and

based on congruence of values people choose or reject the organization.

As presented previously, the work of Chatman (1988), Chatman (1991), and O'Reilley et

al (1991) provide an explanation for why a person may be attracted to, subsequently join,

and decide to stay or leave an organization; it is about the compatibility between the

individual's and organization's values. Chatman's (1988) two-year study of new graduates

entering into accounting firms in America develops this explanation as the reason why people stay or leave an organization. She introduces the concept of person-organization fit as a 'driver' of a person's eventual decision to stay or leave. 'Person-organization fit is defined here as the congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons' (Chatman, 1988, p. 339). With the development of the Organizational Culture Profile, (O'Reilly et al 1991) as a tool to measure a person's fit with an organization, via matching person and organization values, the two concepts, ASA and PO fit, converged. Schneider was discussing the relationships between people and how they influence the organization, 'the people make the place'; PO fit provided the explanation of how the people make the place – sharing common values - and, O'Reilley et al (1991) developed the tool to measure PO fit.

In the more general context of attrition, Hom and Griffeth (1991) in their study into turnover decisions linked job satisfaction → withdrawal cognitions → turnover (-.75, .25 respectively, p < .05). Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000) in their meta-analysis of the accumulated research which focussed on the job satisfaction → turnover relationship identified a statistically significant link between job satisfaction and turnover (K=67. N=24,566, ρ= -.19). As Smith (2008) notes, research into the ASA attrition stage is limited and he further notes the attrition research has relied heavily on values, commitment, and satisfaction as explanations for turnover. Chatman et al (1991), for example, found PO fit and turnover had a correlation of r = - .35, p < 01, and the correlation between PO fit and intention to leave was r = -.31, p < .01.

Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson (2005) in their meta-analysis which was based on 65 studies incorporating N=42,922 people establish a correlation between PO fit and job

satisfaction (.44) and a correlation between PO fit and intention to quit (-.35). When the sample was adjusted to account for the inordinate impact that the Vancouver and Schmitt study might exert due to the large sample (n=13,388) on an over-all meta-analysis sample of N=36,093, the correlations between PO fit when adjusted were .50 for job satisfaction, and -.47 for intention to quit. Unfortunately, little is said in the literature to help demarcate the PO fit – satisfaction relationship beyond identifying a correlation between PO fit and satisfaction with their co-workers (.39), PO fit and satisfaction with their supervisor (.33) and PO fit and satisfaction with their organization (.65).

Arthur, Bell, Villado, and Doverspike (2006) and Wang, Zhan, MCCune, and Truxillo (2011) support the link between PO fit → satisfaction and ITQ and importantly confirm a causal relationship. PO fit influences satisfaction and ITQ. Of particular relevance to this current research is both research draws upon perceived fit with their organization, that is, a cognitive and thus personal interpretation of the person's fit.

Arthur et al's (2006) support is important because the findings reflect a meta-analysis of criterion related validity of .31 (k=109, N=108, 328) between perceived PO fit and satisfaction and a criterion related validity of .24 (k=8, N=2,476) between PO fit and turnover. Furthermore, in their path analysis Arthur et al (2006) clearly highlight the link PO fit → job satisfaction → turnover and PO fit → turnover intentions → turnover. Arthur et al (2006) link cognitions to behaviour.

Wang et al (2011) focused on Chinese newcomers to an organization in China and their outcomes. This study using structured equation modelling found that PO fit influenced both job satisfaction (.38) and ITQ (-35); furthermore, they also deconstructed PO fit into

need-supply and demand-ability fit and found both influenced the individual's sense of job

satisfaction (.27, .21) and turnover intentions (-.25, -.23) respectively .

An alternative perspective that may contribute to the understanding of attrition is the

conceptualization of job embeddedness.

4.4.2   Job Embeddedness

Finally, Job Embeddedness as described by Mitchell and Lee (2001), Mitchell et al (2001)

and Mallol, Holtom, and Lee (2007) helps to place one's attrition decision into a wider

context. They suggest the reasons that individuals leave or do not leave organizations often

have to do with their larger circumstances. Mallol et al (2007) is unique and relevant to this

research in that they explore Job Embeddedness in a cross-cultural sample in America.

Briefly, Job Embeddedness suggests exploring the issue of a person's work and decisions

around work as a gestalt. That is, the person is much more than a simple P x O interaction;

the person interacts with many other spheres of life that influence employment decisions.

Like Schneider, Job Embeddedness draws on Lewin's research as a foundation,

specifically field theory and embeddedness. Lewin suggests people are embedded within a

life space which is individual and personal. Each person experiences uniquely the

influences exerted within a domain; it is a concept influenced by Gestalt psychology.

Based on Lewin's concepts, Mitchell et al (2001) introduced the concept of job

embeddedness to explain the reasons that individuals stay at an organization. Individuals

remain at the organization partly because they feel connected to a social web.

Mitchell et al. (2001) argued that three key facets affect the extent to which individuals feel

embedded in this web. At the organization level: The first factor, *links*, reflects the extent

to which individuals feel linked to other people or activities. For example, the number of committees on which the individual works, the number of colleagues with whom they interact, or the number of years in their position, all helps determine the level of linkages. The second factor reflects the level of fit between their jobs and other facets of their life. How does the job utilize their talents? How do their values and preferences match the culture and climate of their organization? Do they feel valued? Factors such as the aforementioned will help to determine the level of fit between the two. A final organization level factor corresponds to the extent to which links could be severed and what the sacrifices a person would incur would be if they left the organization. That is, the person weighs the benefits, opportunities, and security of their current job relative to other positions to develop their assessment of sacrifice.

Mitchell et al (2001) suggested that each of these three factors – links, fit and sacrifice— exist at a community level as well. These factors, hence, represented the extent to which individuals feel embedded in their community. Links to the community are factors such as whether individuals are married, whether they own their home, or whether their family lives in the community. Fit to the community corresponds to whether individuals like and connect with their community. Finally, sacrifice refers to how much dislocation a person would feel if they left the community relative to if they stayed. The question would be, how difficult would leaving the community be? Reflection upon these points creates a sense of embeddedness within the community.

Mitchell et al (2001) provide evidence to support job embeddedness as a superior model to explain attrition. In their study of two organizations, a grocery store chain and a hospital at two points in time (one measured ITQ and the second point in time measured quit), they

found support for all 6 dimensions of job embeddedness and its relation to intention to quit (ITQ) and quit for both organizations Also, those who were more embedded were less likely to quit. Importantly, as they note,

> The data also shows that job embeddedness adds to the prediction of turnover attributable to standard measures of job satisfaction and organizational commitment ...job embeddedness assesses new and meaningful variance in turnover that is in excess of that predicted by the major variables included in almost all the major models of turnover. Our empirical findings show that job embeddedness complements and extends researchers' understanding of the antecedents of leaving. (Mitchell et al, 2001, p.1116)

With this brief review of the current research about attrition, it is evident that much research still needs to be done. An issue of importance to this research is the person - attrition - international assignment nexus and as Kristof-Brown et al (2005) notes, "research has yet to explore how ASA processes unfold and impact organizations across cultures." (p. 24)

As this research explores an international human resource issue, culture is traditionally used to frame the research. This research will be briefly discuss the influence of culture on the expatriate's satisfaction and conclude that culture has an influence but there are many other constructs which may be more important.

4.5 *Role of culture in expatriate research*

An issue to researchers who study international management is the issue of culture; more specifically, it is the issue of how culture affects any conceptualization or model. Several points are at the core of this issue. Firstly, is culture an overarching factor, which imposes an inordinate influence on a person, or is the role of culture in a person's adjustment more

subtle, more indirect? Second, should cultures be viewed in terms of similarities or in terms of differences? A final and very important point is, culture and country are not the same thing yet are used almost interchangeably (Bailey & Spicer, 2007; Earley, 2006).

Much of the international business research relies on the work of researchers such as Hofstede (1980) who conceptualize culture as an overarching explanation for people's behaviour, however, there are issues with such a perspective as shall become evident shortly.

This thesis adopts a view of culture which is shared by Barinaga's (2001), Cray and Mallory's (1998), DiMaggio's (1997), and Moss Kanter's (1994) research. These researchers suggest that culture is best considered in the context of the person's perceptions and interpretations of their international organization setting level as opposed to the cultural setting of a country. This perspective also fits with Schneider's view of organization fit as a cognitive interpretation and references the relevance of the person organization nexus.

Barinaga (2001) in her research on cross-cultural work group formation describes from a sense-making constructionist perspective how individuals construct their view of the world and their organization culture. DiMaggio (1997) discusses culture as a cognitive process or 'toolkit' that is malleable not a latent variable (p. 268); furthermore, culture plays an indirect role and our level analysis is the organization level.

Moss Kanter (1994), studying cross-national mergers acknowledges different cultures exist; she also suggests the focus should be on the similarities and in business, too much

research has focused on differences. It is about organizations and the people within them working together. Finally, Cray and Mallory (1998) studying international strategy add further support to the view that culture is a factor in international strategy; however, it offers only an indirect impact to organizational international strategy.

Barinaga (2001), DiMaggio (1997), Moss Kanter (1994), and Cray and Mallory (1998) dove-tail with Scullion's suggestion that research should forget about defining international organizations in terms of culture and focus at the organization level. The conceptualizations of culture outlined above provide an alternate view which will allow this research to seat the study of the expatriate or international assignment at the same level as Schneider, the organization.

As noted above, this research suggests it is the expatriate – organization nexus that should be addressed when exploring the expatriate experience. However, also suggested is when studying the expatriate experience, researchers tend to seat their study in relation to culture as the overarching construct influencing business. More specifically, researchers usually rely on Hofstede's (1980) model of culture to underpin their study.

Hofstede (1984) defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another." (p. 21)   Through his global research project of IBM employees, Hostede suggested all countries are organized in relation to five dimensions (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/) small vs. large power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long vs. short term orientation (renamed from Confucianism).

Hofstede's research has intuitive appeal perhaps because it feeds stereotypes, yet his theory is more caricature; he anthropomorphizes/stereotypes/caricatures countries, their cultures, their citizens based upon five dimensions. Three brief points will highlight concerns with research that relies on Hofstede. America is deemed the most individualistic culture; if asked, most would agree with this view. However, Holland and Italy are ranked in the top five as well on this dimension. If asked, would the same people consider Holland or Italy an individualistic culture, similar in make up to the USA? A second example; Japan is considered similar in character to China – Confucian/Shinto – deferent to authority etc.; however, when Bond (2002) reanalyzed Hofstede's data he found Japan to be more similar in profile to the USA on the individual-collective scale. So what does this tell us? Finally, Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier (2002) suggest sub-groups within America exist on the collective-individual dimension. It would appear sub-groups were cancelling each other out; it would suggest a conceptualization and psychometric problem. Thus research which relies on Hofstede should be carefully considered.

4.6   Conclusion and research question

This research did not begin from a culture perspective; that is, this research did not rest upon assumptions about how the Chinese or German or American customs differ and thus superficially identify these traits as explanations for satisfaction in an international organizational posting. Although it is not denied that culture influences there are other factors at play, which this project proposes have a greater influence on how a person performs in the organizational setting

The starting point for this research was an interest in why expatriates left their international postings prematurely. However, what was evident throughout the literature was that identifying those who would or had left would be a difficult if not impossible sample to

obtain. Therefore, this research *could not directly address why* people left; however, this research could identify *what* is important to the expatriates who stay. By understanding what is important to an expatriate in their international organization setting helps explain why a person may leave.

As was suggested at the beginning of this thesis, despite twenty-one years of research using Black et al's (1991) framework describing person's adjustment to international assignments, the attrition rate of expatriates remains significant. This suggests the framework is not capturing their experience satisfactorily. This research then suggested that perhaps the research had been focussing on the wrong level of analysis; exploring the expatriate in relation to their organization may provide new insights and Schneider's (1987) ASA framework was suggested as an alternative. This thesis has suggested both fit and adjustment are similar concepts based on social cognition.

As presented earlier there is evidence of a link between PO fit and satisfaction and intention to quit and quit; a link exists between cognitions and behaviour. Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) in their meta-analysis of the research on the Framework of International Adjustment (Black et al, 1991) identify a link in the international domain between adjustment and job dissatisfaction and intention to quit. They state:

> Does the stress of poor adjustment really lead to important (but, heretofore, infrequently studied) consequences? With evidence from correlations and structural modelling, the answer is an emphatic yes. The importance of the SEM evidence is that it shows effects of poor expatriate adjustment on long-presumed but under documented strains of withdrawal decisions and performance, even after major

influences such as job satisfaction have been accounted for. From the viewpoint of psychological strains, our results indicate that poor adjustment manifests it self in job dissatisfaction as well as in intentions to prematurely quit an assignment. If withdrawal cognitions can be used as a proxy for quitting, the conclusion is that maladjustment will lead to extremely costly early returns (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al, p. 273, 2005).

Because of the recognized link between satisfaction and ITQ and the recognized link between ITQ and quit, satisfaction is an accessible way forward to enable the PO fit → ITQ → Quit and the adjustment → ITQ → Quit process to be operationalized. Gathering a sample of expatriates who had quit to investigate this link would be difficult, if not impossible; however, a sample of in-situ expatriates can be easily identified and measured. Thus satisfaction can be used as a proxy measure to help delineate the process the expatriate goes through to fit or adjust to their international organization setting.

Both frameworks appear to be describing a cognitive process in that they are both 'measuring' how individuals are describing and interpreting how they are fitting in or adjusting to their organization environment, thus, social cognition appears to bind the two frameworks together. What may separate the two frameworks is Black et al (1991) tries to include constructs beyond just organization constructs; whereas, PO fit and ASA appears not to. Although, PO fit tends to be described in terms of personal and organization values, it is only one dimension. Using satisfaction as a measure because of the recognized relationship between both PO fit and adjustment and satisfaction, this research attempts to level playing field between two similar frameworks with slightly different foci.
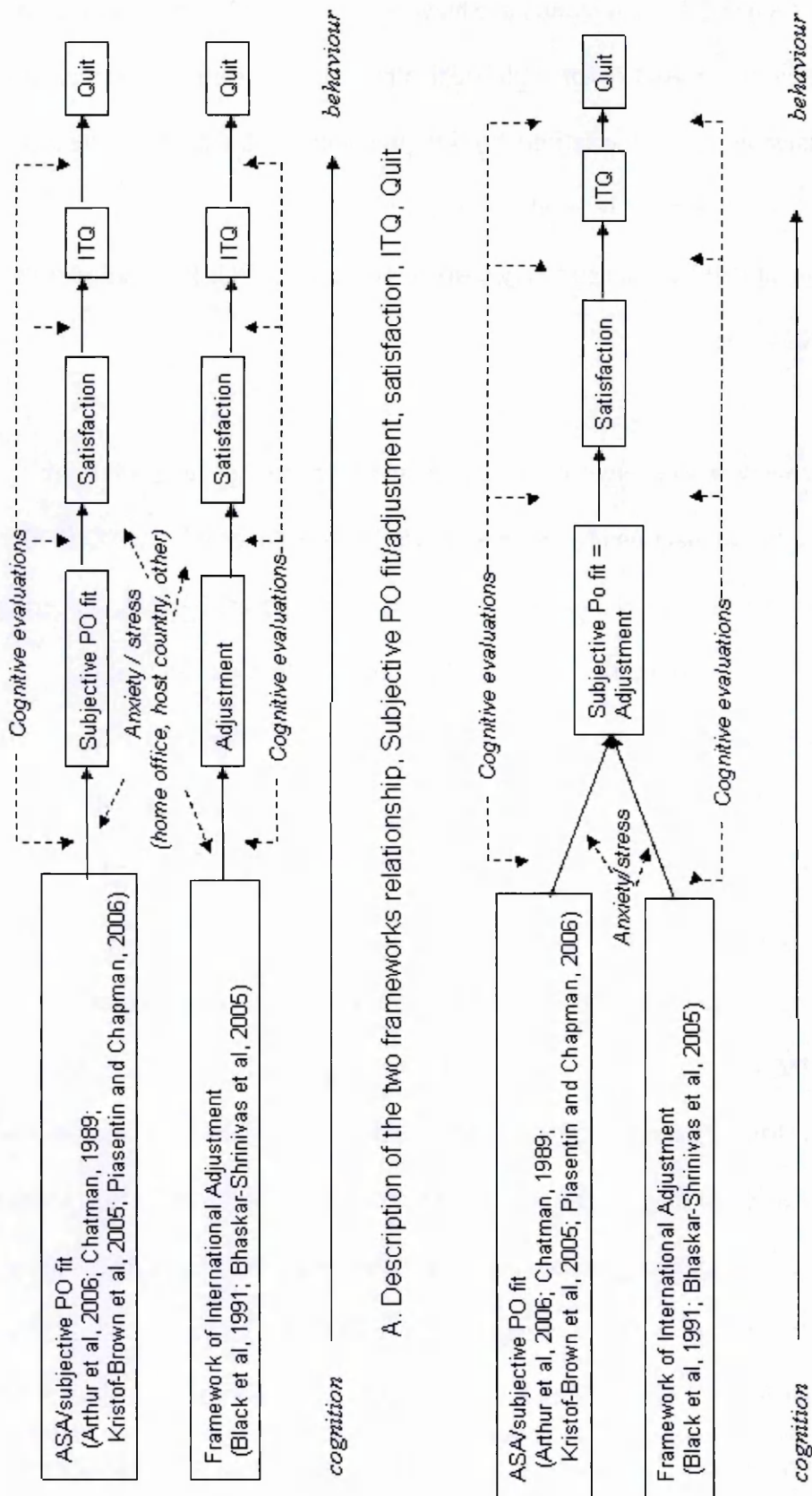
Figure 4-1: Relationship between the Frameworks, satisfaction, ITQ and quit

This research is interested in understanding the constructs that expatriates identify as important to their satisfaction in their international organization setting. Using satisfaction as a proxy measure for ITQ and thus as an indicator of adjustment or fit, the over-arching research question in this thesis is:

What constructs do expatriates identify as important to their satisfaction in their international organization setting?

Subsidiary to identifying what constructs are important to the expatriate's satisfaction, this research also asks: *Do the underlying frameworks; PO Fit and Framework of International Adjustment adequately describe the expatriate's experience in the international-organizational setting?*

In the next chapter the methods used in this research which will bring out the social cognition elements are presented.

5 Methodological Design

5.1 Methodology and Methods

A research design that would allow for both in-depth exploration and the comparison of expatriates was needed for this research. The Framework of International Adjustment appears to be partially a PO fit description but is limited in enhancing in-depth understanding of the constructs important to one's adjustment and how the constructs interact. ASA and PO Fit research offered a potentially viable methodology, q-sort (Organization Culture Profile) and template matching, to explore the expatriate international organization setting; however, a limitation of this research seemed to be that although they were interested in pursuing an understanding of the person organization interaction, no insights were offered on the international dimension. These methods also held promise because the research fell within the scope of social cognition. Markoczy and Goldberg (1985) presented a methodology which addressed the concerns of this current research. Their method of causal mapping offered potential because it had been used in a related international business domain, market entry of foreign firms; however, because it was untried in this international business domain, the person x international organization setting, the researcher wanted to increase the confidence in any findings. Thus a mixed method approach was pursued to address the research issue, understanding the expatriate's satisfaction in their current international organization setting.

As discussed previously, identifying people who had left or were leaving an organization would be very difficult. It has been shown in the literature that there is a link between satisfaction, intention to quit and quit, thus this research used satisfaction and intention to quit as a substitute for quit.

Before describing in more depth the methods used in this research, this research will first discuss why a mixed method was pursued after which the sample of expatriates will be described.

5.1.1 Justification of Mixed Methods

As mentioned at the outset of Section 5.1, this research sought a research design that would allow for both in-depth exploration and the comparison of expatriates. It was also evident this research would employ a cross-sectional design as access would be difficult, time for data collection limited, and resources available for data collection meagre.

When seeking an appropriate method for this research, a second concern was access to samples in international business research (Cooke, 2009; Takeuchi, 2010). In her discussion on conducting research in China, Cooke (2009) suggested that most researchers had 'widely noted that access to research informants and organizations is often the biggest hurdle' (p. 17). Within the field of international business the expatriate is a particularly difficult cohort to research because organizations usually have only a few expatriates at any one site. The testing phase of this project supported this assertion.

Hammersley (1992) reinforced the value of a mixed methods approach for this research by highlighting the strategic value this strategy offered; he suggested different methods may have different appeal to different participants. Bryman (1992) clarified the issue with his suggestion that 'tactical' (p. 68); that is, "…combined research may smooth access to research sites…. [The] moral here may be that an integrated approach is more likely to contain a component that will appeal to organizations to which access is sought." (p. 68).

Petersen (2004) suggested, "… [the] vast majority of research studies in international management have relied on only one research method: namely, surveys and previously

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developed research instruments ... we need more and different methods to more thoroughly understand the phenomenon of interest ... ..." (p. 38). Understanding the expatriate's experience in greater depth would require methods other than surveys.

The selection of mixed methods should help reveal important elements of the research problem which would remain unresolved if only one method were used (Bryman, 1992). Additionally, a mixed methods approach would draw on different methods which would complement each other and thus increase the validity of any findings (Bryman, 1992; Currall & Towler, 2003). Finally, because the central method used in this research, causal mapping, had not been used in person x international organization setting research, to enhance the confidence in the findings, this research followed the lead of using a mixed method approach as suggested by Anderson and Skaates (2004) and Hurmerinta-Peltomaki and Nummela (2004) and Markoczy (1994).

It was for these reasons, pragmatics, increased knowledge, and increased confidence in the findings that this researcher pursued a mixed methods approach.

5.1.1.1 The three methods

The final methods to be used in China were arrived at through a testing phase in the United Kingdom and China was arrived at as the research site because of access ability. The methods settled on were a satisfaction/intention to quit (ITQ) survey, causal maps, and semi-structured interview (Figure 5-1).

A survey would not adequately address what the expatriate felt was important to their satisfaction; however, it was felt it would provide a validated foundation or baseline on

which to build. A survey would address, 'is the expatriate satisfied? Is the expatriate intending to quit?'

Causal mapping methods developed by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and Clarkson (2003) and described below would create a map of a person's unique interpretation of their satisfaction with their international organization circumstance yet also enable comparison. As is evidenced below, causal mapping had been utilized in both research domains under investigation in this research, international business and PO fit. This method would allow the expatriate to 'drive' the process of describing their satisfaction as they would identify and link the constructs important to them. Finally, causal mapping would address Petersen's (2004) suggestion in Section 5.1.1 of using methods other than surveys to develop our understanding of international business issues.

Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) offered a potential method to explore complex situations with small samples whereas statistical methods would require very large samples. This approach to causal mapping might allow the creation of testable models based on small samples.

Mallory, Yang, and Ray (2008) used a variation to explore international decision-making. Markoczy (1995) developed their causal mapping method to study differences between Hungarian and western managers. Billsberry et al (2004, 2005) utilized a variant of causal mapping to research subjective PO fit as originally enunciated by Schneider (1987). Causal mapping allowed for the deconstruction of subjective fit into its component parts and interactions thus addressing the concern raised by researchers such as Edwards (2007) that subjective fit tends to be viewed as an omnibus measure. Thus, causal mapping is a methodology that has been shown to have potential within both domains of interest, the organization and the international setting.

A causal map would not provide context or explanation about why they chose or linked constructs together. A semi-structured interview would provide such an opportunity for the participant. The interview would also allow any unique concerns to be identified. An interview might reinforce the maps and survey and thus improve confidence in the findings. Alternatively, the interview might identify discrepancies and these could be investigated thus leading to improved confidence in the findings. An interview would help identify and clarify one's PO fit.
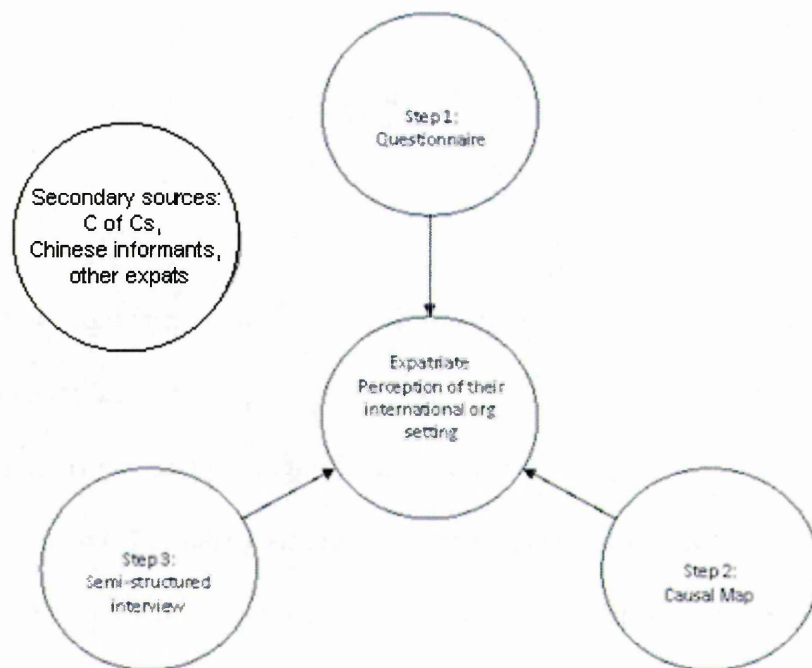
Figure 5-1: Diagram of mixed methods approach

Each method added information to the research objective. The expatriates had to be engaged because the researcher also needed the expatriate to introduce him to more participants. As was evident later in this research, some preferred a survey, others an interview, and others causal mapping. Mixed methods, as will be seen later in this research, did identify unique findings which may have remained hidden otherwise. Thus confidence in the findings would be increased and access enhanced.

These methods will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter; however, what follows first is a description of the testing phase which clarified the methods used in China.

5.2 Sample

5.2.1 Requirements of sample

Central to this research was the contention that the expatriate is on a unique form of international assignment. It is for a minimum of one year duration and that the expatriate has an expectation that they will return to their home country organization at some point in the future. It was this second point that differentiates the expatriate from the émigré who moved to a new country with no pre-conceived intention to leave.

When conducting research, an important consideration is the sampling strategy deployed as it will influence outcomes. Of interest to this research project are the dimensions that attach differentially to the expatriates who are thinking of leaving (ITQ) prematurely and those who stay. Although this research was exploring the person-ITQ relation at the organization level, the international or cultural dimension needed to be accounted for in the design.

The first concern to address was whether the research project should attempt to maximize variability by selecting across the widest spectrum of the population or should the sample be narrowed in an attempt to control for confounding variables, that is, variables which may suggest alternative explanations for findings. A further concern was sample size and guiding these two decisions should be the objectives of the study.

Kristof-Brown et al (2005) clarified the sample choice dilemma relative to PO fit research. In their meta-analysis exploring the consequences of PO fit at work Kristof-Brown et al

(2005) suggested that single organization studies have larger effect sizes for intent to quit than multiple organization studies (single: -.46, multiple: -.34). However, when the Vancouver and Schmitt (1991) study was adjusted for i.e. removed due to the inordinate sample size and thus its potential for biasing findings, the respective effect sizes were identical. Given the similarity of ρ for either sample strategy when adjusted, it appeared whether one measures across multiple organizations or more in depth within a single organization had little differential impact on the person – ITQ dimension.

A limitation of the Kristof-Brown et al (2005) study was they addressed the issue of broad based vs. focussed sample for PO fit - ITQ research in reference to domestic organizations and made no mention of international dimensions.

A concern with international research is how to account for culture and country and its impact on a person's sense of organization fit. The domestic PO fit concerns noted above also hold for the international PO fit dimension; that is, are participants selected from the widest spectrum possible, or does the research attempt to control for culture effects? Fontaine (2008) and van de Vijver, van Hemert, and Poortinga (2008) addressed this issue of sample breadth in relation to the person – culture level of research and suggest random samples across cultures was a superior strategy to culture-by-culture comparisons (equivalent to unit by unit comparison at the PO level).

Like the Person-Organization level research, a second concern was how to measure dimensions. Both fit researchers such as Edwards and culture researchers such as Fontaine suggested commensurate measures and isomorphism of measures respectively were important. That is, it was important that the measurements of each group were equivalent and that the measures used were validated for the respective

groups under study. A further concern with the culture dimension was that the psychological dimensions were also isomorphic across different culture groups. To conclude, Fontaine (p. 82) suggested it was 'difficult to generalize to the population of all cultural groups with a research design that included only a few groups...culture was to be treated statistically as either a fixed or random factor.'

Common method bias, or relying on a single source of measurement for outcomes, as Podsakoff et al (2003) note, is considered problematic to most research as it can inflate reported effect sizes. One method in which this can occur and of particular concern to this research is the inclusion of predictor and outcome variables, which are reported by the same person at the same time and this is particularly problematic for PO fit studies that deploy subjective fit measures. However, Edwards (2006) suggests that there are research instances where common method variance may be less of an issue and the research domain of subjective interpretation of person-organization fit (p.807 – 808) is one. Because one's sense of fit are perceptions, the person and the environment lie within the subjective realm and thus require information from a single source, a relaxation of the common method variance issue may be acceptable.

Based on the research from both the person-organization research and the person – culture research, an appropriate sample would be drawn from a large cross section of the expatriate population which would capture diversity and aid generalizability. Since this research is focused on cognitive i.e. subjective perceptions and exploratory, concern over common method variance is secondary; however, a concern for 'approximate commensurateness or isomorphism' should be maintained. To minimize these concerns this research pursued a mixed methods approach.

This research was conducted in English; however, because this research drew on participants from several countries, there was a concern regarding comprehension and meaning where English was not their mother tongue and even across English speaking nations e.g. England vs. Canada. Fontaine (2008) suggests 'measurement instruments are often the Achilles' heel of most cross-cultural research' (p. 70) as there is often not equality of dimensions across groups. Given the noted limitations of both the Black et al (1991) Framework of International Adjustment and the Schneider (1989) ASA framework and that the research is cross level, as Stanat and Ludtke (2008) building on Fontaine's concerns suggest:

> It is often impossible to develop indicators that allow researchers to take such complex between-country differences into account in multi-level analysis. Therefore, it is important to supplement the quantitative perspective of statistical multi-level analyses with a qualitative perspective in order to generate more in-depth information. (p. 331)

Studies have used causal mapping to explore similar topics, which provide insights into appropriate sample size. Jenkins and Johnson (1992) created 30 maps in their study of Entrepreneurial Intentions; Calori, Johnson, and Sarnin (1992) in their study of French and British Top Managers had a sample of 33 people and in their 1994 study of CEO's, they used a sample of 11 (Calori, Johnson, & Sarnin, 1994).

It is unclear as to the appropriate sample size when analysing maps in Cognizer. This endeavour appears to have been attempted twice; once by Clarkson (2003) and once by Markoczy (1994). Clarkson used a sample of 200 maps; Markoczy used a sample of 111 managers; however, Langfield-Smith (2011, personal correspondence, see Appendix B, Figure 12-5) suggested sample size was irrelevant as the (Frey, Horn, Persson, & Schneider, 1985)) method of comparing causal maps was not a statistical test. Daniels

(personal correspondence, 2010, Appendix B, Figure 12-6) suggested when using the Markoczy-Goldberg formula large samples were required. The Markoczy and Goldberg formula (1995) is an extension of Langfield-Smith and Wirth (1992). Therefore it is not a statistical test thus the issue of a required minimum sample size remains unclear.

So far this discussion of sample selection and size has drawn on statistics to help frame the discussion because the statistical concerns mentioned help give structure to the study. A final concern regarding sample, addressing the issues mentioned above, was not just a concern for statistical research; it helps strengthen the design and subsequent findings of all research.

To reach a sample size target, this research also considered the difficulties of sample collection in international management research (Cooke, 2009). Utilising the idiothetic perspective would require depth and breadth of sample, as would the mixed method being pursued. The time required of participants also had to be considered.

Considering the aforementioned concerns and also taking into consideration that this was an exploratory approach with untried methods, that access would be difficult, and it would take approximately one hour of a participant's time, a sample of approximately 35 to 40 was considered acceptable. Thirty-five would reflect the size of most studies and as mentioned in the personal correspondence with Langfield-Wirth, there appeared to be no reason for a larger sample.

The sample would be multinational, multi-organization, and employ mixed methods and even with two well connected gatekeepers, it would be difficult to access the 36 participants. This research used an opportunity sample, which was snowballed until there was a large enough cohort (Figure 5-2, Table 5-1). The final sample was 36 participants.

5.2.2 Development of methods: testing phase

Before beginning the study proper, a testing phase involving expatriates and international students as proxies was conducted in the United Kingdom with a focus on clarifying the methods, ensuring the strategy was feasible, and becoming familiar with the equipment to be used. From the beginning, attention was paid to ensuring consent was received by participants in accordance with the Open University Ethics Committee and the UK Data Protection Act (Appendix A, Figure 11-1 & Figure 11-2).

The strength of the cohort used in this testing phase was that they were aware and willing to participate in a situation that would be unpredictable and time consuming. The participants came from a variety of countries, backgrounds, and both genders (Chinese woman, Korean woman, Canadian woman, English man, Canadian man, and a German man); thus reflecting the desire for a broad cross-section of people. All had the requisite English language abilities - English suitable to be accepted into a British university or native speaker. This cross-section of people was helpful in identifying any misunderstandings that might occur because of language, culture, or gender; they were also invaluable in identifying problems such as clarity of the instructions and presentation skills. Even though all had the requisite English language skills, it was important there was a shared understanding of meaning. From the work in this phase, this concern proved to be satisfied.

Some might consider that the inclusion of international students weakened the process; however, because this phase was primarily focussed on developing a workable strategy for the eventual field research, it was considered a non-issue. In keeping with the Journal of International Business Studies editors' guidelines (Bello, Leung, Radebaugh, Tung, & van Witteloostuijn, 2009) on the use of students in international business research, using

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students was not a concern because the purpose was not to extrapolate research findings. Finally, as the prime purpose of the above stage was to develop and refine my methods, it could be considered acceptable.

As mentioned a mixed methods approach was pursued. Testing the methods in England, it became immediately apparent that the time an expatriate needed to complete their participation in the original format was not feasible as sessions were taking at least 90 minutes and more. This amount of time expected would be in contravention of the advice offered from expatriates.

The subsidiary issue of the research was focussed on the expatriate's 'fit' with their international organization; thus, the original method included the nine question 'fit' questionnaire (Cable and DeRue, 2002). This represented one possible point that could be adjusted. The expatriate's subjective perception of their fit with their organization could potentially be garnered from the semi-structured interview that followed the causal mapping exercise. Therefore, the Cable and DeRue questionnaire was omitted.

This research first approached the causal mapping exercise with the 'more traditional' idiographic approach used by researchers such as Billsberry et al (2005) and Bryson, Ackermann, Eden, and Fin (2004) . In this approach, a person begins tabula rasa, with no preset boundaries or dimensions and a map of dimensions and their interrelations that represent the participant's unique interpretation of the issue under enquiry is created.

When trialled, it immediately became clear that this idiographic approach was untenable. The map was so complex that it was almost impossible to interpret; furthermore, it took over an hour to complete and by the end of the exercise the participant was losing interest.

Because concerns centred around viable methods with an eye to comparison and credibility in the field, the researcher tested the structured approach presented by Markoczy (1994) and Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and developed by Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005) including software. With this approach, participants selected 10 constructs from a pool of constructs which had been developed based on previous research. Once selected, using the Cognizer Causal Mapping Software, participants were asked to weight the pair wise comparisons of the selected constructs. This created a matrix of 90 pair wise weighted comparisons that were then converted to a digraph or causal map. This method acknowledged the trade-off between idiographic and nomothetic choices.

Initial testing indicated a superior outcome. The maps were more intelligible, the process seemed more engaging to the participants and importantly, the time required was significantly reduced. Thus Clarkson and Hodgkinson's (2005) approach and Cognizer program was accepted as the option for China.

The original interview involved addressing items that appeared in the causal map just created. Again, the length of time required was problematic and on two occasions the interviews were not completed. This was not considered overly important because the focus was clarifying the research process.

5.2.3 Identification of sample: United Kingdom

During the testing phase enquiries were simultaneously being made seeking out participants in the UK as the original plan was to use a cohort of expatriates in England. This researcher contacted business groups, university associated groups, organizations, appropriate social networks e.g. InterNation, individuals, and organizations the researcher was associated with (Table 5-1). Results on all fronts proved unsuccessful.

The first point of contact was the local Chamber of Commerce as they are the prime

representative of business in the community. Although the Executive Director espoused an

interest and willingness to make introductions to the appropriate people within the local

business community, the efforts proved unproductive. When these meetings proved futile,

the next groups approached were organizations who had education relationships with the

Process of Garnering a Sample (not linear)		
Groups, Organizations, People contacted	success	unsuccessful
United Kingdom		
Milton Keynes Chamber of Commerce		x
Other business organizations in U. K e.g. Canadian – UK Chamber of Commerce Polish - UK Chamber of Commerce		x
the departments in OU that deal with industry		x
Open University Alumni Association.	Success with numbers but inappropriate group	
Business direct		x
University of London Alumni Association		x
friends , organizations I belong to		x
Groups such as InterNation and LinkedIn	Limited success (both countries)	
China		
Chambers of Commerce – Shanghai CanCham; AmCham; BritCham		X (background)
Roster of China based orgs that Bill forwarded (Always asked for a lead and met others)	x	
Followed up the leads Alan provided	x	
Met expats on own e.g. ChinAm Air, Darrell	x	

Table 5-1: Process of identifying a viable sample

Open University (e.g. Partners in the Workplace), and the Open University Alumni

Association. Again, a dead end was reached with the Open University. Responses from

the Alumni Association offered a partial sample and many who responded were

enthusiastic; however, many were unsuitable because they did not fit the definition of an

expatriate described in Section 2.4. Simultaneously support from other Chambers of

Commerce who represented foreign businesses in the UK e.g. Canada – UK Chamber of

Commerce and the Polish - UK Chamber of Commerce were solicited. Unfortunately, only

platitudes were received.

The next thrust was identifying and directly contacting businesses which would have an

expatriate contingent. Again this yielded unsatisfactory results. An underlying issue was

because this researcher was not from the UK; he had no history of being involved in

industry in the UK and thus had no gatekeeper.

Since approaching organizations or their representatives was proving unsuccessful at

gaining access, the next approach was to contact expatriates directly. The social network

groups LinkedIn and InterNation were joined. These sites were purposely selected for two

reasons. First, the individual profiles contained more personal contact information, an

individual's position, nationality, status, and other useful information. The more important

site was InterNation because it was expressly focussed on the expatriate (the focus of this

research) and helping them meet other expatriates. InterNation provided a few leads in

both the UK and a third thread of participants in China as will be seen below.

5.2.4 Identification of sample: China

Recognizing the untenable situation developing at the time of the meetings with the

Chamber of Commerce, Milton Keynes, three alternate strands were pursued. First, the

Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai was contacted because they had a reputation

for actively supporting research and firm opportunities existed in China. The second strand was a family connection (brother) and business owner who has lived in Shanghai for over 10 years, who developed a partial list of willing participants. The final thread was the Technical Director, China of a Dutch-Anglo chemical and shipbuilding MNE.

He introduced me to the Vice-President of Human Resources of his MNE while in Newcastle, UK which again turned out to be a dead end. However, he approached three key people within the China operation including the General Manager for India, South East Asia, and China and all were willing to participate. Thus a viable sample to complete my research had developed.

This researcher had developed a list of willing participants in China; however, the list of participants had to be expanded to meet the desired target of approximately 35 expatriates. To achieve this, the snowball needed expanding and this was accomplished in two ways. First, participants were asked for their help in identifying participants once they had completed their participation. The second method was by developing a social network in China and then inviting their participation.

Advice offered by the businessmen was whatever was asked for stick to it; and assume there will be a future follow-up opportunity. The presentation had to have clarity about what was wanted from the participant and the researcher had to be organized, presentable, and professional. They also stressed, 'Be respectful but above all else consider it as an exchange between equals.'

Advice offered by several colleagues at the Open University suggested viewing a data collection session as a one-off interview where the participant would never be seen again.

Therefore, 'get as much information as you can or do not concern oneself with their needs or situation' was suggested.

The businessmen's view was about building credibility, getting people onside, not annoying people as the expatriate community was small. Since I needed their help to meet more expatriates, the businessmen's strategy prevailed.

An opportunity sample using a snowball method to gather participants was deployed (Figure 5-2 highlights the snowball method in China) and the objective of the sampling procedure described earlier was realized. An in-depth introduction of the expatriates is presented in the next section. That is, the sample consisted of 36 expatriates sent on assignment with an expectation that their assignment would be at least one year in duration. Furthermore, the cohort had a range of experience on their current assignment, came from a variety of countries, and fulfilled a wide cross-section of positions at a variety of levels within a variety of industries. For example, one American male and one English female had been in China for less than one year, whereas one English man had resided in China for over a decade. Fifteen participants had previous expatriate postings in other countries.

The expatriates were from around the globe: Germany, Singapore, England, Ireland, USA, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. Positions they held included senior positions in Asia such as Vice-president Asia, Managing Director, CFO, technical director for Asia, research, human resources director, director of sales to name a few. Industries represented were as diverse as hotels, chemicals, shipbuilding, light manufacturing, heavy manufacturing, airplane manufacturing, IT, and insurance.

The gender breakdown was 28 males and 8 female expatriates, of which, eighteen

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expatriates indicated they had important others with them in China while sixteen indicated

they did not. Finally, the ages of the expatriates ranged from their twenties to over 60

years and their education backgrounds included trades and diploma level to post-graduate

degree level.
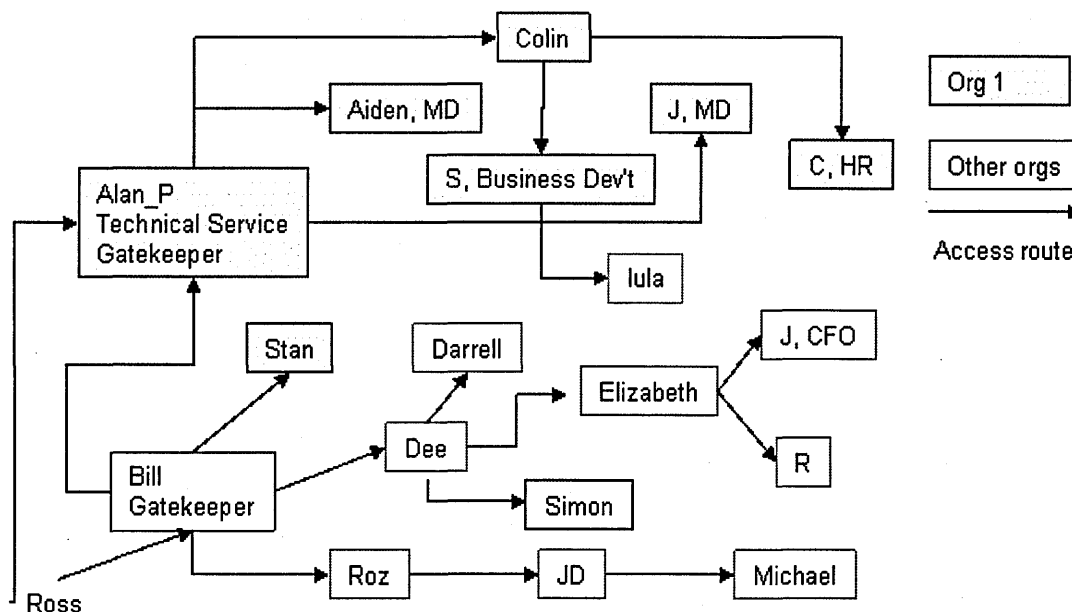
Figure 5-2: Map of the data collection snowball (part of the sample)

Meet the expats

In this section the expatriates are introduced and in later chapters their stories will be given

life. The information is drawn from the demographics provided and information provided

in the initial 'getting to know each other' phase. The sample consists of a wide cross

section of expatriates as desired. Three organizations provide multiple expatriates and the

balance of the sample was drawn from the community at large. Appendix B, Table 12-2

contains a chart of their background demographics.

5.2.4.1.1 DBChemical

The following participants were all employed by a Dutch British MNE focussed on

chemical and coatings solutions for the shipbuilding industry.

5.2.4.1.1.1 Colin

Colin, a Singaporean, was the Director and General Manager for Asian operations (excluding Korea). He was transferred from the Singapore operations six years ago to develop the market as the organization strategy envisioned China becoming the largest market in the region. Previous international experience had been gained in Taiwan and Colin felt that critical to his success was his fluency in Mandarin. With him in China was his wife.

5.2.4.1.1.2 Aiden

Aiden was from Northern Ireland and was one of the two General Managers. Holding an MBA, he had been in China for over five years with his wife and children. Previous international experience had been gained in Norway. When they first arrived they had a ready support network as her sister and her family were in China; within two years they had moved on.

Aiden was very open that he was at a career crossroad. He wanted to move up the organization ladder; however, this would mean returning to the UK; however, confounding the issue was his children were in the process of completing (or near completing) their A level education at a school type and quality (Dulwich College) that would be beyond their family's affordability back in the UK.

5.2.4.1.1.3 Jackson

Jackson (BSc), although originally from Hong Kong was now a Canadian citizen and identified himself as a Canadian, thus for this research was considered a Canadian. He was the other General Manager, Aiden's counterpart, and had been seconded to Shanghai 11 years ago. Although the location was not specified, Jackson had previous international experience and his wife and family were with him in Shanghai.

5.2.4.1.1.4 Alan_P

Alan_P hailed from Newcastle and was the Technical Director for China. Holding a

Bachelor of Science qualification, he was one of the most senior expatriates in the cohort

having lived in China for 16 years; his whole career had been on the international stage

working in places such as Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, India, and Taiwan. Alan_P was

single.

5.2.4.1.1.5 Stan:

Stan was an English chemist who had transferred into business development with this

organization. Holding a Bachelor of Science degree, his previous international experience

had been gained with the organization in Korea and he had since reposted to China

approximately two years ago and looked forward to marrying a local woman in the autumn

of 2010. Stan 'saw it as the opportunity to work overseas and get well paid and have a

good package [; it] was a privilege, and not everyone [got] that privilege.'

5.2.4.1.1.6 Cheng

Cheng, who held a Bachelor of Arts degree, was a Singaporean woman who worked in the

Human Resources department. Operations were downsizing in Singapore and portions

were relocating to China; because of her experience she was offered an opportunity to join

the operations in Shanghai. She was single and had been on this, her first, international

assignment for just under two years.

An irritant for her was upon her arrival, whereas the western expatriates were offered

assistance, she was told she could get her affairs sorted out as she spoke Mandarin. This

was an irritant because although she spoke Mandarin, she knew nothing about how the

necessary systems in China were organized e.g. getting housing or opening a bank account.

5.2.4.1.1.7 Sarah

Sarah, who also held Bachelor degree, was a single English woman from Sunderland who was on her first expatriate assignment as a Business Development Manager. She had been in China approximately 4 months. Achieving an international posting was a personal goal achieved. To achieve her goal she had actively campaigned to secure an overseas position. She expressed her excitement at not only receiving an assignment in China but as it was a newer position she would have a great deal of latitude in determining her job role.

5.2.4.1.2 *ChinAm Air JV*

The following study participants were employed by a pre-eminent America China aircraft MNE join venture. Unique to this organization was how politics, national security, and history complicated operations.

5.2.4.1.2.1 John

John, who was a lawyer, was the CFO and self described 'sheriff' seconded to Shanghai to watch out for the American partner's interest in the joint venture. Having worked in international business for years, usually flying into and leaving a city within hours or a few days of doing business, he finally had the opportunity to live his dream and he had been in Shanghai on his first expatriate assignment for approximately one and a half years. He was very certain this would be his only international assignment.

He was in China with his wife and family and his story of his family's decision to move to China as a family was most compelling. His other consuming concern was the fear that the China posting would lead to early retirement. International assignments were not considered valuable career development moves in his organization.

5.2.4.1.2.2 Elizabeth

Elizabeth, an American, was the Director of Training and Development for China operations. Holding an MBA, she was nearing the end of her assignment in China and

facing repatriation which had brought her to a personal cross-road. Although she had travelled extensively internationally with her work, China was her first expatriate assignment. She had lived in China for over two years and expressed her desire to stay there; however, she was balancing this with a desire to pursue further education and career advancement back in the USA. Like other single professional women in this sample she talked about the difficulty of making female friends.

She had found support, although promised by the home office, weak to non-existent. It had talked about the difficulty and long time that it took her to adjust and now that she was performing at a high level it was almost time to return to America. This situation she thought was counterproductive for her organization.

5.2.4.1.2.3 Roger

Roger, who held a Bachelor degree, was the American Director of Sales and Marketing for China. He had been in China for approximately two years and his repatriation was imminent. Roger was single and facing retirement in two years upon his repatriation at the end of his three year secondment. He had no regrets about his choice to expatriate to China in lieu of career advancement.

5.2.4.1.3 CanSingIndustrial

The following participants were all employed by a Singaporean SME which specialized in high value short run light medical products such as mobility scooters and bariatric equipment. Except for the Managing Director, the participants are Singaporean.

5.2.4.1.3.1 Bill

Bill, who holds a Bachelor of Arts degree, was the Canadian Managing Director. He had been encouraged to move to Shanghai from Hong Kong over 10 years ago to develop new business opportunities for his organization. With the organization based in Singapore, he

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had previous secondments in Asia. While in China, he settled and now has a wife and two children.

His main reason for being in China was career development.

5.2.4.1.3.2   Gary

Gary (Diploma) was the Singaporean Purchasing Manager and sent to Shanghai as an option to a certain redundancy and had been at the operations for less than six months. His spouse was with him in China. Although he did not state the locations or context he had three previous international postings.

5.2.4.1.3.3   LP

LP (Diploma) was from Singapore and sent by his organization to Shanghai 10 years ago and was the senior manager in charge of the organization's ICT. This was his only international posting and he gave no indication as to any family with him.

5.2.4.1.3.4   Patrick

Patrick (BSEE) was the Singaporean Client Service Manager who had worked in Shanghai for the past two and one half years. Patrick had no significant other with him and had been on three previous international assignments, two in China and one in America.

5.2.4.1.3.5   Winston

Winston (BSc) was a Singaporean who was in Shanghai with his wife was employed as the Quality Assurance Manager. He had been in the organization for three and a half years. Winston had three previous international secondments.

5.2.4.1.4 *From the community*

The remainder of the expatriate participants were identified through a variety of sources as previously discussed and they are now introduced. They represent a wide cross section of backgrounds.

5.2.4.1.4.1 Alan_Kiwi

Alan_Kiwi was a New Zealander who had been commuting from his head office in New Zealand on a monthly basis to China and was tasked with ensuring quality control of the garments manufactured in various factories in mainland China. Finding it incredibly difficult to ensure quality and build relations from afar, Alan_Kiwi actively pursued a strategy of creating a fulltime office in Shanghai which would enhance the quality control objectives of the organization, yet also improve his work situation. Because he had developed relations with the Chinese suppliers he was selected to head up the Chinese operations. At the time of this interview, Alan, who was single, had been living in China for approximately two years. China was his first expatriate posting.

5.2.4.1.4.2 Stacey

Stacey, who held a Bachelor degree, was American and the Communications Manager for a Chinese corporation that built construction equipment e.g. backhoes. She was expatriated from North Carolina to their headquarters in Liuzhou City, Shandong, a 3rd tier city far removed from the international enclaves such as Shanghai. This was her first international posting and she had been in Shandong for nine months. Stacey openly shared how she counted the days until she could move as she found it very difficult being one of the few westerners in the city. She was lonely and envious of the expatriate life with MNEs in places such as Shanghai. She had no command of Mandarin.

5.2.4.1.4.3 Darrell

Darrell, who held an advanced diploma in business, an Australian, was the Manager of Operations for an American owned international organization which specialized in the manufacture of slurry pumps. He had been commuting to operations in China from Australia and when the decision was made by the organization to locate an expatriate manager permanently in China, because of his experience, he was offered the opportunity. He had been in China with his wife for approximately one and a half years when he was interviewed.

5.2.4.1.4.4 Eddy

Eddy was from Northern Ireland and had worked his way up from boilermaker to site supervisor and had been in China for five years overseeing the construction of new ships for his American organization. Eddy was interviewed in Shanghai before he moved to the Dalian construction site to begin the build of a new ship. He had four previous expatriate assignments. Although Eddy did not have his family in China, he talked extensively about the importance of them in his life.

5.2.4.1.4.5 Herb

Herb, who held a Bachelor of Engineering degree, was from the American mid-west and worked as the unit manager for an American company that specialized in injection mouldings for auto parts. He was transferred to China as his organization wound up their factory back in the USA. He had been in China less than 10 months with his wife and son and this was his first expatriate experience

5.2.4.1.4.6 Howard

Howard, who held a Bachelor degree was from England and had been sent to Shanghai by a major international hotel chain two years ago as the Managing Director to oversee the development of a 5 star hotel. He had actively pursued an international career and the hotel

industry afforded him the opportunity to achieve his goal. Howard had been on 13 previous expatriate postings.

5.2.4.1.4.7 JD

JD, who held a Bachelor of Science was an American educated at US Naval Academy, Annapolis. He was an old China hand who had been in country for 10 years. He was the General Manager of China Distribution for the American scientific and medical devices MNE. With Joe on his second international posting was his second family. His first marriage came to end because of his international posting.

5.2.4.1.4.8 Keith

Keith, who held an MBA, an American, was the Managing Director of an automotive parts manufacturing organization and had lived with his family in China for 14 years. Keith was the participant who first talked about what it meant to be an American in China; he was also the first American to talk about the value of his Marine Corp. training in helping him to adjust to different situations.

5.2.4.1.4.9 Klaus

Klaus (BA) was the German Managing Director of a freight forwarding company and was in Shanghai with his American wife and child. His first posting was to Hong Kong and he was transferred to Shanghai to salvage operations which were embroiled in corruption. He began his expatriate journey in China 21 years. Klaus did not separate the time on each assignment as they were with the same organization.

5.2.4.1.4.10 Lauren

Lauren, with a Master of Science, was an American on her first international assignment and was the Director of Operations for an HR Consulting firm. She had been in China less than three months and had actively pursued an international posting with the owner of the organization. She was single.

5.2.4.1.4.11 Mark

Mark, who held an MBA, was an American from Michigan who was Sales Director for an automotive parts company that specialized in upholstery and had lived in Shanghai with his wife and young daughter for approximately six years. He had one previous international secondment which was also in China.

Mark identified two points of great importance to him. While he enjoyed living and working in China he acknowledged decisions would have to be made regarding the education and upbringing of their child in the near future. Like Keith, he thought quite a lot about being an American in China. The other concern Mark had was the collapsing state of the American automobile industry and what opportunities there might be for him back in the USA.

5.2.4.1.4.12 Michael

With previous international experience gained in Singapore, Michael, who was an American and held a Bachelor of Arts degree, was offered an opportunity to head up China operations for his organization which specialized in the manufacturing of scientific and medical equipment. As the VP and General Manager of the MNE, he and his family had lived in China for two years. He thought it was an exciting challenge as the company was 'late getting into the China market' because of their focus on Europe and North American operations.

5.2.4.1.4.13 Peter

Peter was a Canadian actuary who was Technical Director for a British insurance firm. He had been back in China for approximately one and a half years after working in India. For Peter, returning to China with his family was a homecoming of sorts as his wife's family had left China during the Cultural Revolution and she still had family in the Shanghai area.

5.2.4.1.4.14 Priscilla

Priscilla, who had a Bachelor degree, was from Singapore and was the Senior Analyst in a Chinese owned marketing firm. She had been seconded to Shanghai for just under two years and like many of the other Singaporeans in this project she had been offered a position in the Chinese operation because organizations were moving parts of their operations to China for strategic reasons. Shanghai was her second international experience and she was looking forward to more international opportunities. She was in Shanghai on her own. Although she spoke Mandarin, she talked at length of the differences of her Mandarin dialect and how she felt inept.

5.2.4.1.4.15 Roz

Roz, with an MBA, was an American, less than 40 years of age and the Vice President of an American healthcare/medical product SME. She had been in Shanghai with her spouse and children for five years to develop the operations and had become the premier income which allowed him to resign his position and begin retraining as a sports teacher. This was her second expatriate assignment in China. Because she had been involved in commuting from America to establish operations in China, when decisions were being made as to who would head up the operations, Roz was encouraged to apply.

5.2.4.1.4.16 Sebastian

This was Sebastian's (Dipl-Ing) first international posting and he had been in China with a large German MNE focussed on household products for approximately 10 months. He was the R and D manager and tasked to manage the lab. Sebastian was also fulfilling his personal goal of working in Asia. Sebastian was single.

5.2.4.1.4.17 Sian

Sian, who held a Bachelor degree, was an English woman who had been working in Shanghai for five years as nurse. She had previous experience in other parts of the world and met her significant other while in Shanghai.

5.2.4.1.4.18 Simon

Simon was from England and the Managing Director of an advertising firm. His objective was to 'tick a career box' that he felt was missing and he had been in China for over four years. With him in China was his son who was returning to England at the end of the school year. He noted he would be returning to England soon as he had a mother and other children in the UK. Like many in this research cohort, Simon also had previous international experience.

5.2.4.1.4.19 Stacey

Stacey, who held a Bachelor degree, was American and the Communications Manager for a Chinese corporation that built construction equipment e.g. backhoes. She was expatriated from North Carolina to their headquarters in Liuzhou City, Shandong, a 3rd tier city far removed from the international enclaves such as Shanghai. This was her first international posting and she had been in Shandong for nine months. Stacey openly shared how she counted the days until she could move as she found it very difficult being one of the few westerners in the city. She was lonely and envious of the expatriate life with MNEs in places such as Shanghai. She had no command of Mandarin.

5.2.4.1.4.20 Tony

Tony, an Australian engineer (holding a Bachelor of Engineering), was the Marketing Manager for a large Swiss based MNE that was the third largest railway equipment supplier in China. He had been in China for six years and China was his only international

posting. Tony had decided to extend his time even though his expatriate benefits were reduced because he enjoyed China. He was single.

5.2.4.1.4.21 Yoyo

Yoyo, who held a Bachelor degree, had been sent by his employer, a major Japanese home electronics manufacturer as their controller for the Shanghai operations. He had been in China for approximately two and half years. During this time he had married a Chinese academic and was now raising a family. Previously, his organization had sent Yoyo to America

5.3   Fieldwork - China

5.3.1   Data gathering in China

Figure 5-1, Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 map the final data gathering process deployed in China.
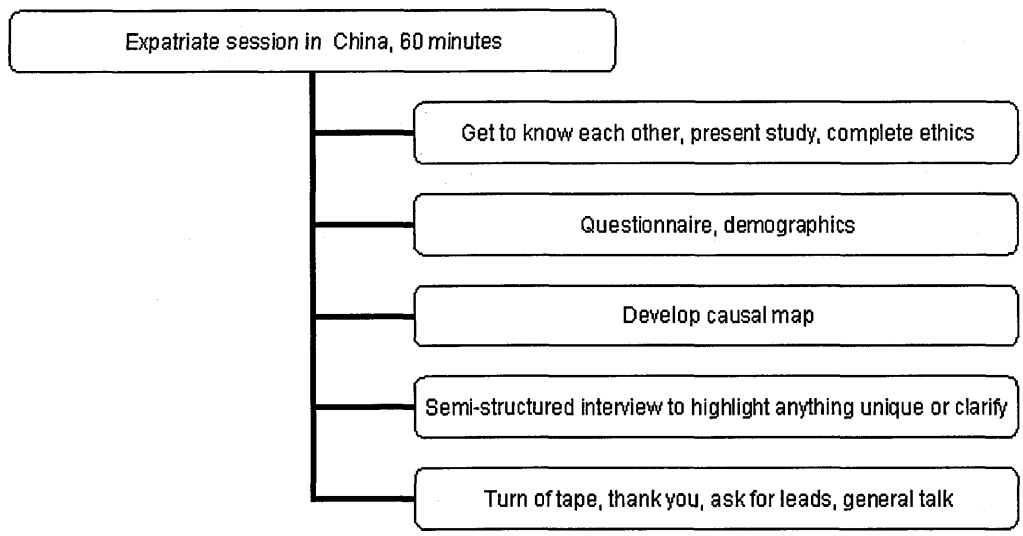
Figure 5-3: Outline of an expatriate's research session

Each session began by the researcher introducing themselves and thanking the expatriate for their participation. It was imperative to establish a rapport and sense of trust as quickly

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as possible. To this end, the researcher would ask about them, their family, and their life trying to identify commonalities. For example, Mike had played hockey at university in Minnesota. The Soccer World Cup was an excellent ice breaker with many.

Once the participants were feeling comfortable the focus of the research was presented and why it was of interest, I outlined what would happen over the course of the next hour, encouraged them to ask questions if something was not clear, and explained the research followed the guidelines of the Open University Ethics Committee and the UK Data Protection Act. Upon completion of the formal explanation I asked them to sign the consent form (Appendix A, Figure 11-1, Figure 11-2). Demographic information was also gathered. These demographics were sought because multiple assignments and spouse had been used in the literature before (Black et al, 1991; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al). Nationality was included to address the issues presented earlier in the sample discussion. This information would be used to address the issue of organization fit and it would potentially provide a secondary support for what the expatriate considered important. Formal data gathering then commenced.

Each session had the same format. After this introduction, the process was first they completed the questionnaire, next the causal map was developed, and finally a short interview to discuss their personal experience occurred (Figure 5-3).

The original strategy was to have the questionnaire and mapping completely via computer and the internet; however, the limitations of adequate wi-fi access necessitated reverting to a combination of paper and pencil and computer aided procedures. The interview followed the mapping exercise for two reasons. Firstly, it was an opportunity to add anything unique to the information and second, it was at the end to avoid any potential priming effect (Markoczy & Goldberg, 1995, p. 326).

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The questionnaire (see Appendix A, Figure 11-3, Figure 11-4) consisted of several short parts. There were three individual questions measuring satisfaction with their international assignment, the country, and their organization. This was followed by a three question intention to quit measure and two open ended questions. The first open ended question asked about their main reason(s) for going on an international assignment and the second open ended question asked them to list their main concern(s) with going on an international assignment. Finally, there were demographic background questions with items drawn from previous literature (Bhaskar-Schrinivas et al 2005, Black et al 1995, and Hechanova et al 2003). This included either the person's organization or industry (some wanted privacy of their company), whether they had been on multiple assignments, whether there were any important others with them on their assignment e.g. spouse, their education level, their age and their nationality (Appendix A, Figure 11-4 & Table 12-2).

Upon completion of the questionnaire, a causal map was developed and the completed map was briefly explained to the participant. It was important to highlight the non-linearity and complexity of how the expatriate 'saw' their international assignment and it was felt that discussing the map they had created would help keep the expatriate participant engaged in the research process, build credibility and thus enhance their willingness to help recruit future participants. Finally, this briefing allowed the participant an opportunity to discuss any questions they might have; however, in keeping with the method outlined by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) no changes to their maps were permitted.

During the session talk between the researcher and the participant was kept to a minimum; however, if requested clarification was provided at any point. When introducing the map making session it was emphasized that they were 'making a causal map, a mental map of what *they considered important to their experience and satisfaction* in their current international setting ... how they saw their world.' Although causal maps and mental maps

are not the same, for explanation purposes with people unfamiliar with the method, I used mental map as an aid to help participants better envision what they were creating.

Creating the causal map was a four step process, which followed methods, outlined in Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005) and utilized Clarkson and Hodgkinson's (2005) Cognizer computer program (see Appendix A, Figure 11-5, Figure 11-6, & Figure 11-7) for an example of the program. These steps were:

1. A pool of 40 constructs drawn from the extant literature and testing phase was developed. The next two steps are the instruction provided to the participant.

2. Select the 10 most important dimensions (I purposely used dimensions as it was a term more familiar to the layman.) from the list relevant to your satisfaction in *your* international assignment here in China.

3. Rate the relationship between the two dimensions. If there is no relation go to the next pair. The scale is from strong positive influence (3) to strong negative influence (-3). There will be 90 comparisons. The blue bar at the bottom will show you how far along in the process you are.

4. The completed map was shown to the participant and briefly discussed with no option for changes offered.

Each step in the process was explained as the participant arrived at it. The main points of clarification focused around selecting dimensions that reflected *their* [researcher's emphasis] personal experience rather than what they thought was important.

As mentioned previously, Cognizer is a computer program. A list of 40 predetermined constructs drawn from the literature and testing phase was presented to the participant and asked to select a sub-pool of 10 constructs. From this sub-pool, a matrix of pair wise

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comparison ratings of the constructs was created and thus the map upon completion. It was observed in the initial stages that the pool of 40 dimensions filled more than one computer screen and when there was more than one screen of constructs the selection process was truncated. Often participants would not scroll down to the end; they would select the 10 dimensions from the first screen. Alternatively, if they scrolled through to the end, they would not go back and change their selection. This became a second justification for a paper roster of the constructs as they could all fit on one page.

There was an issue at times with the awkward grammar used in Cognizer when completing the pair-wise comparisons. A final concern also related to the pair wise comparisons that were being made. Because the same two dimensions appeared twice, it was sometimes necessary to explain that the comparisons were not equivalent. For example, given dimensions 'education' and 'income' several relations are possible: 'education' may influence 'income'; however, 'income' may not affect 'education', thus they are not the same and both needed rating. If they felt the two dimensions were not related they were instructed to move to the next pair wise comparison.

The strength of the on computer selection process is the pool of dimensions was randomized for each participant and this helped insure all dimensions had an equal chance of being selected across all participants. However, as discussed above there were problems in that not all dimensions were being considered. Therefore, it was decided to forego the randomization and offered participants a one page printed two column list of the 40 dimensions with the same instructions, 'select the ten most important dimensions relevant to their experience.' It was immediately evident that the participants were more thorough in the selection process. For example, participants could be seen quickly checking 15 or so 'potential' dimensions and then selecting their pool. Many would be observed selecting in

a non-linear fashion; that is, they would scan up and down and select a few items, then they would scan across columns and so on.

As the participant selected the relevant dimensions, they were entered into the program by the researcher in anticipation of the next step, creating the adjacency matrix. Each participant was asked to rate the pair wise relationships between the 10 dimensions on a six point scale ranging from 'increase strong' to 'decrease strong' and if there was no relationship they were to leave it blank and move to the next pair wise comparison.

The language was a concern as it was often very awkward and the researcher likened it to a version 1 of Windows, that is, it would eventually have refinements. The program would have benefited greatly had there been the ability to change the responses to something more familiar such as 'strong positive relation' and 'strong negative relation'. However, participants were very thoughtful often musing aloud or using me as a 'sounding board' to arrive at their decision.

Upon completion of the pair wise comparisons, the causal map was presented in its rough form with a promise of a cleaned up version at the project conclusion. Most showed interest in how their selections interwove to create a complex map of their satisfaction experience as they perceived it.

All that was left was their completion of a short semi-structured recorded interview. The interviews were the voices from the field and would provide the expatriate the opportunity to add anything they thought was important but had been overlooked by the researcher. They afforded another opportunity to actively engage the expatriate in the process rather than being a passive form-filler.

Upon completion of the formal data gathering process, the recorder was turned off and the researcher and expatriate stayed and talked briefly about the experience. Often the expatriate added further interesting comments or comments they wanted to make but wanted to make them on an anonymous basis. The participants were always kept aware that their comments might be used in this research but also that the information provided would be kept private. The participant was then thanked and they were asked if they knew of any potential leads. If they wanted the researcher stayed to chat to the expatriate; on several occasions this led to more intimate revelations and intriguing insights. Besides being interesting people, this end time was a final opportunity to build rapport and trust. A few days later the researcher would send an email thanking them for their participation and in the email again they would be asked if they knew of anyone who might be interested and willing to participate. The e-mail concluded with, 'I look forward to sharing the findings with you once the project is near completion.'

As discussed previously, a mixed methods approach consisting of a satisfaction/ITQ questionnaire, causal map, and interview was pursued. Following is an in-depth discussion of the three components used in this research.

5.4 Measures used

5.4.1 Satisfaction and intention to quit survey (ITQ)

Cunningham and Sagas's (2004) four question Satisfaction and Intention to Quit (ITQ) survey using a 7 point Likert format offering a response choice ranging from 'disagree strongly' to 'agree strongly' was completed by the expatriate (Appendix A, Figure 11-4). The ITQ questionnaire was considered reliable ($\alpha = .84$).

Two questions, satisfaction with their international assignment and satisfaction with the country were included for exploratory purposes; but, are excluded from this study because they had not been psychometrically validated. Although, they were modelled on the question 'Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this organization', they had not been pre-tested in any capacity to ensure they measured what they were intended to measure, nor were they subjected to any kind of item analysis as it was beyond the scope of this thesis. Furthermore, the focus of this research was the person interacting at the organization level and it was important to keep the thesis focussed on this level of interaction. Thus it was prudent to retain the questions for exploratory purposes only.

Satisfaction is based on the notion outlined in the single item question on the survey: "Generally, speaking I am satisfied with this organization" thus satisfaction is given much individual latitude. This strategy of using a single item global measure is considered an acceptable metric to gain an insight into one's sense of satisfaction in general terms (Wanous & Hudy, 2001; Wanous, Reichers, & Hudy, 1997).

Research indicated *intention to quit* is linked to the behaviour 'quit' as is satisfaction (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). From the initial background research, it was evident that the ability to identify and interview expatriates who quit or were intending to quit would be impossible. Therefore, because research had shown a strong link between satisfaction and ITQ were provided as a proxy for the behaviour 'quit'.

Exploration of the responses provides evidence that in fact a progression through the stages level of satisfaction → thinking about quitting → intending to quit → quit (i.e. cognition → behaviour) may exist.

The satisfaction and ITQ survey was used as a start point, and this researcher acknowledges the potential priming/focussing effect it may invoke in the participant when it came to map construction. This concern was viewed as a positive because it would help participants to focus into the topic of interest – the expatriate's satisfaction.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, the causal maps were developed next. Montibeller and Belton (Montibeller & Belton, 2006) point to the heart of the issue when using causal maps; that is, causal mapping was a relatively new approach thus methods are still evolving with no firm protocol.

5.4.2 Causal Mapping

Causal maps were to be utilized in this research because the investigator wanted to understand the complexity of the expatriate's international work environment in relation to their satisfaction. Furthermore, previous reading suggested this approach would be helpful in uncovering their perception of their international organization environment and how the constructs the individual identified as most important to them are inter-related. Finally, because this is a PhD, a requirement is to contribute something unique to the research. Causal mapping had not been used in this domain; however, it had been utilized in allied studies of managerial beliefs of Hungarian vs. non-Hungarian managers (Markoczy & Goldberg 1995) and PO fit within an organization (Bilberry et al, 2005). Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) were exploring international issues around performance, whereas Billsberry et al (2005) were interested in PO fit; this research was about the expatriate's perception of their satisfaction in the international organization.

Montibeller and Belton (2006) point to the heart of the issue when using causal maps; that is, causal mapping is a relatively new approach thus methods are still evolving with no firm protocol.

5.4.2.1 Nomenclature

Before proceeding it is important to understand what a causal map is for this research as many conceptualizations exist. This research draws on the explanation offered by Bougon, Weick and Binkhorst (1977) who conceive of a causal map as a special case of a cognitive map because it reveals understanding of influence and causality. Critical to this is the concept of map because as Huff and Jenkins (2002) suggest a map defines a domain, has a common language, and is a visual representation of the defined domain.

Causal maps (Figure 5-4, Figure 5-5) are considered to contain two basic elements which make them suitable tools to represent expatriate satisfaction (Laukkanen, 1990). These are the constructs which subjects consider relevant in a given domain, and the assessed relationship between these constructs. Constructs assume a literal meaning; they can be anything that a person pays attention to; for example, people, events, or processes (Bood, 1998).

Accepting that causal maps are graphic representations of the expatriate's satisfaction in their international organization setting, Axelrod (1976) linked the map with graph theory and drawing on Harary, Norman, and Cartwright (1965) he suggested causal maps could be described as digraphs (Figure 5-4, Figure 5-5). By conceiving of causal maps as digraphs, Axelrod et al (1976) allowed maps to be conceived of as a matrix which had implications for an alternate view to the idiographic view espoused by researchers such as Eden and Ackermann. Axelrod (1976) laid a foundation upon which Langfield-Smith and Wirth (1992) and Markoczy (1995) developed their methods to compare maps.

Importantly, causal maps, using this method and similar methods outlined by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) or Clarkson (2003) make no claims that the maps represent the whole

field of possibilities to explain an issue. The critical benefits of this method are

standardization of concepts and thus comparability and this point will be discussed shortly.
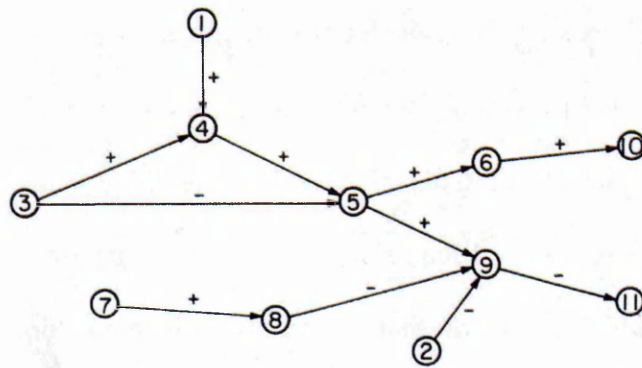
FIGURE A4–2.

Valency Matrix and Associated Row and Column Sums for the
Cognitive Map in Figure A4–1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Row abs. sums
1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	−1	0	0	1.
3	0	0	0	1	−1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	−1	0	0	1
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	−1	1
10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Column abs. sums	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	3	1	1	11

Figure 5-4: Axelrod's conceptualization of a causal map

From causal mapping	From graph theory
causal map	digraph (directed graph)
construct, dimension	node
link	arc

Table 5-2: Terminology and alternates used in causal mapping

Within the causal mapping domain there is inconsistency in the use of a variety of terms

and Table 5-2 presents equivalent terms used. This research uses the terms causal map

(map), construct or dimension, and link.
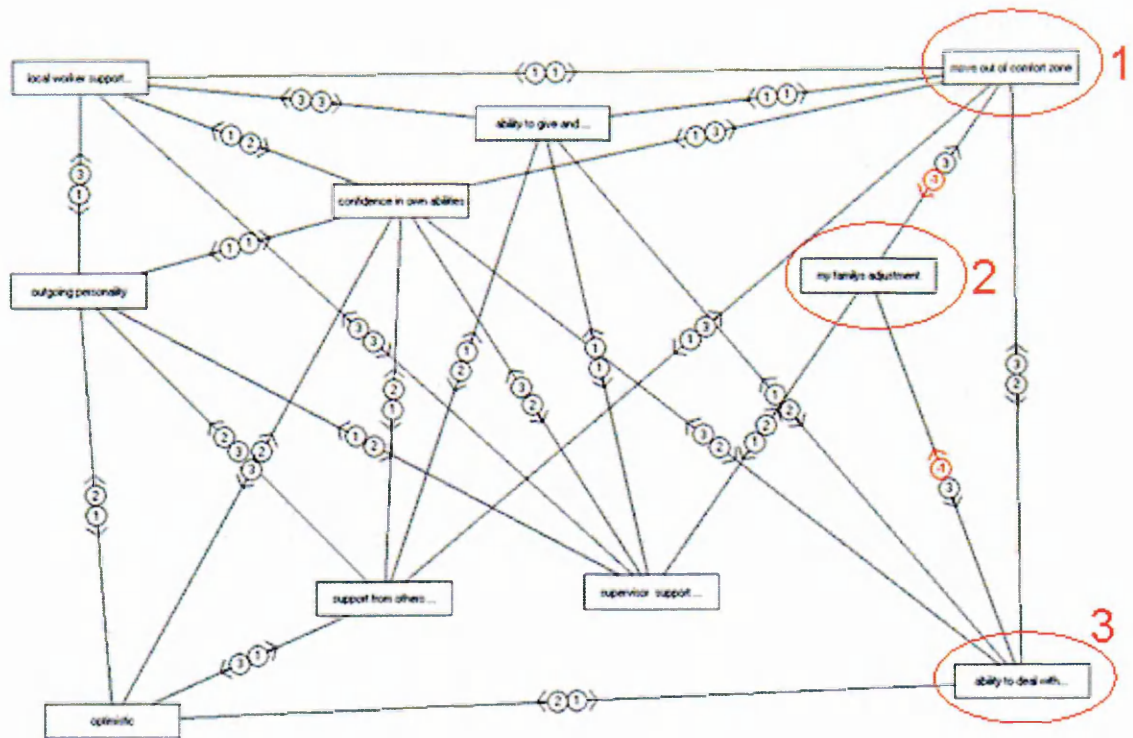
Figure 5-5: Causal map (digraph)

Figure 5-5 highlights an expatriates causal map or digraph. The next section presents the map elicitation method used in this research.

5.4.2.2 Approaches to map creation

The causal mapping method used in this research followed a structured approach as set out by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and further developed by Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005). This method also fitted with this research's tactical considerations mentioned earlier; not only was the method legitimate; it also appeared legitimate and thus it addressed strategic aims of enhancing access by engaging the participants.

An alternate approach, an idiographic approach has been developed by researchers such as Eden (1992), Eden and Ackermann, (2004) Bryson et al (2004). An issue with a completely idiographic approach to causal mapping is the eventual comparison of maps. Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005), Daniels et al (1994), and Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) note that the comparison of idiographic maps is fraught with issues over the

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subjective interpretation by researchers. Furthermore, Ackerman on her research-focused website indicates that 100 to 300 concepts in a map elicited using their idiographic protocol was a rule of thumb (http://www.banxia.com/dexplore/resources/mind-mapping/). With this many constructs per map; as Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005) address,

"The transformation of data into standard dimensions is both laborious and time consuming activity, one that entails a considerable amount of researcher subjectivity. Despite a number of advances in the use of specialist coding procedures ... fundamental questions remain concerning the reliability and validity of such coding procedures." (p. 320)

The Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) procedure, 'deals with the inevitable coding problem prior to [map] elicitation as opposed to after. The merits are that it makes coding much easier...the other merit is that it ensures that each subject is presented with the same stimuli. The disadvantage is that it precludes the elicitation of novel dimensions.' (p. 310). To address this weakness, this research followed Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and finished with a semi-structured interview which will be discussed in the next section. Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005) developed the ideas of Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and developed the computer software, Cognizer Causal Mapping Program, to enable the application of a structured approach to causal mapping.

Evidence provided by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005) indicated psychological concerns existed if the task was too onerous. "Limiting the selected factors to the top ten was necessary as trial elicitations showed that the next elicitation step, which includes assessing the causal relationship between all pair wise combinations of the selected constructs, tends to exhaust the patience of the subject beyond 10 *constructs* (Markoczy & Goldberg, 1995, p. 1019)

For these reasons this research followed Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and limited the number of selected dimensions to 10, which required 90 comparisons (10 x 9).

To create the causal map, step 1 in the Cognizer Program required a pool of dimensions be created from the extant literature or preliminary interviews. In step 2, the participant selected from the pool the 10 most relevant dimensions. Step 3 required the participant to weight the pair wise comparisons on how they felt one dimension influenced the other on a scale of strong positive (+3), moderate positive (+2), slight positive (+1), slight negative (-1), moderate negative (-2), strong negative (-3). If the participant felt there was no relation between the constructs they left it blank and move to the next pair wise comparison. The weightings were based on *how they felt* [researcher's emphasis] one dimension influenced the other in relation to *their satisfaction* in their organization. Once all pair wise comparisons were complete, the map was created (See Appendix A, Figure 11-5, Figure 11-6, & Figure 11-7).

5.4.2.3 Approaches to map interpretation

Two methods of interpreting causal maps exist which are related. One can explore the structure of the map through calculations such as comparing the number of links or link strength. These measures indicate which constructs expatriates consider most important or central amongst their chosen constructs. Measures such as these also indicate how constructs influence each other.

The other dimension within a map is the actual constructs chosen. Which constructs an expatriate chooses will help tell a story about what is perceived as most central to their satisfaction in their international organization setting.

Several technical points about map interpretation need to first be addressed.

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5.4.2.4 Technical points

5.4.2.4.1 Indegree (ID), outdegree (OD)

Indegree (ID) refers to the directed links between nodes and represents the number of constructs exerting an influence on a construct. In Figure 5-6 previous international experience has ID=3, that is *co-workers willingness to make decisions*, *approach to problem solving* and *necessary skills and knowledge* all exert influence on *previous international experience*. The construct at the tail end influences the construct at the head end of the link; the indegree is the influence from other nodes.

The links from a node to other constructs are the outdegrees or the influence they exert on other constructs. For example, in Figure 5-6 *previous international experience* has an OD=0; it influences no other construct.
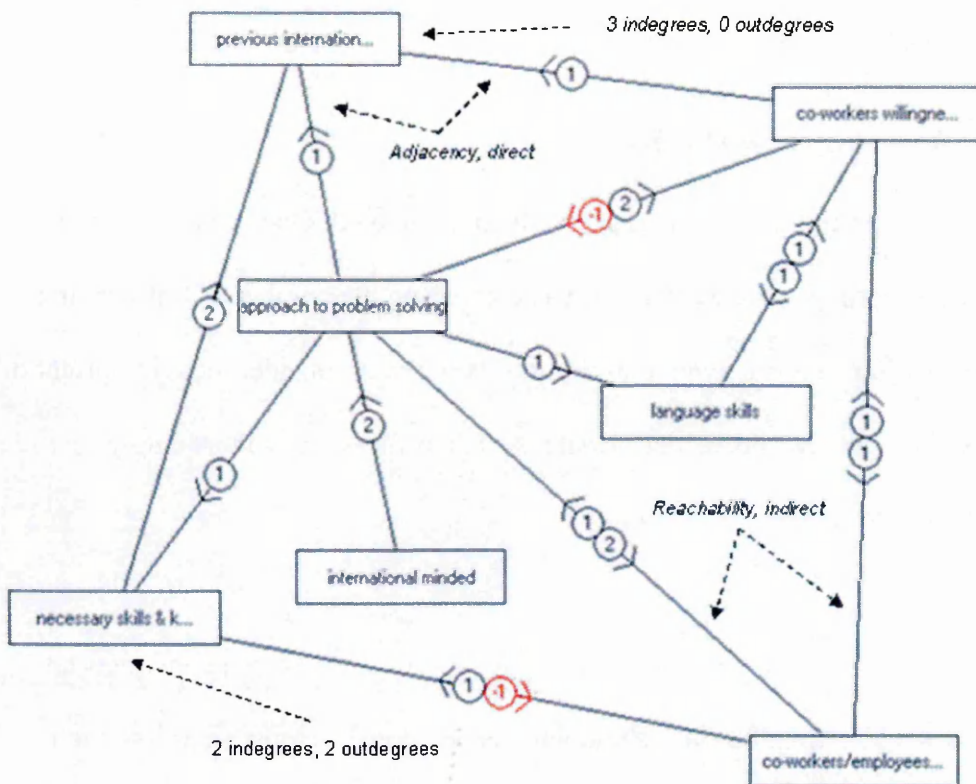
Figure 5-6: Causal map highlighting ID, OD, adjacency, reachability for construct previous international experience

The indegrees and outdegrees can be counted up to give an indication of a construct's centrality or central importance within a map. In Figure 5-6 *language skills* has ID=2, OD=1 therefore, a central measure of 3; *approach to problem solving* has ID=3, OD=5 or a centrality measure of 8.

Each link can be weighted by the map creator and the weight represents the strength or influence of the relation. For example, being *internationally minded* has a moderate positive influence on *approach to problem solving* (2); whereas co-worker's *willingness to make decisions* exerts a weak negative influence on their *approach to problem solving* (-1).

Figure 5-6 represents a partial map of an expatriate created to highlight terminology; it is evident how complex a map can become. If considering a map containing 90 links (10 constructs selected x 9 links per construct pair), it can be impossible to comprehend in map form; therefore, the matrix form is the only viable method of comprehending a map.

Finally, not all relationships are of equal importance thus links are weighted differentially on a scale of strong negative influence (-3) to a strong positive influence (+3). It is also possible to have no relation which in matrix form is 0 (Clarkson, 2003; Markoczy & Goldberg, 1995).

5.4.2.4.2 Causal maps as matrices

As mentioned earlier, two types of measures occur within a causal map, measures of structure and measures of content. How many links, the strengths of the link between constructs, or the density of a map are structure measures and reveal which constructs are considered most relevant or central within the expatriate's world.

5.4.2.4.3 *Adjacency vs. reachability matrix*

An important issue in map interpretation was whether to use the adjacency or reachability matrix and if the reachability matrix was used to which level.

The reachability matrix, also known as the total effects matrix, accounts for all direct and indirect influence a construct has on other constructs and it is this matrix which is often utilized to maximize information e.g. Bougon, Weick, and Binkhorst (1977). The strengths of influence, both direct and indirect, can be determined through the reachability matrix formula, $T = |A| + |A|^2 + |A|^3 + \ldots |A|^{n-1}$ where $|A|$ is the absolute values of the entries in the matrix A.

As Stubbart and Ramaprasad (1990 in Huff) and Bougon et al (1977) point out, and as is reflected by the second order in the expatriate maps, all constructs become linked to all other constructs thus leading to information which provides little insight into the expatriate's world. On a positive note, what this highlights is the complexity of a cognitive process.

A concern when using a reachability matrix in our overall map is it becomes meaningless given the complexity. All constructs link to each other totally, unless reduced to the 2nd order. Even at this level, there is little uniqueness left; therefore we use a reachability matrix of the first order, which is the adjacency matrix. Thus the direct causal effects are of interest.

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Axelrod (1976) identified two critical breakthroughs to ease the exploration, interpretation, and comparison of maps. He described the maps as *graphic representations* and this perspective allowed the causal maps to be viewed as *n x n matrices where n is the total number of constructs* and this laid the foundation for the development of methods to allow

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comparison of individual maps and development of group maps by researchers such as Bougon et al (1977), Clarkson (1998), Langfield-Smith and Wirth (1992), and Markoczy (1995). This is the approach used in this thesis.

Construct	adjacency		reachability	
	Id	Od	Id	Od
insurance, tax, and/or pension concerns	11.00	16.00	40.00	40.00
improve career opportunities	37.00	35.00	40.00	40.00
fitting in when I return home after being gone for so long	7.00	7.00	40.00	40.00
language skills	29.00	24.00	40.00	40.00
supervisor support in host country	19.00	14.00	40.00	39.00
local worker support in host county	24.00	25.00	40.00	40.00
support from others in the community at large	20.00	23.00	40.00	40.00
ability to deal with frustrations	32.00	32.00	40.00	40.00
previous international experience	16.00	19.00	40.00	40.00
support from family/important others	26.00	26.00	40.00	40.00
out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunities at home	10.00	12.00	40.00	40.00
confidence in own abilities	32.00	31.00	40.00	40.00
able to engage with people who are different	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
clear understanding of why on assignment	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
logistical support from home office	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
personal development	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
my familys adjustment	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
better compensation opportunities	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
outgoing personality	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
international minded	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
because of importance of China; receiving more scrutiny thus more pr	39.00	40.00	39.00	40.00
corruption	38.00	40.00	38.00	40.00
co-workers/employees willingness to make decisions	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
personal side deals by employees at company expense	40.00	39.00	40.00	39.00
ability to give and take to get along	26.00	28.00	40.00	40.00
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	26.00	23.00	40.00	40.00
approach to problem solving	33.00	33.00	40.00	40.00
eyes of home office	14.00	17.00	40.00	40.00
inculcate home/corporate expectations/culture	8.00	10.00	40.00	39.00
move out of comfort zone	25.00	20.00	40.00	40.00
necessary skills & knowledge	28.00	27.00	40.00	40.00
match between local knowledge & home office expectations	19.00	21.00	40.00	40.00
local expat advice ignored	13.00	13.00	40.00	40.00
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	20.00	20.00	40.00	40.00
role conflict between home office & posting	17.00	14.00	40.00	40.00
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	18.00	21.00	40.00	40.00

Figure 5-7: Adjacency matrix v reachability matrix (level =2)

Recognizing the complexity of the maps, using methods described by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and the Cognizer program, loops are allowed in maps.

5.4.2.4.4   *Loops in causal maps*

Loops (cycles) occur in the causal maps using the methods outlined by (Clarkson &

Hodgkinson, 2005) and Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and need explanation as they are

considered contentious by researchers such as Eden et al (1992). Eden et al (1992) suggest

loops may be a coding accident which needs correction or they may represent the existence

of a dynamic consideration within cognition. Either way, Eden et al (1992) suggests they

are unacceptable.

It is this dynamic nature of loops which Bougon et al (1977), Bougon and Komocor

(1988), Langfield-Smith and Wirth (1992), Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) suggest makes

them important. Loops may represent issues which people keep returning to; they are the

basis of feedback, positive or negative (Bougon and Komocor, 1988; Stubbart and

Ramaprasad, 1990) and because people keep returning to the same constructs, Stubbart and

Ramaprasad (1990, p. 267) suggest they may form the core of a map.

Although Bougon and Komocor (1988) focus on the importance of loops positive influence

in organizations, social cognition theory suggests a similar situation can occur at the person

level as well (Bandura, 1986;(Bandura, 2002; Wingreen & Blanton, 2007) and as in the

organization where loops are a source of stability and change (Stubbart and Ramaprasad,

1990, p. 266), there is no apparent reason why this is not also the case at the person level.

Although loops are discussed in positive outcomes, there is no reason loops, reinforcement,

and change cannot be negative.

Figure 5-8 highlights the role of cycles in an expatriate's map. What was apparent was the

complexity and number of loops in JD's map. JD's map, Figure 5-5 has been sorted to

highlight the cycle on the right side of the map (Figure 5-9): *move out of the comfort zone*

(1) ↔ my family's adjustment (2) ↔ ability to deal with frustration (3). This cycle was

chosen for discussion because it includes negative influences (links/arcs) as well as positive relations. It also highlights a massive spread in reciprocity between constructs.

The personal constructs *ability to deal with frustration* (3) and *move out of comfort zone(1)* were having a negative influence on his *family's adjustment (2)*; however, his family is exerting a significantly larger positive influence on JD (+3 vs. -1 in both instances).

Further exploration of this cycle suggests JD's decision to *move out of his comfort zone* (1) i.e. accept an international posting has influenced his *family's adjustment* (2) negatively (- 1) (perhaps JD is not around as much because of job responsibilities and this impacts
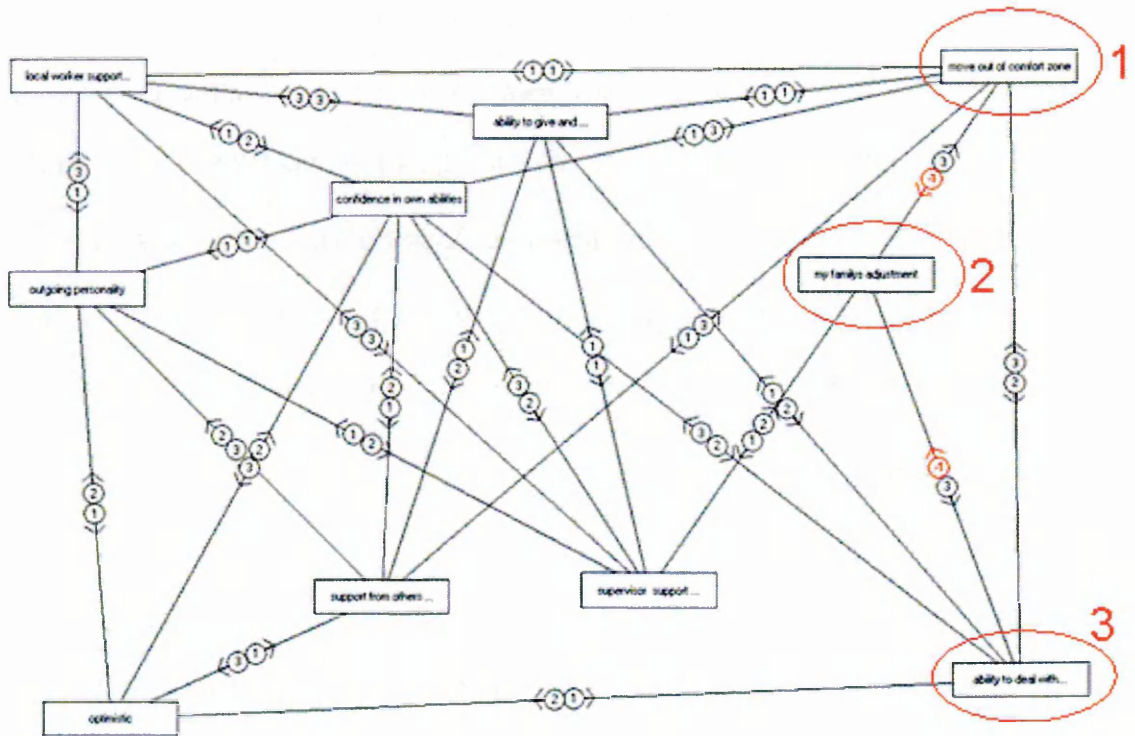
Figure 5-8: JD's map, cycles only

negatively on his family), but interestingly his family's adjustment has a strong positive influence on his *ability to deal with frustration* (3) within his situation (+3) (perhaps they are supportive of his long hours at work). By being able to better deal with his frustrations

it enhances his willingness to move out of his comfort zone (+3). That is one level of understanding this loop.

If the loop is followed in the opposite direction JD's *willingness to move out of his comfort zone(1)* has a positive effect on his *ability to deal with frustration* (3) albeit not as strong (+2). Yet, he suggests his *ability to deal with frustration (3)* is impacting negatively on his *family's adjustment* (2) although mildly (-1). His *family's adjustment* (2) has a strong influence on his *willingness to move out of his comfort zone* (+3).

Looking at the link *family adjustment ↔ move out of comfort zone* and deconstructing the reciprocal link, *moving out of the comfort zone* has impacted somewhat negatively on the *families adjustment* (-1); yet the family adjustment has had a strong positive influence on JD's *movement from his comfort zone* i.e. moving to China from the USA. This pair and *family adjustment ↔ ability to deal with frustration* deserve attention because they represent the greatest spread within the map (-1 to +3); also indicated is the importance of JD's family to him. They have a very strong positive influence on his *ability to deal with frustration*; similarly, they have a very strong influence on *his willingness to move out of his comfort zone.*

Moving to a wider perspective, this *move out of the comfort zone (1) ↔ my family's adjustment (2) ↔ ability to deal with frustration (3)* loop is linked with or to (influences) the construct *confidence* in one's abilities. JD considers *confidence* to be the most influential construct to his success in his Chinese organization setting. It is most influential because it is the construct that has the most direct and indirect influence. *Confidence* influences directly 7 of the 9 constructs; it does not have a direct influence on either his *family's adjustment* or *his ability to give and take to get along* on his expatriate assignment. However, there are indirect links to his *family's adjustment* and vice versa.

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This brief discussion reinforces the importance of loops; a second technical concern given the mapping strategy pursued in this research is how to account for constructs which are not chosen by the expatriate.

5.4.2.4.5 *Accounting for constructs not chosen*

In the analysis following Markoczy and Goldberg's (1995) approach to casual mapping where a sub-group of constructs is selected from a pool an important issue which needed addressing was how to account for constructs not chosen. Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) suggest a node not chosen does not mean it is not relevant only that it is not among the 10 most relevant constructs to a person (p. 311).

5.4.3 Measures Used: Central tendency construct

Map evaluation began by identifying maps which appeared visually different from the majority of maps; however, little beyond an awareness of an issue could be determined from such a general overview. To gain further understanding of what expatriate's identify as important to their satisfaction a simple count of links gave an indication of the importance of constructs; the greater the number the total number of links the more central a construct was.

A first step in developing an understanding of the expatriate's experience is to identify which 10 constructs the expatriates consider most relevant to their satisfaction.

Axelrod (1977) suggested a more informative overall measure to gauge a constructs centrality or importance to the map was a simple sum of the absolute number of direct links, indegree + out degree (ID or OD), between constructs regardless of direction or

average weight (importance) ascribed to the link. This approach begins to address the importance and differential influence constructs impose on each other.

Returning to the issue of centrality, using the Cognizer program, the outdegree of the constructs using Sum of Absolute value of matrix row elements = outdegree (OD) value of a construct (a simple counting process) was calculated. This was followed by calculating the indegree of the constructs using Sum of Absolute value of matrix column elements = indegree (ID) value of a construct. Finally, the Sum of total ID plus total OD for a construct created the total degree of influence of a construct. These calculations begin to reveal the differential influence constructs impose on each other. These add to understanding the centrality of a construct. These measures do not consider differential weights or influence of constructs; or doe they consider whether the influence on other constructs is negative or positive.

As discussed previously, loops are important in an expatriate's map as they indicate issues that a person keeps returning to. In this research, important loops were explored. A loop was considered important if it contained negative influences and these were easily visually identified because they appeared red in a map. These loops were considered important as well because a focus of this research was understanding what differentiates the satisfied vs. dissatisfied expatriate.

Because the adjacency matrix only accounts for direct and immediate influence of constructs some information is lost in the form of the indirect influences. However, as discussed previously, this research only considered direct links or a reachability matrix of 1 which is equal to the adjacency matrix.

These calculations were performed at both the individual and group level.

5.5 Interview

Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005), Daniels, Markoczy, and de Chernatony (1994) and Hurmerinta-Peltomaki and Nummela (2004), and Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) suggest order of the methods is important. Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) raise the issue of psychological priming if an interview was completed prior to the causal map. In keeping with the method of Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) a semi-structured interview completed the research session with the expatriate.

The interview was post-map creation for three reasons. Firstly, it avoided any potential psychological priming or triggering effect. This point on priming may seem contradictory to the priming issue mentioned in the survey section; however, the impact of priming is potentially different. In the survey situation, if priming occurred it would simply focus attention into the general area of interest; whereas, if an interview occurred prior to the map creation, it may incite the person to focus on more specific issues. Second, an interview would provide an opportunity for any unique point to emerge. Finally, an interview would allow any necessary clarifications or more in-depth exploration.

A semi-structured interview format was chosen to maintain focus on addressing the information the researcher desired and the protocol can be found in Appendix A, 10.1. The interview focussed on why they were in China and their experience. It was felt that structure would efficiently obtain consistent responses to consistent questions which would make coding and analysis easier. Furthermore, a semi-structured interview would enhance the tactical considerations mentioned earlier and a semi-structured interview format would improve environmental validity.

5.5.1.1 Interview coding

Once back at the Open University, the interviews were transcribed and coded using NVivo 9 in reference to the 40 construct pool (Appendix 1A, Figure 11-7) used to create the

causal maps; Kristof's (1996) definitions of PO fit, and the Framework of International Adjustment and any unanticipated themes which emerged in more than two maps e.g. being an American.

5.5.2 Summary

This chapter has described the methodology and research methods employed. The mixed methods approach which was necessary to use establishes this thesis within a critical realist ontology and the neologist 'idiothetic' approach to social-cognitive research. Creating interdependency between the different research methods used was important: the ITQ questionnaire, cognitive map and semi structured interview were deployed in ways which maximised richness in the capture of the expatriate experience but also facilitated comparison between the experiences of different expatriates. This chapter has also outlined how the data were analysed, as well as introducing the different expatriates who participated in the study. In the next chapter the findings are presented, and the lives and views of the expatriates are explored in more detail.

6 Presentation of Results

6.1 Presentation of Results

In the previous chapter, a case was presented which made the case for the use of a mixed methods approach to answer the research question. Part of the argument was based on the requirement that the sample cohort had to be gathered in a very challenging international arena (Cooke, 2009), China, and that help would be needed with introductions to expatriates. This choice proved to be worthwhile as evidenced by the expatriate's reaction to and comments on the different methods used.

Part of the success of the mapping phase was that it was a novel hands-on activity thus it required active involvement. For example, Elizabeth found the causal mapping component very engaging. She had never heard of mapping before; her background was human resource development and she was quite interested in learning about new ideas. A serendipitous outcome of this unique technique was it provided an excellent vehicle to build a relationship quickly and also she introduced me to two of her colleagues. John, was also fascinated by the mapping process. For example, while getting to know each other, John spoke passionately about the challenges his family faced in arriving at their decision to come as a family to Shanghai. They had to reconcile his daughter's desire to graduate with her lifelong friends in America vs. his dream to live overseas. Given John's passionate discussion, the construct *importance of family* would be expected to be selected as a construct to include in his map. Upon completion of his map, John immediately commented on how he had not selected *importance of family*.

For other expatriates the interview captured their attention. Roz for example, at a subsequent social gathering was 'surprised and flattered that someone was interested in her experiences in China' and she suggested Joe (Joe subsequently introduced Mike) as a

candidate for this research. Finally, participants such as Mike while completing the satisfaction/ITQ survey commented on the necessity of statistics to enable meaningful comparisons.

Although not the sole reason for investing their energy to introduce the researcher to more participants, it was clear that the methods did have a differential impact. Because participants were interested they were more inclined to support this research and identify potential participants.

6.2 *Measures of satisfaction and intention to quit*

Thirty three out of 36 participants completed the four question Satisfaction and ITQ survey. The complete questionnaire and detailed results can be found in the Appendix B, 12.1.

6.2.1 Satisfaction

6.2.1.1 Survey findings with reasons for dissatisfaction

In response to the question, 'Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this organization.' four of the 36 expatriates or approximately 11% expressed some level of dissatisfaction; if adjusted for the 3 missing responses, it represents 12% of the cohort expressed some level of dissatisfaction. Of this group, two selected the 'disagree' level, and two selected 'disagree somewhat'. Four responded neutral; as shall be noted in Table 6-1 the neutral respondents represent a group that was interesting

6.2.2 Intention to quit (ITQ)

A total of 12 different participants from the total cohort of 36 expatriate participants (three did not complete the questionnaire) or 25% or 36% if adjusted to reflect the non-completed

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questionnaires 'agreed somewhat', 'agreed', or 'agreed strongly' that they would at a minimum think about leaving their organization.

Of note, the numbers remained constant at the three stages of the ITQ process: think about leaving (9 people), will search for a job (7 people), and will leave within the year (8 people). Five of the expatriates who had identified themselves as having some level of ITQ identified themselves as satisfied as can be seen in Table 6-1. These results suggest that the survey results alone hide the complex nature of their decisions and thus the results require caution in interpretation (Table 6-1).

Eight people were identified as 'will leave'. Working back towards the initial step, 'thinking about leaving', the intermediate step, 'will search for jobs' had seven respondents; five were the same as the previous statement, 'will leave'. Mark and Tony were the additional expatriates who 'will look for a new job'.

The initial stage, 'thinking about leaving' had nine respondents; seven were also included in the previous two statements. Alan_ P and Cheng were the additional respondents to this question

. These initial outcomes indicate that caution must be exercised when using such a survey with an expatriate cohort. Elizabeth for example, 'will leave'; however, indications are she is satisfied. The same holds for Peter. Alan_P was dissatisfied but appeared to be 'thinking about leaving', whereas the other two expatriates who were dissatisfied 'were leaving'

Satisfaction	Think about leaving	Will look for new job	Will leave
Alan_Kiwi (d s)	Alan_Kiwi	Alan_Kiwi	Alan_Kiwi
Alan_P (d)	Alan_P		
	Cheng		
			Elizabeth
Joe (n)	Joe		Joe
John (d s)	John	John	John
	Mark	Mark	
		Peter	Peter
Roger (d s)			Roger
Simon (n)	Simon	Simon	Simon
Stacey (n)	Stacey	Stacey	Stacey
	Tony	Tony	
Winston (n)			
8	9	7	8

Table 6-1: Progression of satisfaction → will leave

(Satisfaction code: d s = disagree somewhat; d = disagree, n = neutral)

Following are several brief descriptions drawn from the interviews and the 'getting to know each other' phase that highlight the potential misinterpretation if relying just on the results of the satisfaction/ITQ survey to draw conclusions or develop policies. Accounts from participants, Elizabeth, Alan_P, Stacey and Tony are drawn upon.

Elizabeth enjoyed her experience in China but her posting was coming to an end and she would be repatriated as a normal part of the international assignment contract. Peter wanted to remain because he liked China and he had family in Shanghai; however, it appeared he would be leaving his organization. He indicated he might be moved to the Middle East. Alan_P, in his post-map interview and from other sources indicated several points of personal dissatisfaction with the home office and an attempt to send him to early retirement the previous year. However, in his interview he was very clear that he liked his

experience. Stacey was neutral in her satisfaction. She liked the personal growth she was experiencing, yet she wanted to leave the third tier city where she was posted for a more western oriented city like Shanghai and an expat package. She was in a very challenging situation. Tony expressed an interest in progressing in the organization. These stories suggest that caution should be exercised when interpreting ITQ.

Surveys may offer a start point but other factors exist such as repatriation and these cannot be identified from the survey alone. Thus, satisfaction may prove a more useful measure when attempting to identify disaffected expatriates. These conclusions also reinforce the value of a mixed methods approach for this research. In the next section each of the expatriates' causal maps and interview data are presented and explored in depth.

6.3 In-depth analysis of the expatriate

6.3.1 Salient issues identified by the expatriates

Causal mapping provides insights into the person's experience in their international organization setting as it provides information to allow comparison between people; it also allows in-depth exploration of the individual person. Through their maps and interviews an understanding of who they are and what they consider important to their satisfaction in their international organizational setting will emerge. The individual expatriates are grouped by their organization or within the community at large if they are the sole participant from an organization.

First, a brief introduction of the expatriate is presented based on their background demographics, 'getting to know each other' and interview. Next the causal map is presented.

Visual representations of the individual's causal map, Figure 6-6, although highlighting the complexity of their field, are very difficult to interpret; therefore, via the matrix supplied by the Cognizer program, the Indegrees (ID) and Outdegrees (OD) and the respective sorting of the links is supplied for each expatriate. Finally, highlighted from the interviews are the issues the expatriate identifies as important and these are linked to the map, PO fit, and Framework of International Adjustment. The interview was a supplement to provide support for important constructs in the map. On occasion, discrepancies exist.

There are five maps which are distinct. In this section, for ease of reading, quotations from the expatriates are italicized and indented. Constructs referred to are also italicised.

6.3.2 DBChemical:

The following participants were all employed by a Dutch British MNE focussed on chemical and coatings solutions for the shipbuilding industry.

6.3.2.1 Colin

Colin, a Singaporean, was the Director and General Manager for Asian operations (excluding Korea). He was transferred from the Singapore operations six years ago to develop the market as the organization strategy envisioned China becoming the largest market in the region. Previous international experience had been gained in Taiwan and Colin felt that critical to his success was his fluency in Mandarin. Colin was accompanied in China by his wife.

6.3.2.1.1 Map
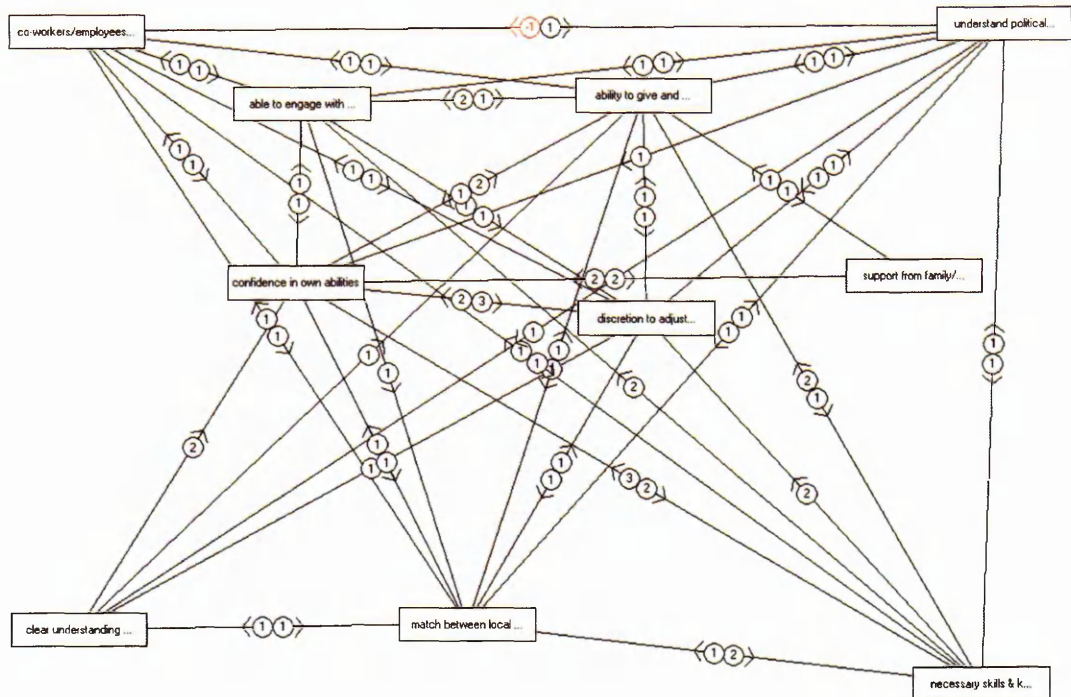
Figure 6-1: Colin's causal map

Colin identifies the *ability to give and take to get along* as most important followed closely by *confidence in one's abilities.* It is noteworthy that *support from his family/important others* is selected but at a distant bottom. What makes this map of particular interest is his position within the organization. As the head of Asian operations excluding Korea, he reported to the Board of Directors in Europe, yet he was also in a position to influence operations. In the interview is a relation of their discussion to the relevant frameworks and constructs selected relevant to the map.

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Construct	ID # links	OD # links
support from family / important others	2	2
confidence in one' abilities	9	7
able to engage with people who are different	6	6
clear understanding of why on assignment	2	4
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	7	7
ability to give and take to get along	9	8
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	6	8
necessary skills and knowledge	5	7
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	8	7
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	8	6

Table 6-2: Colin's map link structure

The direct quotes which follow indicate Colin's focus.

6.3.2.1.2 Interview

6.3.2.1.2.1 Reason for being in China, clear understanding of why on assignment, necessary skills and knowledge, PO fit: demands-ability

And the real purpose for being here is to develop the business in China, to grow the business in China, and the company wanted somebody whom they know, somebody whom they can trust, and know the company's operational kind of corporate governance, company's policies, company's culture, etc, to drive the business.

6.3.2.1.2.2 Support from family/important others

The fortunate thing is that my wife likes China, interestingly, because the two girls are in London.

6.3.2.1.2.3 Language skills, PO fit: demand-ability

People tend to forget that China, many years ago, was a little bit still what China was, and the gap was big. China today is now narrowing the gap, as they have more exposure now. So, being able to speak Chinese actually was an added

advantage. Knowing the company's business, the thing the company needed me to

set up, to establish a certain standard here

6.3.2.1.2.4   Match between local knowledge and HO expectations

it needs to be a combination, meaning, we need the local expertise, and they need

the external expertise that the local don't have, and you complement it out.

The local guys know the local needs. We know how to sell, or complement and

supplement the companies. Trying to do alone either one, you lose out, again.

6.3.2.1.2.5   Previous international experience, language skills, move out of comfort zone,

you find that, I had the advantage because I was an expatriate before, and I speak

the language, and then, like I say, you are realistic, and you are not... you don't

whinge, because this is what I expected, right.

6.3.2.1.2.6   Support from HO, selection process

{DBChemical] had a fairly standard what we call international assignment policy,

and it is a standardised policy that applies to everyone. The company pays,

obviously, for the family, equal, I mean, fair housing for the secondees and the

family, education the same. The company ensures that employees get what we call

tax advice,

In fact, before a guy is transferred here, we allow this, only in the family to come

and take a look.

Again, Shanghai is not an issue, because you've got friends, some of them live in

Shanghai, you can hear, you can see. The difficult one will be in some other remote

cities.

We struggle to attract people to go into some of the second and third tier cities,

because it will be like Shanghai 20 years ago.

6.3.2.1.2.7   Necessary skills and knowledge, Selection, PO fit: demand-ability

It's both. It is both. Because was it planned that way? Sometimes not. Because it is

a case of where there's a demand, where there's an opportunity. And then you see

that somebody fit into it, you start to... There was a need, for example in, let's say,

Pudong, I've come in Pudong. And Alan was at the level, Alan was sent here, so he

just... one thing's led on to another, one year led on. So he's here [overtalking].

6.3.2.1.2.8   Issue: lack of loyalty, language skills, understand the political dynamic of host co-workers, ability to deal with frustration

Now, the frustration here in China is there's a lack of loyalty in the local people,

primarily due to there are more jobs in the marketplace, and they can pick and

choose. By job hopping they will get more money, and some of them actually make

it a job in itself, because if you work for a Fortune 500 company, you speak a bit of

good English, you know what you're talking about, you get a very good offer from

new entrants. So this is a frustration. So that we train people, but we find it very

hard to retain some of the good guys, not because we were underpaying, but

because the competition from outside somehow will actually push your guys away

anyway, so that is a frustration, but it's one of those things that as soon you accept

that this kind of attrition will take place, then you accept it, and you let go some,

right

6.3.2.2 Aiden

Aiden (MBA), who was from Northern Ireland was one of the two General Managers and had been in China for over five years with his wife and children. Previous international experience had been gained in Norway. His wife was a homicide detective with the

London police force and had taken early retirement for this opportunity. In informal conversation, she felt the overall benefits for her family outweighed those from her job; besides she also wanted a change. When they first arrived they had a ready support network as her sister and her family were in China; within two years her sister had moved on.

Aiden was very open that he was at a career crossroad. He wanted to move up the organization ladder; however, this would mean returning to the UK; however, confounding the issue was his children were in the process of completing (or near completing) their A level education at a school type and quality (Dulwich College) that would be beyond their budget back in the UK.

6.3.2.2.1 Map
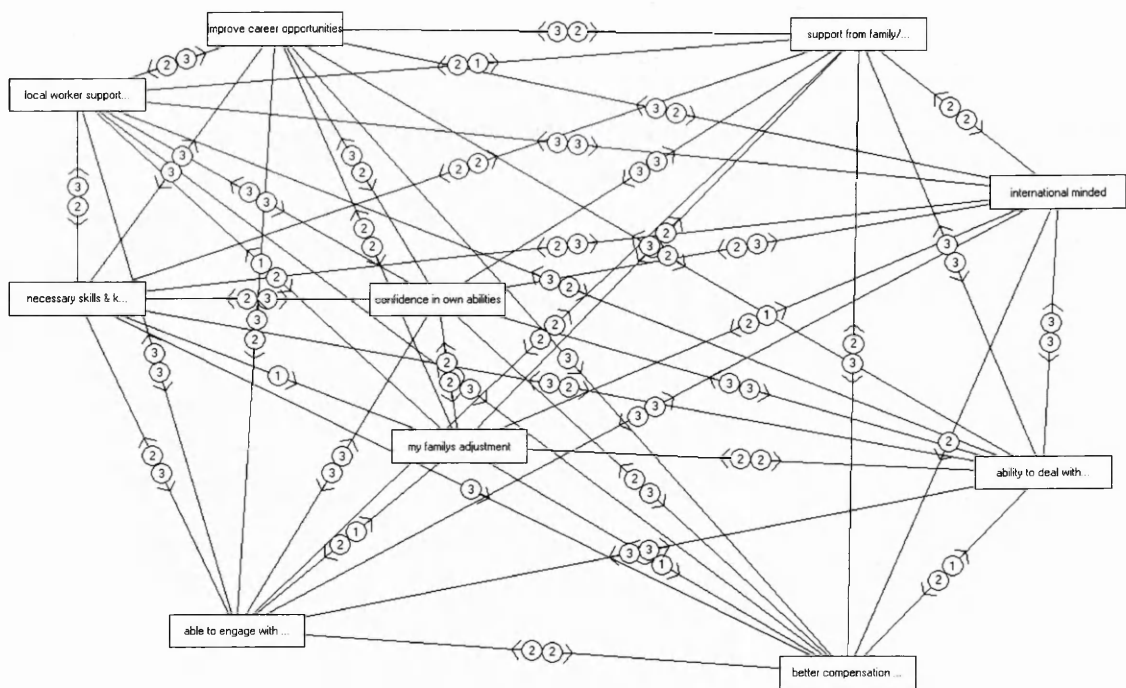
Figure 6-2: Aiden's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	8	9
local worker support in host country	9	9
ability to deal with frustrations	9	9
support from family / important others	9	9
confidence in one' abilities	9	9
able to engage with people who are different	9	9
my family's adjustment	9	8
better compensation opportunities	9	6
international minded	8	9
necessary skills and knowledge	7	9

Table 6-3: Aiden's map link structure

Aiden's map appears to focus on his development and his family. Although not as straightforward this suggested by the inclusion of the constructs *support from family/important others, my family's adjustment, better compensation* and *improve career opportunities*. The direct quotes which follow indicate Aiden's focus.

6.3.2.2.2 Interview

The tape recorder malfunctioned for Aiden's interview and the following is drawn from field notes.

6.3.2.2.2.1 Necessary skills and knowledge, match between local knowledge & home office expectations, improve career opportunities

Aiden felt there was a lack of understanding about operations and working and living in China from his head office and this stemmed from their collective lack of experience working overseas. Furthermore, this lack of experience was creating a disconnection between the HO expectations and what could be accomplished in China.

6.3.2.2.2.2 My family's adjustment, better compensation, PO fit: needs-supplies

Of interest when having our post mapping discussion, besides talking about his career development requiring a move back to the UK and the importance of his children's

development, was Aiden's desire to ensure his children had education at the best possible institutions to ensure a bright future. He wanted to ensure they had opportunities he never had. He had earned his MBA at a mid-level British university and was quite successful; he wanted to ensure his children 'moved in the right circles to ensure their future' and that meant starting at the right schools and universities with an appropriate discipline.

6.3.2.2.2.3 Support from family / important others, necessary skills and knowledge

Personal constructs Aiden felt were critical to one's satisfaction were an open mind and flexible attitude. Also, critical he suggested was the support of his family and personal confidence. Finally, he suggested a person needs the requisite knowledge and skills.

6.3.2.3 Jackson

Jackson (BSc), although originally from Hong Kong was now a Canadian citizen and identified himself as a Canadian, thus for this research was considered a Canadian. He was the other General Manager and had been seconded to Shanghai 11 years ago. Although the location was not specified, Jackson had had previous international experience. With him in Shanghai were his wife and family.

6.3.2.3.1 Map

Jackson's map was so unique in form and no explanations for this could be ascertained. It was decided to consider it the equivalent of an outlier and refer to it at a cursory level. The direct quotes which follow indicate Jacksons's focus.
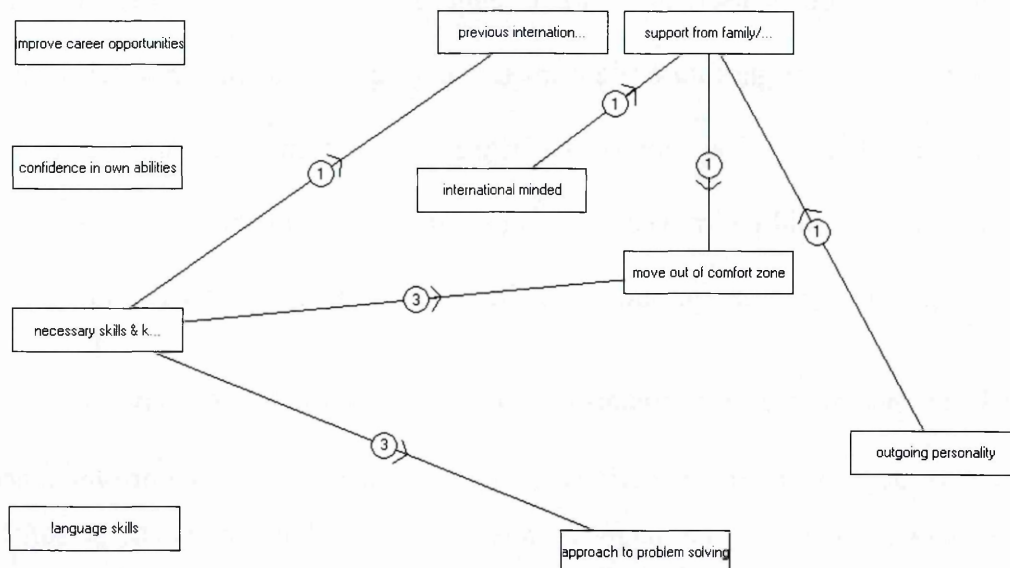
Figure 6-3: Jackson's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career	0	0
language skills	0	0
previous international experience	1	0
support from family / important others	2	1
confidence in one' abilities	0	0
outgoing personality	0	1
international minded	0	1
approach to problem solving	1	0
move out of comfort zone	2	0
necessary skills and knowledge	0	3

Table 6-4: Jacksons's map link structure

6.3.2.3.2 Interview

6.3.2.3.2.1 Improve career opportunities, PO fit: demand-abilities, clear understanding of why on assignment

I was approached by the company to... asking whether I can come back to China to

take over Protective Coating and my thinking was come back here to do a three-

year contract and then go back home. Since I stayed here, then I can see the

business booming and you feel you do something for the company....

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6.3.2.3.2.2 Necessary skills & knowledge, PO fit: demands-abilities

I think in China so far we don't have high good quality management type people. They don't have the experience of how to do business with other countries. We need people to come here to train them up but in the long run A/N prefer using local people. That's our policy. But I can see it not only happening in China. If you look at Colin's reporting, in quite a few countries actually there's expatriates, so after the... Like Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, they're all developing countries and they're using expatriates because the local people do not have that kind of experience yet. .

6.3.2.3.2.3 Move out of comfort zone, international minded, language skills

I think for an expatriate here you have to understand the culture to start with because the European culture, North American culture is not the same as the local cultures. Some local cultures is not the way it should be but you have to bear in mind, because they have been doing it for thousands of years. So, you have to change them slowly.

Because in language, if you understand what you're talking about, even if you don't... Sometimes you don't understand 100% because there are different dialects but the thinking... also the way they're talking, then you can see more or less what they want. So, it's quite helpful. Even our expatriates now, most of the people are taking up Chinese lessons.

To conclude, although Jackson mapped *support from family/important others* as important to his map, he does not mention his family in relation to his expatriate experience. What his interview highlighted was the necessity of understanding China, its language, culture and politics, to succeed. Given the incredible difference in his map it is treated with great

caution as an alternate explanation might be he did not complete his map.

6.3.2.4 Alan_P

Alan_P (BSc) hailed from Newcastle, UK and was the Technical Director for China. He was one of the most senior expatriates in the cohort having lived in China for 16 years; his whole career had been on the international stage working in places such as Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, India, and Taiwan. Alan_P was single.

6.3.2.4.1 Map

Exploration of Alan_P's map, Figure 6-4, is complicated. For Alan_P as Table 6-5 indicates, the most influential constructs based on the number of links were person oriented, *outgoing personality and support form the community at large*. The latter was noteworthy as Alan_P was single. Although dissatisfied according to his survey, he indicated he was not ready to leave or retire; however, his map indicates a great deal of negative influence.

When his map is stripped to the core *support from others in the community at large* and *previous international experience* become orphan (unconnected) constructs. As mentioned, in the overall map both constructs are well connected and thus important to his success.
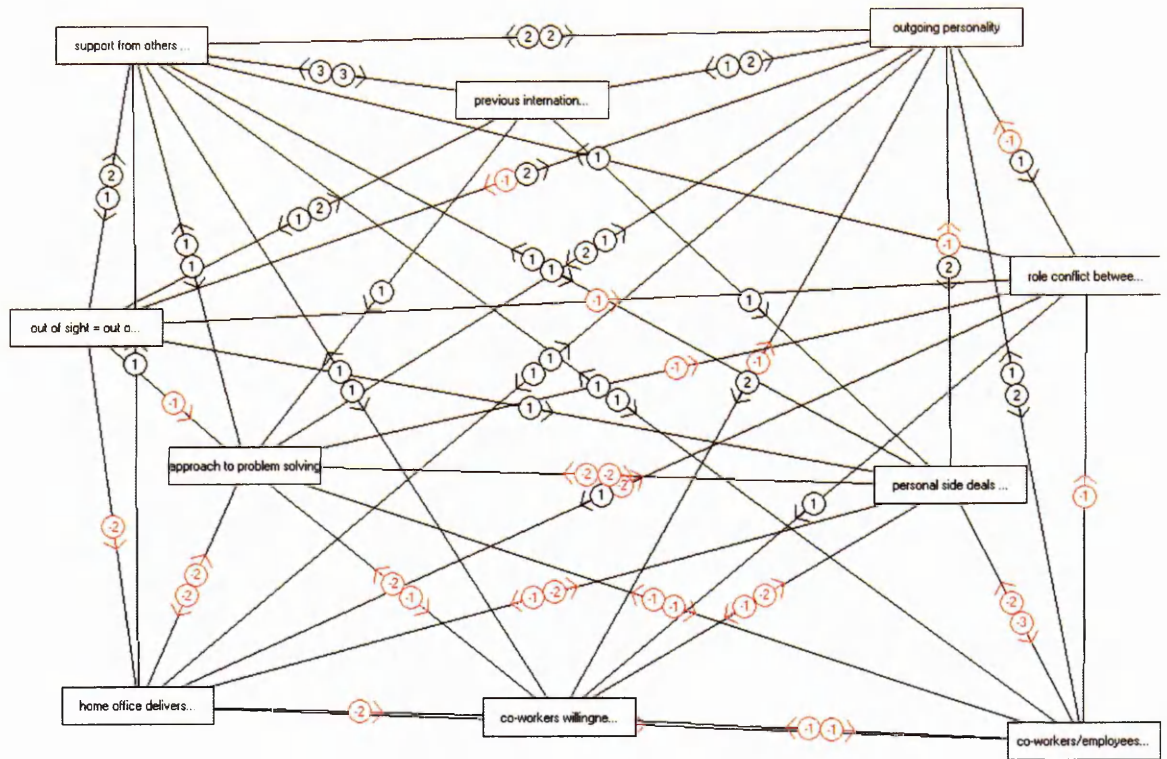
Figure 6-4: Alan_P complete map

Further exploration of Table 6-5 indicates the bulk of negative influence appears to centre on issues with the organization. For example, *being out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunities* is having a negative influence *on home office delivering on promises*.

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When rendered down to the negative links, Figure 6-5, Alan_P appears to have several issues. There would appear to be an issue with the home office, and from the appearance of his map it appears that he feels that being out of sight, that is, away from England is impacting negatively on him and creating conflict with his home office. The second issue is related in that it there appears to be an issue with side deals in some capacity. Finally, he appears to have an issue with the *co-workers willingness to make decision* and his *co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions made.*

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Construct	ID #links	OD # links
support from others in community at large	9	7
previous international experience	3	5
out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunity back home	3	7
outgoing personality	9	9
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	6	7
personal side deals by employees at company expense	8	6
approach to problem solving	8	7
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	7	5
role conflict between home office and posting	5	4
home office delivers on promises	6	7

Table 6-5: Alan_P's map link structure
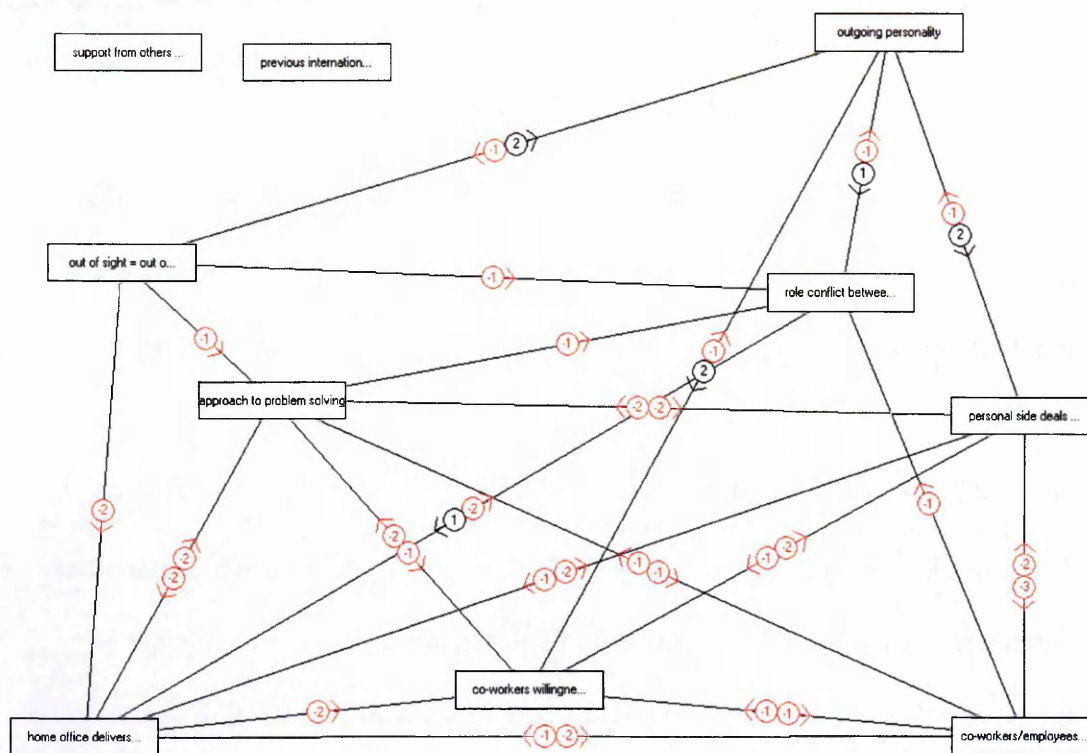
Figure 6-5: The negative issues

Of the four mentioned constructs *home office delivering on promises* was the most

influential construct over the other constructs selected by Alan_P whereas, *co-workers*

willingness (unwillingness) to make decisions was the most influenced most by the other

constructs. The inputs from other sources were having a negative impact on the willingness

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of people to make decisions. *Personal side deals* was adding to the cycle of frustration; they were affecting negatively approaches to problem solving, decision acceptance, and there seems to be a home office dimension.

6.3.2.4.2 Interview

Alan's interview was unique as he was one of the key informants of the researcher and his interview was substantially longer than the others. The direct quotes which follow indicate Alan-P's focus.

6.3.2.4.2.1 Co-workers willingness to make decisions, Co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions made, understand the political dynamic of the host country co-workers

...one of the biggest problems with the Chinese, is that they don't like to take responsibility. Now, when I say, the Chinese, I'm talking about mainland Chinese. Taiwan Chinese are different, and a lot of that comes down to the days of the cultural revolution, where no one wanted to take responsibility for anything for fear of being blamed and being sent off for re-education or whatever. So you end up with Chinese who will quite happily try and pass things to someone else

6.3.2.4.2.2 Career development, PO fit: demand -ability

we initially had a satellite office in Shanghai with just a couple of salesmen and a couple of tech service people, when I was moved into there, it was clearly, we need to develop the team there because this is going to be the major hope for the operation. And that's where my role's come in, and initially my role was technical, tech service, to develop the technical service team, but then they gave me responsibility of quality control at the factory. Then I started getting involved in commercial, and so that was what I was saying before; you ended up where you become jack of all trades

6.3.2.4.2.3 Role conflict between home office and posting, match between local knowledge and home office expectations, ability to deal with frustrations

But quite often they will get something like this from a shipyard and they'll sit on it for two weeks, because they'll keep looking at it on a daily basis, trying to muddle their way through it, and eventually they'll come to me and, in the 11th hour and say, I just got this, can you help me, I need to answer the shipyard tomorrow. ... this is going to take me all night; when did you hear about this. ... they know I'm going to be pissed off with them. ... But you would think that will never happen again with that sales person; it'll happen again a week later because ...and they don't seem to learn from their mistakes

6.3.2.4.2.4 Role conflict between home office and posting, ability to deal with frustrations

look at it from all aspects – commercial, technical, technical; they might be a requirement in there for the ship owner, saying, he wants to borrow one of our technical service guys, and you need to say, well, have you told the tech service manager to see if he has anyone available; no; well, you need to go and talk to them

6.3.2.4.2.5 Co-workers willingness to take responsibility

an example: And then you'll try and find someone else, and you'll find that they don't want to take responsibility, and no matter how much you try and push them to take responsibility, they won't do it. They'll call you up on a Sunday and, got a problem; what's the problem; hey, well, we had this problem two weeks ago. Well, yeah. Well, what did we do then? Well, we did this. So, what do we do now? Well, what do you think? No, what do you think? And there's a reluctance for them to say, well, we did this, this and this; right; well, do it again. Oh, well, can you sign the piece of paper?

Well, [unclear] I mean, you're seeing the younger generation coming through now who will take on some responsibility, but they don't have the experience.

6.3.2.4.2.6 Out of sight=out of mind=lost opportunity back home, PO fit: demands-abilities

was being based in Newcastle and travelling out around the world ... we need you to go to Taiwan, we've got a big problem out there, and we need you to go there. And it ended up being thirteen months. And you start thinking; hell, they'll have forgotten about me. And when I was back on vacation, I went on site and I had a couple of guys from site saying, hey, I thought you'd left the company. And you start thinking, whoa, I've been away from here for too long, and I'm being forgotten about.

6.3.2.4.2.7 Personal development, improve career opportunities, international minded, optimistic, PO fit: needs-supply

If I had my time all over again, I wouldn't change it, even though the negatives that I've just said there, because frankly, when I joined IP, I didn't come in with a degree. I was going part time. I had worked for another company before that, an animal [?] and flour milling company, in their laboratories doing analysis. Got made redundant, joined IP in the laboratories, and they were allowing me to go part time. Now, what I saw clearly was having worked since I was 16 in laboratories, and then joining IPs laboratories, what I saw was graduates coming in, PhDs coming in, and looking down on me because I was just doing my degree part time. That, to them, that was, oh, that's not as good as mine. And I honestly felt that I was being held back, and there was no chance for me going up the corporate ladder if I'd stayed in the laboratories. And I saw technical service, which was going out to shipyards and giving technical advice, as, wow, that looks interesting. You get to see the world, make a bit of extra money because everyone knew that the salaries were higher there.

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6.3.2.4.2.8 Role conflict between home office and posting, work, co-workers willingness to make decisions,

finishing work at 4.30 in Shanghai; I mean, that's a rare occurrence. The, we're in the office normally from about eight o'clock in the morning, and the earliest you're heading out is 5.30, six o'clock, because the time difference, so you need to be calling Europe to speak to headquarters if you need a chat with them, and even when you get home you end up maybe having to call the States or Canada or whatever, so you can be on the phone at nine o'clock in the evening, talking to people; or if people need to speak to me regarding a certain problem, I can be out for dinner with customers, and have people ringing me while I'm out for dinner. Or, I can be out with friends and have people ringing me up at eleven o'clock at night. So, you end up putting a lot more hours in, and you get, I mean, our Chinese, if there's a problem and they've got a ship owner jumping up and down, he'll say, you know, who can I talk to in authority; and they'll give them my number. And I'll get this guy ringing me up on a Sunday

6.3.2.4.2.9 Support from home office, previous international experience

You get none of the help from the company. I mean, when I went to live in India before I was in China, I was the only one in India for the company, so the initial step was to go to the deputy British high commission and register there with my passport, just you know, and let them know I was in the country. They give me some help, but basically, where do you learn? It's basically, you have to teach yourself.

6.3.2.4.2.10 Ability to deal with frustrations, able to engage with people who are different

The one thing which annoys the hell out of me is expatriates that I see overseas still behaving like it's the British Empire; but it's not just the Brits; you see this with some Americans, you see; talking down to the locals like they're nothing. You see a lot of the expats arriving from no different a background than myself, or, for

example, yourself, wherever, and suddenly they've got a big car with a driver and a

big house that's three times the size of what they've had back in England, and

suddenly their head becomes huge. They start talking down to people, they become

arrogant, they treat their drivers like they're a slave, and I see them talking to the

staff in the office in the same way. And I think to myself, well, treat people the way

you'd like to be treated yourself. If you treat people with some respect,

6.3.2.4.2.11 Previous international experience, approach to problem solving, able to engage with people who are different

Don't treat people like idiots. You have to assume that the way of doing business in

China is very different to the way business is done in Europe, done in And I will

always sit, I mean, what, I made the mistake in the early days of going out to

countries and, well, look, this is how it's done in England, do it. And then you

suddenly realise that you're building brick walls... And you have to try and look for

a compromise that keeps everyone happy, but commercially you don't end up

getting the company into liabilities because, for example, the Chinese will, oh, you

know, we can't really put that document in front of the customer, they'll feel

offended. And you say, well, yeah, but if we don't put that document in front of

them, our liabilities are wide open.

6.3.2.4.2.12 Organization culture, personal side deals at company expense

in your situation, is how would you describe the role or importance of your

organizational culture, and is the culture of DBChemical Nobel in Shanghai, is it a

universal type of culture as they're suggesting, Or, is it kind of just bits and pieces

around the world?

You know, that's an incredible question, because I P, who I work for, was owned by

Ctts, who were based in Coventry. They own a textiles company in fibres and

chemicals and everything else. And, the I P brand is so big, in the marine industry.

So, I joined the company when Ctts had bought us, but the, within the

organization, we never regarded ourselves as being Ctts, it was always, well, we're

I P, and we had the red propeller, which is the company logo; red propeller was

everywhere. And we basically used to ignore Ctts entirely, because we thought they

were talking nonsense.

when DBChemical bought us, for the first one or two years, we didn't hear very

much of DBChemical, but after that we suddenly found them starting to interfere.

And my honest opinion of DBChemical, and I know this is being recorded, and I've

told them this myself, I think they're control freaks. They've ended up where,

because their pharmaceutical division got sued in America from price fixing, which

cost them a fortune, they've had us going jumping through hoops with business

principles, training and how we should behave in an ethical manner and everything

else, and frankly, I find that insulting, because in all my time of working in

International Paints, we always worked in an ethical manner,

so you don't necessarily identify with the organizational values as expressed?

Not at all.

6.3.2.4.2.13 Selection, support from home office, ability to deal with frustration, role conflict between HO and posting

mentioned it briefly when we were having coffee, how quite often home office

would, they just bring somebody over, basically almost like on a five star holiday,

and then once they're in Shanghai full time, it, their supports may or may not be

there, ...

Oh, the support is atrocious.

I happened to be back in the UK , it was, just after I moved to China, I was in the HR department, and one of the girls who looks after, is supposed to look after the expats, was there, and she said, oh, hi Alan, how's things; fine; where are you now? And I said, China; whereabouts; Shanghai. Is that next to Hong Kong?

They haven't got a clue geographically where they're sending people. And like, we have a clause in our contract that if we're being moved from one location to another, where climatic conditions are different, you're entitled to a clothing allowance. And I used to say to them, well, where's my clothing allowance? Well, is it different climatic conditions? Well, Korea and Saudi is the same climatic conditions. Well, I don't know, where is Saudi? They're sending people out overseas, and they have no idea where the countries are that they're sending them to, what sort of problems they're likely to encounter, what language is spoken [laughing]; not a clue.

happened to myself; I arrived in the country, and the first six months, because all I've had is a few days handover with my, the person I'm replacing, and the end result is you're, well, I don't know how to get this done, so you just muddle your way through. And companies have the short term attitude that, oh, it's going to cost quite a few thousand to bring his replacement out one month or two months before he's going to go. Whereas, if they did that, you could actually pass on a lot of the knowledge that you'd learnt in that country, and give them a chance to get their feet on the ground by the time you are leaving.

6.3.2.5 Stan:

Stan (BSc) was an English chemist who had transferred into business development with this organization. Previous international experience had been gained with the organization in Korea and he had since been posted to China approximately two years ago and looked forward to marrying a local woman in the autumn of 2010. Stan 'saw it as the opportunity to work overseas and get well paid and have a good package.

6.3.2.5.1 Map

Visual representations of the individual's causal map Figure 6-6 and the ID and OD are supplied in Table 6-6.
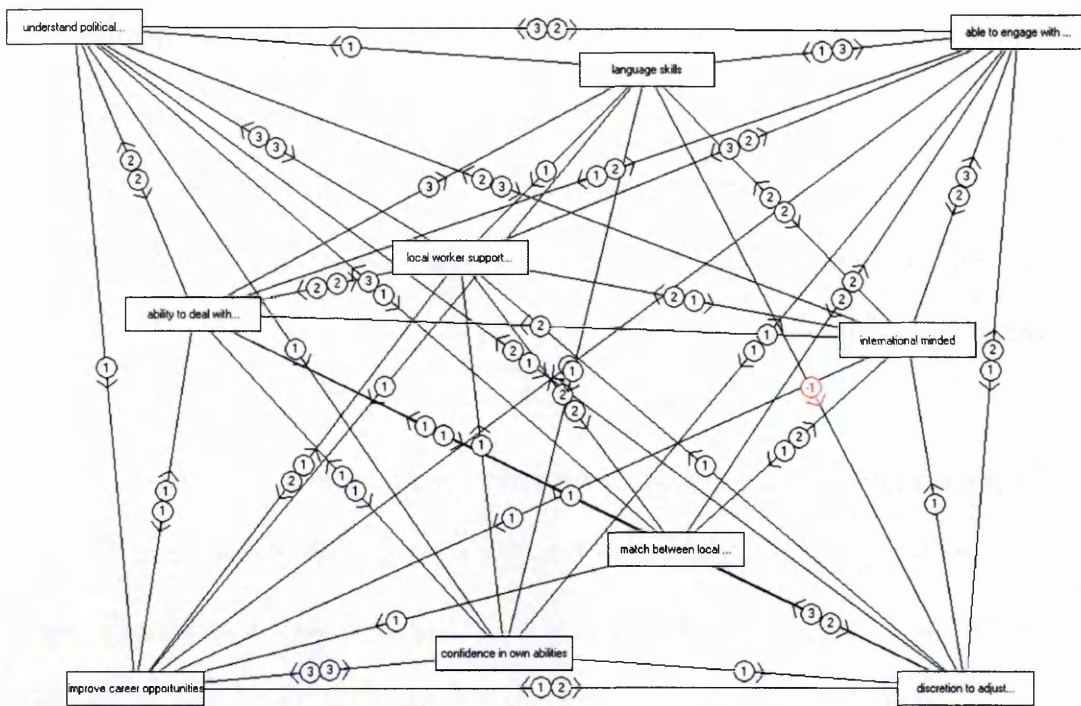
Figure 6-6: Stan's complete map

Stan's map suggests several things. Firstly, *an ability to deal with people who are different* is the most central construct as it has 8 ID and 9 OD. The constructs most influenced by other factors are *local worker support and improve [his] career*; ID= 9 respectively. *Able to deal with people who are different* has the most influence on other constructs.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
local worker support	9	6
improve career	9	4
able to deal with people who are different	8	9
understand political dynamics of host	7	8
ability to deal with frustrations	8	7
international minded	6	7
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	6	7
discretion to adjust roles as necessary	6	7
confidence in one's abilities	5	5
language	3	7

Table 6-6: Stan link structure of causal map

The key constructs that Stan focussed on in his interview which supplemented his causal map were: *career development, able to deal with frustration, accepting differences.* The direct quotes which follow indicate Stan's focus.

6.3.2.5.2 Interview

6.3.2.5.2.1 Career Development, international minded, PO fit: needs-supply

So, the technical teams in the UK essentially do exactly the same job as the technical teams in Korea, but the technical teams in Korea are on the doorstep of all our major customers. So, they were exposed day in, day out to the customers where people in the UK were essentially working within the laboratories with very little exposure. And that was really the key for me to move out there.

[P]robably the two things that I've appreciated most, one is exposure to senior management within our company which I'd previously never had exposure to. And the second one whereas previously I was working in either research and development or in business development, I now work day to day with people who are actually running the business.

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6.3.2.5.2.2 Able to engage with people who are different, deal with frustration, understand political dynamics of host country, personal development

I think it's a willingness to accept that not everybody thinks in the same way as that the people are used to when they're at home. And what you may see as stupid, as frustrating, as a lack of common sense, as a focus, for example health and safety. When people do stupid things in countries like China or Vietnam or countries like this, we see it as it's just incomprehensible [sic] to us that somebody would do something that would put their own life and other people's lives in danger.

dealing with the differences, particularly the government organisations, where I'm used to things in black and white, you've got a procedure to do something, it's agreed, this is how you follow something, this is what you have to do, this is how it's documented. To then say that people will deal with things on a case by case basis and there's no actual procedure for following

I used to question why people are doing things differently and I never understood why... that the way we do things is right, and these people are doing things wrong. But the quicker that you can understand that these are just differences between the cultures and the people and there isn't a right way or a wrong way, the quicker you'll get accepted by the people that you work with and the quicker that they'll support you.

Thus, with this person, the various methods reinforce each other. Stan registered as satisfied on the survey, is consistent as to the prime focus is his career development and personal growth.

6.3.2.6 Cheng

Cheng (BA) was a Singaporean woman who worked in the Human Resources department. Operations were downsizing in Singapore and portions were relocating to China; because of her experience she was offered an opportunity to join the operations in Shanghai. She was single and had been on this, her first, international assignment for just under two years.

An irritant for Cheng was the western expatriates were offered assistance in settling in Shanghai, whereas, upon her arrival, she was told she could get her affairs sorted out because she spoke Mandarin. This was an irritant because, although she spoke the language, she knew nothing about how the necessary systems in China were organized e.g. getting housing or opening a bank account.

6.3.2.6.1 Map

As can be seen in Table 6-7, Cheng identified a balance amongst seven of her selected constructs as key to her satisfaction as they ranked 15 or 16 in influence. These constructs related to the person; for example, the most influential constructs were *optimism* and *supervisor support in the host country*. There was a substantial gap between the employee related constructs and the construct *out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunity back home.*
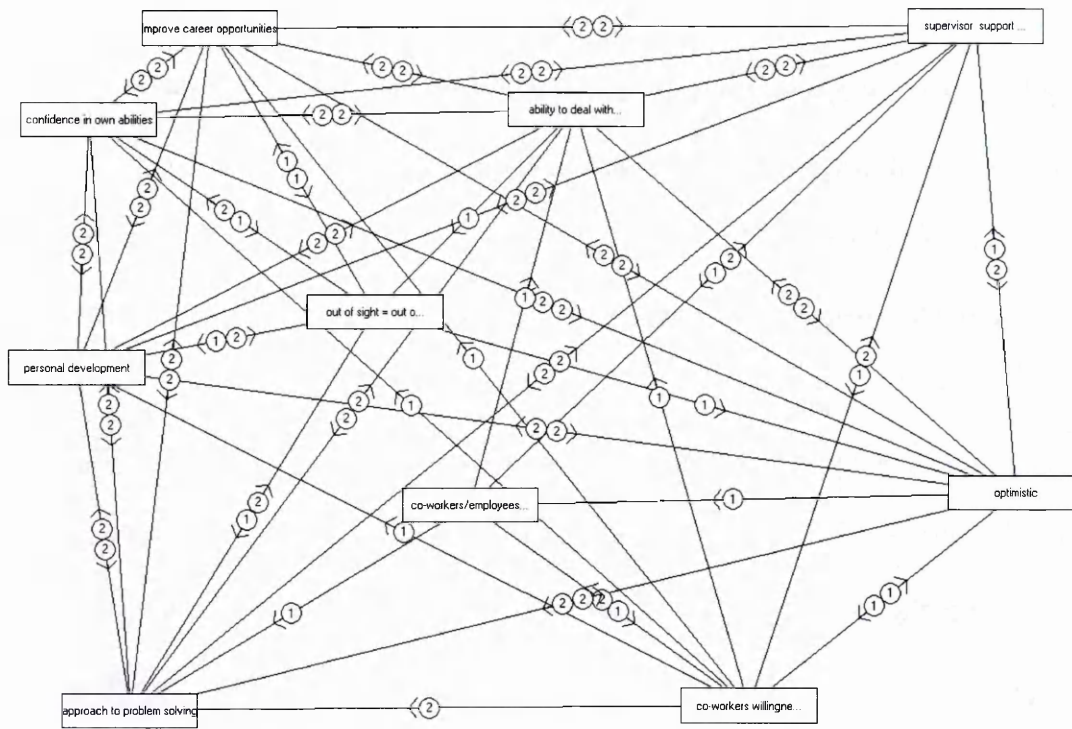
Figure 6-7: Cheng's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	8	7
supervisor support in host country	8	8
ability to deal with frustrations	8	7
out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunity back home	5	5
confidence in one' abilities	8	7
personal development	8	7
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	3	4
approach to problem solving	9	7
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	3	8
optimistic	8	8

Table 6-7: Cheng's map link constructs

The direct quotes which follow indicate Cheng's focus.

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6.3.2.6.2 Interview

6.3.2.6.2.1 Improve career opportunities, PO fit: needs-supplies

Two years ago I was actually given the opportunity to come to Shanghai because the head office in Singapore actually closed down. I did turn it down.

Because I just didn't want to leave my comfort zone, you know? But somehow because of this economic crisis, it sort of made me take a step back and, you know, became very worried, because at that time I was actually actively looking for a job, but it was extremely quiet. So in the end I told my boss, I said, okay, I will give it a try, and I don't regret.

I'm actually very glad that my very first assignment is in China, because there is really a lot of opportunities. And being in Shanghai I guess makes it very easy because, you know, it is like Singapore, except for the weather, and the hygiene.

6.3.2.6.2.2 Co-workers willingness to make decisions, co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions made, ability to deal with frustrations

I think the co-workers here somehow... they actually lack the ability to make decisions as well as to take responsibility. I think this is something which I find a little bit more backward than in Singapore.

In Singapore you have a lot of speed, you know, people are willing to take responsibility, people are willing to work hard. But somehow I find it here it's like... especially the group of people that I'm dealing with, the dedication is just not there. Yes.

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6.3.2.6.2.3 Supervisor support in host country, personal development, ability to deal with people who are different

CH   I think it's my willingness to adapt, you know, to do things that is different.

And I would actually... actually do a lot actually to the support of my boss. Yes.

RO   So you find your boss very supportive?

CH   Yes. I guess I think it's also partly because he is not Chinese, you know? I think that makes it more... I mean, it makes it easier.

6.3.2.7 Sarah

Sarah (Bachelor degree) was a single English woman who had been in China approximately four months on her first expatriate assignment as a Business Development Manager. She recounted her desire to work internationally and how she pursued a posting back at her head office in the UK. In her interview, Sarah talked about her family and how important they were to her and her pursuit of her dream.

6.3.2.7.1 Map

Sarah's map and link structure (Table 6-8) suggests the constructs most central to her are her *ability to give and take to get along* (ID=9, OD=9) and *personal development* (ID=9, OD=8).
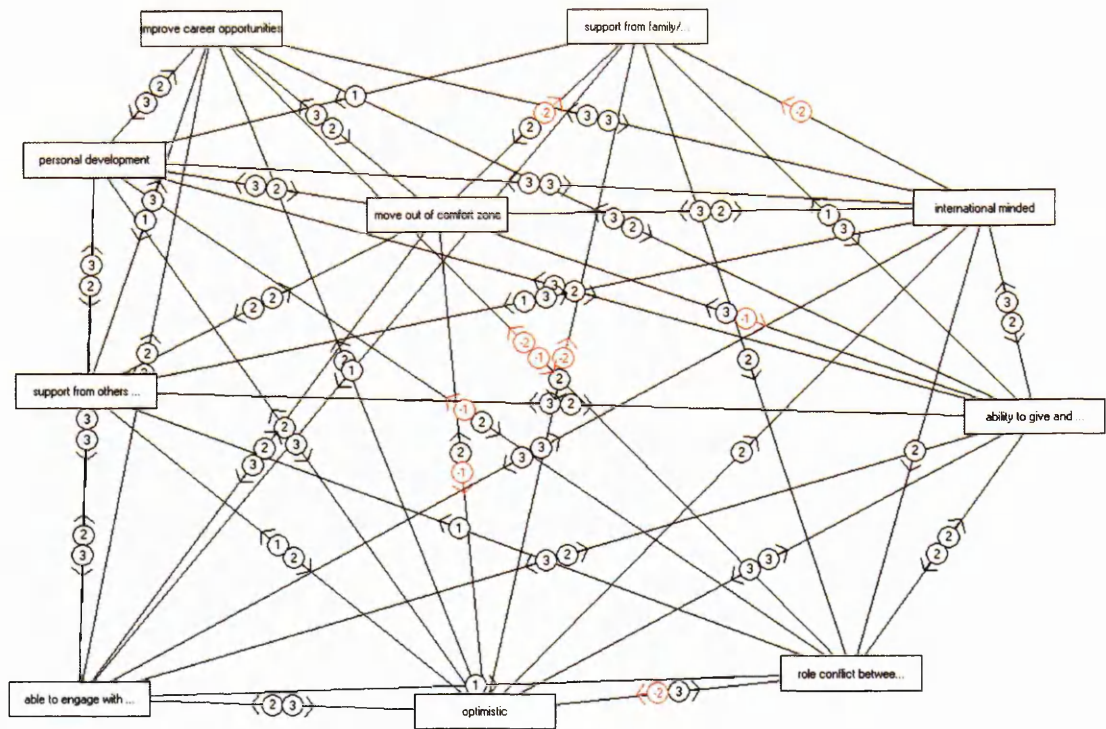
Figure 6-8: Sarah's causal map

Except for *role conflict between home office and posting* the other constructs all focus on her development. There were a large number of red links appearing in her map, thus deconstruction of the map to clarify what the negative relationships were was warranted.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	8	7
support from others in community at large	8	7
support from family / important others	4	6
able to engage with people who are different	8	8
personal development	9	8
international minded (curious)	7	8
ability to give and take to get along	9	9
move out of comfort zone	8	8
role conflict between home office and posting	7	5
optimistic	7	9

Table 6-8: Sarah's map link structure

Upon deconstruction of the map several points are noticeable. Firstly, the interplay between Sarah and her family is evident. It appears her family is a positive influence on her optimism and decision to move; however, it appears from her perspective moving to

China is having a negative influence. It is noteworthy that the negative links all flow in the same direction and the positive flow in the opposite direction. This situation is repeated in relation to the *construct move out of comfort zone*; she is receiving positive influences in the form of family support, her optimism and her ability to give take to get along. Interestingly the interrelationship forms a cycle.

The second point of interest is the negative-positive interplay repeats itself in relation to the construct *role conflict between home office and posting*. The final point is, the lynchpin construct appears to be her *optimism*. It is the only construct linked to the person and the organization.

Sarah stated in her interview she had wanted to work internationally ever since her being in boarding school in Sunderland and in order to arrive in China she actively pursued an international assignment. The other point to note is the effect that the construct *role conflict between home and head office* was having on her experience.
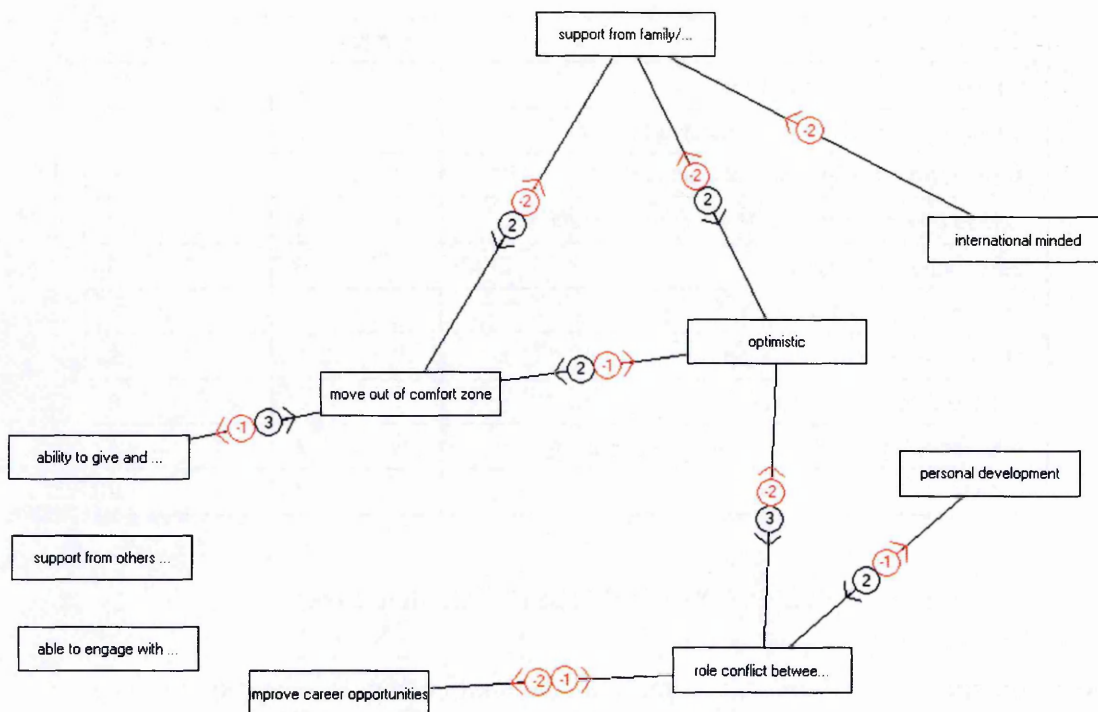
Figure 6-9: Sarah core map

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Both the core and the overall map of Sarah's suggest support networks are important to her *support from others in the community at large* (ID= 1.63, OD=2.57) and *support from family/important others* (ID= -1.25, OD=1.83) in the overall map and *support from family/important others* (ID= -2.00, OD=2.00) in the core map.

Again, when winnowed, the map highlights a link, one link between the person and the organization; in this instance it is role conflict between the home office and posting and the person constructs. She commented extensively on the lack of support to settle in. Again, a cycle seems to set up which appears to have an effect. In this map instance the personal lynch pin is her.

Again, evidence of the organization impacting on the expatriate is apparent. The direct quotes which follow indicate Sarah's focus

6.3.2.7.2 Interview

6.3.2.7.2.1 Support from family/important others

I think my family were terribly, terribly supportive about my decision to come here. ... and they acknowledged that it was something that I'd wanted to do for a long time. I have a significant other at home who was very, very supportive as well.

6.3.2.7.2.2 Support from home office, home office delivers on promises

within the organisation from a UK perspective, I think the support was... from an HR perspective the support was very limited,

Having arrived in China, again HR itself has been limited. The other expats and even locals that work for the company have been absolutely phenomenal,

6.3.2.7.2.3   Selection, PO fit: needs-supplies

I went and asked. I said I knew I always wanted to do an international assignment, I was coming to a point where I wanted to change my job and I went and I spoke to my boss that I'm interested in doing an assignment

6.3.2.7.2.4   Being female

My boss is very positive, you know; it's not an issue at all. I'll be honest, in the place where it's been the hardest is within the expat community. ... And also a lot of women socially don't work, so it can be difficult to socialise because they want to go out at lunchtime and I'm at work. So I think it's hard to find likeminded women.

To be honest with you, there are more senior women within the Asian region than there are within our worldwide and European organisations.

I think one of the key things that I know isn't one of your questions, but one of the key things is this market is so fast-moving, so large. Everyone's on their merits so for those women it's their merit and if they don't perform they will be, you know, the company will get rid of them. That's one of the things that has been quite daunting – they're ruthless.

6.3.3   ChinAM Air

The following participants were employed by an American Chinese aircraft MNE joint venture. The organization was the only one in which politics, national security, and history played a role in its operations.

6.3.3.1 John

John (BA, JD) was the CFO and as he described himself, the 'sheriff' seconded to Shanghai to watch out for the American partner's interest in the joint venture. Having

worked in international business for years, usually flying into and leaving within days or hours of doing business, he finally had the opportunity to live his dream of living internationally and he had been in Shanghai on his first expatriate assignment for approximately one and a half years. He was very certain this would be his only international assignment.

The selection process was, in theory rigorous; however, John socialized with several of the panel members so 'the fix was in' as he said. John expressed very passionately his disdain about the lack of support from the home office.

With him in Shanghai were his wife and daughter and as we got to know each other, he spoke passionately about his family's struggle to reach their decision to move to China as a family. His other concern was the fear that the China posting would lead to early retirement as international assignments were not considered valuable career development moves within his organization.

6.3.3.1.1 Map

Table 6-9 indicates seven of ten constructs are person oriented. Most important to him are personal development and the ability to deal with people who are different. (ID=6, OD=6 respectively). Local expat advice was selected as one of his top 10 constructs, yet, was not linked to anything
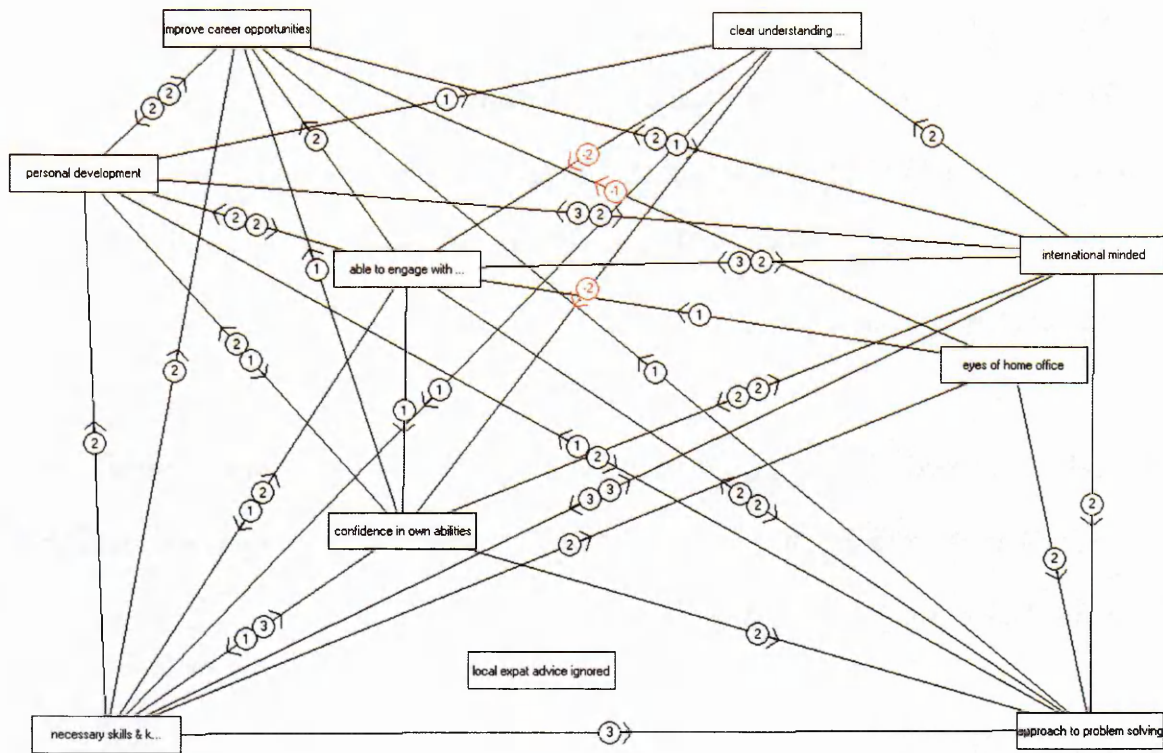
Figure 6-10: John's causal map

.John identified three negative influences in his map; they related to issues with his organization, it would appear. Firstly, he enjoyed his adventure; however, he did not have a clear understanding of what was expected of him. This was made clear in our general getting to know each other, his map, and his formal post-map interview. It would appear this was a negative link (-2) and was undermining his *confidence*. It would appear this lack of understanding was also exerting a meaningful negative influence (-2) on his *ability to engage with people who are different*. The other negative influence was the relation between being the *eyes of the home office* and *improving his career opportunities*.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	7	2
confidence in one' abilities	5	5
able to engage with people who are different	6	6
clear understanding of why on assignment	2	3
personal development	6	6
international minded (curious)	5	7
approach to problem solving	6	3
eyes of home office	1	3
necessary skills and knowledge	4	7
local expat advice ignored (selected but not linked)	0	0

Table 6-9: John's map link structure
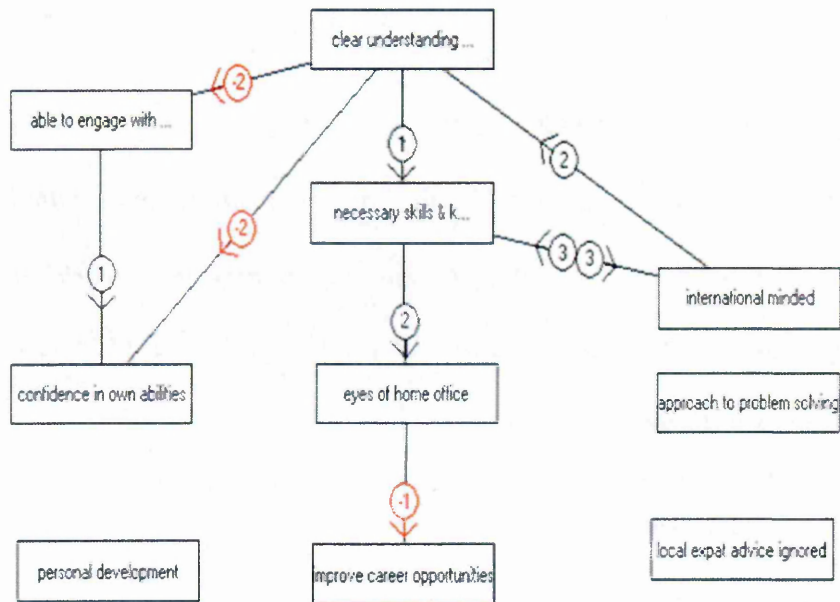
Figure 6-11: John map reduced

Following are quotes that reflect issues important to John.

6.3.3.1.2   Interview

6.3.3.1.2.1   Career development, necessary skills and knowledge, PO fit: needs-supply, PO fit: demand-abilities, selection process

the company needed somebody to come and replace the CFO of our local joint

venture, and I was interested in an overseas assignment and was in need of an

assignment and so it worked out very nicely.

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Absolutely, so the company's perspective, they needed someone who had enough of an understanding of finance but was able to protect the company's interests with a background in law and developing the business

it was a mix; I was formally interviewed by two people within ChinAmAir and then it kind of went into an informal phase in the company. Where they normally do these group interviews, I did not have to go through those because I was an executive in need of a position and I was qualified, and so they put me in. (In the informal discussions, he talked of how he knew people on the interview panel.)

6.3.3.1.2.2 Logistical support from home office

So ChinAmAir would think that they have an organisation that's called Global Mobility that would help anybody going to any country in the world; it's interesting it hasn't come up in our conversation yet, but they're horrid, [?] I basically had to figure out everything on my own.

6.3.3.1.2.3 Clear understanding of why on assignment

challenges, well the business challenge, you know, we're just not being successful in the market place honestly that is the biggest anchor.

6.3.3.1.2.4 My family's adjustment, ability to deal with frustrations

Some of the personal challenges are time away from my family, I mentioned I started in January and my family didn't join [?] me 'til August. I'm now back here, I got back the July 18th and I won't, I'll see my family again for a quick trip in September but my wife isn't rejoining me 'til October.

6.3.3.2 Elizabeth

Elizabeth (MBA) who was from America was the Director of Training and Development for China operations. She was nearing the end of her assignment in China and facing repatriation which had brought her to a personal cross-road. Although she had travelled extensively internationally with her work, China was her first expatriate assignment. She had lived in China for over two years and expressed her desire to stay in China. Like other single professional women in this sample she talked about the difficulty of making female friends.

6.3.3.2.1 Map

She had found support, although promised by the home office, weak; she also felt the home office could make more effort to accommodate their needs. For example, meetings were based on Seattle time which was a 15 hour time difference, 10 AM Seattle = 1 AM Shanghai..

Table 6-10 indicates the most important overall construct was her *ability to deal with frustration* (ID=9, OD=6). The two other important constructs were *discretion to adjust roles and methods as necessary* and *understand the political dynamic of host country co-workers* (ID=7, ID=7). As reflected in her map above and her interview, the relationship *discretion to adjust roles and methods as necessary* → *co-workers/employees willingness to make decisions*, was an issue she struggled with.
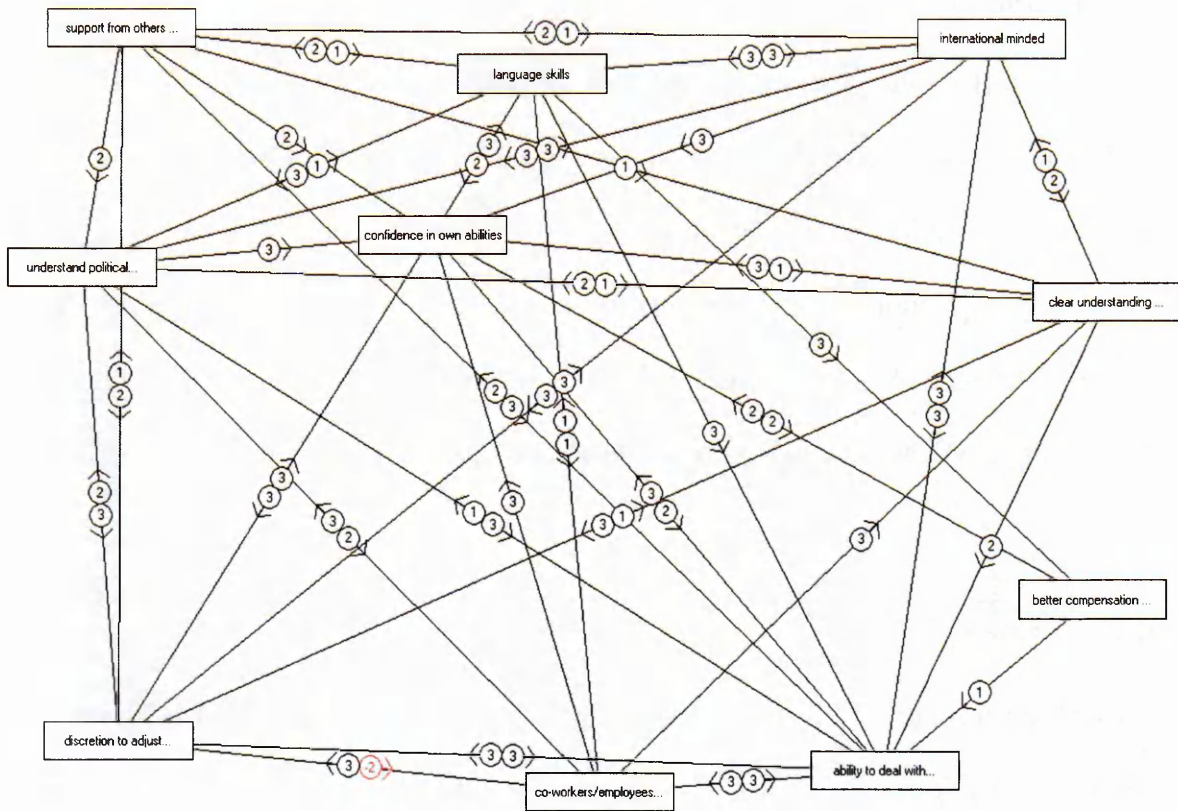
Figure 6-12: Elizabeth's causal map

The most central constructs influenced by the other selected constructs were her *ability to deal with frustration* and *confidence in one's abilities* (ID=9). It is notable that she identified a cluster of five constructs that all equally influenced the other constructs (OD=7).

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
language skills	5	7
support from others in community at large	4	7
ability to deal with frustrations	9	6
confidence in one' abilities	9	5
clear understanding of why on assignment	6	5
better compensation opportunities	2	2
international minded (curious)	6	7
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	4	6
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	7	7
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	7	7

Table 6-10: Elizabeth's map link structure

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Following are quotes from Elizabeth's interview highlighting the issues important to her.

6.3.3.2.2 Interview

6.3.3.2.2.1 Ability to deal with frustrations, role conflict between home office and posting

negatives are the time difference between us and our home country. The issue that you brought up about, you know, needing to be up in the middle of the night to participate in telecons, a lot of burden put on the expats here. It's not a give and take. No one in Seattle stays up in the middle of the night and yet we're required to quite often. So, that is a strain.

And then I think the other thing that is a negative in the company, it seems like if we're not there to sort of reinforce the training or the systems or procedures that we put in place, it gets dropped immediately and it's forgotten, like sometimes every day.

6.3.3.2.2.2 Willingness to make decisions, ability to deal with·frustration, understand the political dynamics of host country workers, optimism

There's a big difference, not in that particular issue but the older, especially if they've worked for the government-owned entities, there's a real reluctance to take responsibility for anything or actually be given an assignment and they're masters at somehow deflecting that and it's been explained to me by other locals here that there is this fear and that if you knew something you could be criticised, which can be quite dire, and so you're best to stay out of vision and not do anything and so...

I think that any kind of suggestions that we give are received very positively. Not always followed but... or it doesn't always stick but they're very courteous and very

respectful. The other thing is that I see... The other positive is really seeing that I have involvement here and that the work that I'm doing is valuable.

6.3.3.2.2.3 Ability to deal with frustrations, logistical support from HO

So, the support from the home office for the project I think could be better. It's sort of, well, those people are out there, they'll take care of it and some of the resources that we ask for, sort of out of sight, out of mind.

No, there was no support, really, for how to find an apartment, how to find a bank or anything like that, that kind of thing. Now they've hired an agency. So, it was really, you know, the off-desk [?] was available to kind of help show the ropes and that kind of thing and... Maybe another one of the frustrating things is the people that make the policies and guidelines and, you know, restrict, you know, your allowances, that kind of thing, that can... Our home country have never travelled, probably don't even have a passport and so really it's kind of a fight to explain, you know, how difficult things are and how, you know, you need a little bit of different...

6.3.3.2.2.4 Ability to deal with frustration, optimism, logistical support from HO

Do you find that talk with them is changing anything or not really?

EL   No, not at all. And recently, like in the last couple of weeks, we've had a change of personnel that I think will be positive but in the past it's been expats are out to rape the company for money, you know, and take advantage of the situation.

6.3.3.2.2.5 Previous experience, ability to deal with frustration

I think the biggest advantage I had was extensive business travel, you know, and international travel for business before for a long period of time. So, I think

somebody, you know, moving over... I would really be worrying about somebody

that hadn't had exposure

think that having support and having that outlet to sort of chuckle and laugh at how

different things are and sometimes frustrating.

having things your own way and getting upset about it... You know, it's been, you

know, my experience that if you can kind of laugh and see the interesting part of it,

6.3.3.2.2.6   Language skills, international minded, able to engage with people who are

different, move out of comfort zone

I think just letting go and become curious would be one. If you can come at it with

a attitude of curiosity first and foremost and then learning a little bit, even a couple

of words of language and having the courage to speak them to foreigners, even if

you sound terrible, it's a way of breaking the ice and, you know, they get a chance

to laugh at you and they're not intimidated and it's a way of building a

relationship.

6.3.3.3 Roger

Roger (Bachelor degree) was the American Director of Sales and Marketing for China. He

had been in China for approximately two years and his repatriation was imminent. Roger

was single and facing retirement in two years upon his repatriation at the end of his three

year secondment. He had no regrets about his choice to expatriate to China in lieu of career

advancement.

6.3.3.3.1 Map

Roger's most central constructs were *personal development* and *optimistic (ID=8, OD=8).*

A third ID (ID=8) of *top importance was move out of comfort zone.* Again, there was a

cluster of five constructs identified as exerting equal influence on the other selected

constructs OD=8) (Table 6-11).
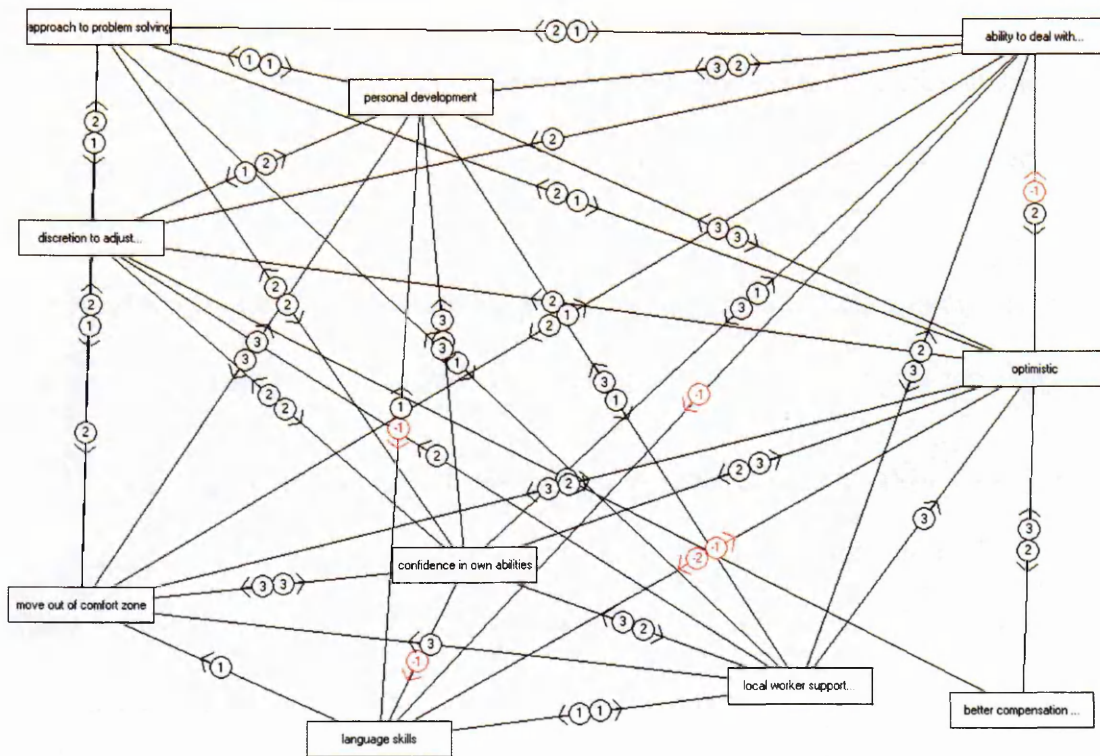
Figure 6-13: Roger's causal map

Exploration of Roger's map is very instructive when incorporated with his response to the

satisfaction survey and interview. He expressed real enjoyment with his assignment. Roger

was a very optimistic person looking to learn and develop. As he reflected, moving out of

his comfort zone and challenging himself was very important to him.

Roger also talked about the challenges of working with the Chinese and the

intergenerational changes that were occurring; it was complex. He described culture as a

reason for reticence in decision making; however, it was culture through the lens of the

Cultural Revolution as an explanation for the unwillingness to make decisions. This

echoed Peter's observation. Finally, Roger also reported home office support was limited.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
language skills	5	4
local worker support in host country	5	8
ability to deal with frustrations	6	8
confidence in one' abilities	7	8
personal development	8	8
better compensation opportunities	2	1
approach to problem solving	7	7
move out of comfort zone	8	5
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	6	5
optimistic	8	8

Table 6-11: Roger's map link structure

Despite his positive situation, there is enough red in his map to warrant deconstruction to explore his issues. Deconstruction appears to suggest language was at the core of his issues; Roger was learning Chinese. It is noteworthy, the negative cycle that has formed in the ability to deal with *frustration → language skill → optimistic* triad. A second negative cycle appears to be forming in the *language skills → optimistic → confidence* triad.
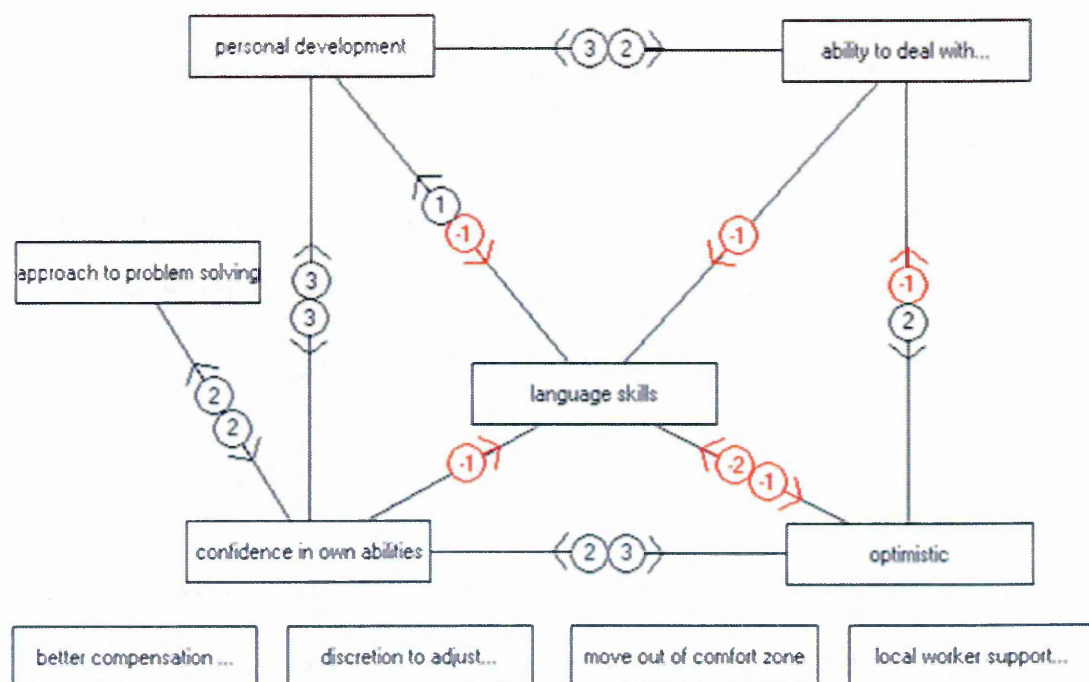
Figure 6-14: Roger's map reduced to highlight issue

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From the exploration of these maps value is added in that one can trace the sequences and patterns.

Following are quotes from his interview highlighting his concerns. It is noteworthy how little mention is made of language in the interview.

6.3.3.3.2 Interview

6.3.3.3.2.1   Logistical support from home office

I have been coming over to Shanghai ... since about 2002 or 2003, so over that time I did develop some friendships with local people. So when I actually moved over here I already had a very, very small support group that was local. So that was a very positive experience for me.

ChinAmAir has relocation services and so they're designed to help you settle in. I can't say that ChinAmAir does a spectacular job.

6.3.3.3.2.2   Move out of comfort zone, personal development, confidence, PO fit: needs-supplies

what's critical is that I continue to push the envelope and move myself out of my comfort zone, which was one of the primary reasons I took this assignment. You know, I'm 63 years old; I had a choice to make. I could skate till retirement or I could stimulate myself. So I chose the latter.

think it would be to do things, both in your personal life and in your professional life that put you in situations that are not comfortable. You know, once you've gone through that you'll develop confidence. And once you develop confidence in your

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abilities then you'll be able to focus on where you want to go with your career, and that opens doors for you.

6.3.3.3.2.3 Local worker support in host country

One positive is the people. One negative is the people. In general, people are spectacular - and I'm speaking of our Chinese co-workers – very intelligent. The negative part is, and I think it's a generational thing, if you take someone in their 40s or 50s whose primary work experience had been previously with a State-owned organisation, their outlook, their attitude and their sense of responsibility are far different from a younger generation that's had Western experience

6.3.3.3.2.4 Approach to problem solving, discretion to adjust methods as necessary

And with the workaround is you develop a personal relationship with these people. And you do have like dinners and drinking, you know, giving them face and all of that kind of good stuff. So... But we, as an American leadership, don't have the relationship that we would like to have with certain government officials that control our destiny.

From my perspective it's more difficult with government officials, because you can do simple things with airline executives. One example is we're trying to get to see the Chairman of an airline here and the date that we want to see him, he's taking an inaugural flight, it's a new route they're opening up, so the suggestion was he can't meet with you, but you would go a long way if you sent him congratulatory flowers on the inaugural flight. Okay. And that gets you mileage

6.3.4 CanSingIndustrial:

The following study participants were all employed by a Singaporean SME which specialized in manufacturing medical products such as mobility scooters and bariatric equipment. Except for the Managing Director, the participants are Singaporean.

6.3.4.1 Bill

Bill (BA), the Canadian Managing Director, had been sent to Shanghai from Hong Kong over 10 years ago to develop new business opportunities for his organization. For Bill, moving to Shanghai was about his career development. With his Singapore based organization, he had previous secondments in Hong Kong and Thailand.
While in China, he met his wife and now has two children.

6.3.4.1.1 Map

Exploration of Table 6-12 indicates the most central construct is *move out of comfort zone (ID=9, OD=)* and was followed closely buy *confidence in one's abilities* (ID=7, OD=8) and *ability to deal with frustration* (ID=6, OD=9). *Move out of comfort zone (ID=9)* was most influenced by other constructs, whereas, his ability to deal with *frustrations (OD=9)* was the most influencing construct on other constructs.
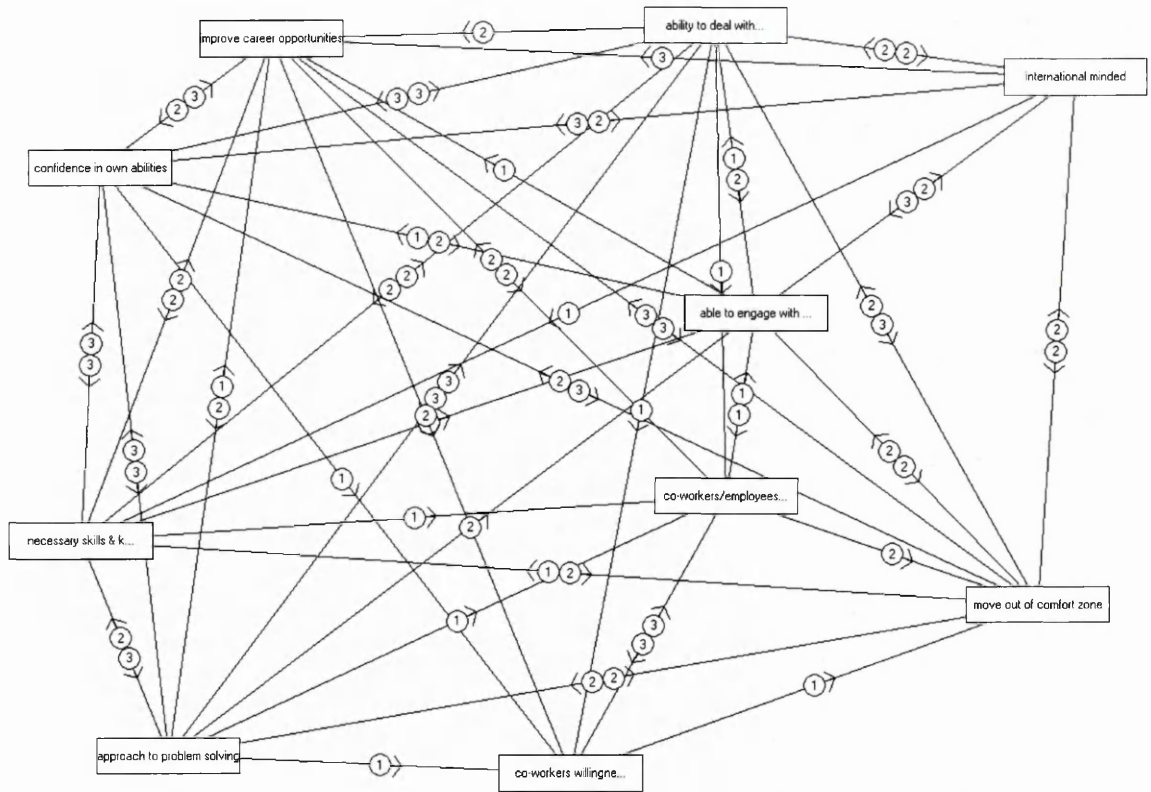
Figure 6-15: Bill's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	8	6
ability to deal with frustrations	6	9
confidence in one' abilities	7	8
able to engage with people who are different	7	6
international minded (curious)	4	6
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	6	4
approach to problem solving	5	8
move out of comfort zone	9	7
necessary skills and knowledge	6	7
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	5	2

Table 6-12: Bill's map link structure

Following are quotes from Bill's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.4.1.2 Interview

6.3.4.1.2.1 PO fit: demands-abilities

I am in Shanghai because the boss, Philip Ong from Singapore, asked me to come up to Shanghai to look for opportunities, and while I was in Shanghai, we had the opportunity to start up a manufacturing company

6.3.4.1.2.2 Support and settling in

RO   What about the day-to-day settling in, such as housing, medical...?

BI   Off the plane, on your own.

... There's no formal system, no.

6.3.4.1.2.3 Improve career opportunities, reason for being in China, PO fit: needs supply, PO fit: demand-abilities

it's a growing China market with opportunities.

Shanghai and some of the emerging markets are probably going to be seeing the best growth in the way forward. So, a lot of it was opportunities in Shanghai as a positive. Shanghai is quite a cosmopolitan, easy place to live relative to other places in China. ...It's a very positive environment. It's very much a can-do environment even though it's a socialist country with a heavy government involvement in their planning and structures.

6.3.4.1.2.4 Ability to deal with frustrations, knowledge and skills, co-workers willingness to make decisions

That middle level is going to be a big constraint on their growth in the country, as we're seeing ourselves. Hiring good quality middle managers is very difficult right now with the skill sets and the openness and the capability of decision making via the ownership.

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6.3.4.1.2.5 Co-workers willingness to make decisions, co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions made, necessary skills and knowledge

Challenges today I am finding on the business perspective, which obviously relates directly to me, being the managing director, are challenges of getting local talents and keeping local talents. That's a huge issue. .

6.3.4.1.2.6 Ability to deal with frustration, co-workers willingness to make decisions, understand political dynamics of host country co-workers, Chinese organization structure

Creating cliques within the company. It's very much a social clique based on strengthening their own positions. Controlling information... very much we find today that certain supervisory and managerial levels don't like to share information. As one of my colleague directors calls it, it's like the kung fu master will teach the nine steps, but they won't teach you the tenth because... to keep that person below them from being a challenge to them.

6.3.4.1.2.7 PO fit: demands-abilities (from employers perspective), understand the political dynamic of host country co-workers

Most locals to ex-pats – depending on the position – will try to challenge them and test the ex-pat. They all know they're coming in at a higher salary level and higher benefit package, so whether it's your IT guy coming in, people will try to test them on the MRP programs, just to test their knowledge and capability. On the local side, I think there's some jealousy toward some and some lack of cooperativeness. I think it's both ways because some come in too condescending and look down or take the stereotypes and embellish them too much. I think some come in very willing and work well with the local staff. It's really a mixed bag. I think it's more of an individual than a cross ex-pat relationship aspect. We have an American ex-pat who comes for one month in China, one month in America. He works very well

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with the locals because he passes on all the technical knowledge. So, the smart

technical ones in our company know to go to him. They'll get as much information

from him as possible. It's mixed. I can't say our successes have been huge with

our ex-pats. Some have been very good and some have been very weak.

6.3.4.1.2.8 Co-workers willingness to make decisions, co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions made, ability to deal with frustration, inter-generational change, culture similarity

I do think overall you're getting a bit of a generational opening up. They're

thinking more and are willing to make decisions. I think it's socio-politically of

recent times, the last 50 years. You don't want to take on responsibility, because if

it goes negative, your head is on the chopping block both figuratively and literally.

Who wants to take on that type of responsibility?

I think it exists in other countries too. My biggest customer is American. I

regularly find that more and more the present culture in the company today – not

ten years ago – is, I won't make a decision. It's all CYA – cover my ass – on

decisions. It's very easy to put off making decisions. Even the people that are in

charge... or deflecting the decision by requesting a test or something else so they

don't have to make that decision. There's different ways of looking at it. That's

definitely one of the biggest factors here for the impeding growth.

didn't hire anybody over 40 years old. We didn't want in ten years' time for them

to all be over 50 now. Their educational background – both society-wide

education, social education, and academic education – was in such a controlled

environment. Don't make decisions and so forth. You don't want those people in

your organisation. You can't grow with them, so we purposely had people who

were younger, more eager, more open, but with that comes less skill and less capability sometimes.

6.3.4.1.2.9   Move out of comfort zone, international minded, people are similar

I think it's good that people go overseas. We all talk about the global village. I think more people should be more open to going. A holiday to the Caribbean is nice. Backpacking across Europe is a good first start. Anything like that opens people's minds to realising, everyone talks about the differences, but there's more things that are common and holding us together, more similarities than there are differences. I strongly encourage people to do a stint overseas.

I think a lot of people focus on the differences, because as you mentioned earlier, you get into the pub and coffeehouse conversations and everybody starts... you're in your own safety enclave of people in similar positions, backgrounds, countries, and so forth, and the other ones are different out there. The Chinese or the Thai... pick a group and work [unclear]. Everyone makes the jokes about the differences. It's very easy to get caught up in that. If you go the other way... you can still make the jokes and everything. That's fine, but you have to be broad-minded enough that when you're dealing with your colleagues in your company, you have to find some similarity. It's extremely important.

6.3.4.2 LP

LP (Diploma) who was from Singapore was sent by his organization to Shanghai 10 years ago. He was the senior manager in charge of the organization's ICT. This was his only international posting and he gave no in indication as to any family with him.

6.3.4.2.1 Map

Exploration of Table 6-13 suggests the most central construct is *improve career opportunities (ID=7, OD=6)*. This is followed closely by the constructs *confidence in one's abilities (ID=7, OD=5)* and *engage with people who are different (ID=6, OD=6)*. Again, overwhelmingly, the constructs identified as most central to his satisfaction are person oriented constructs.
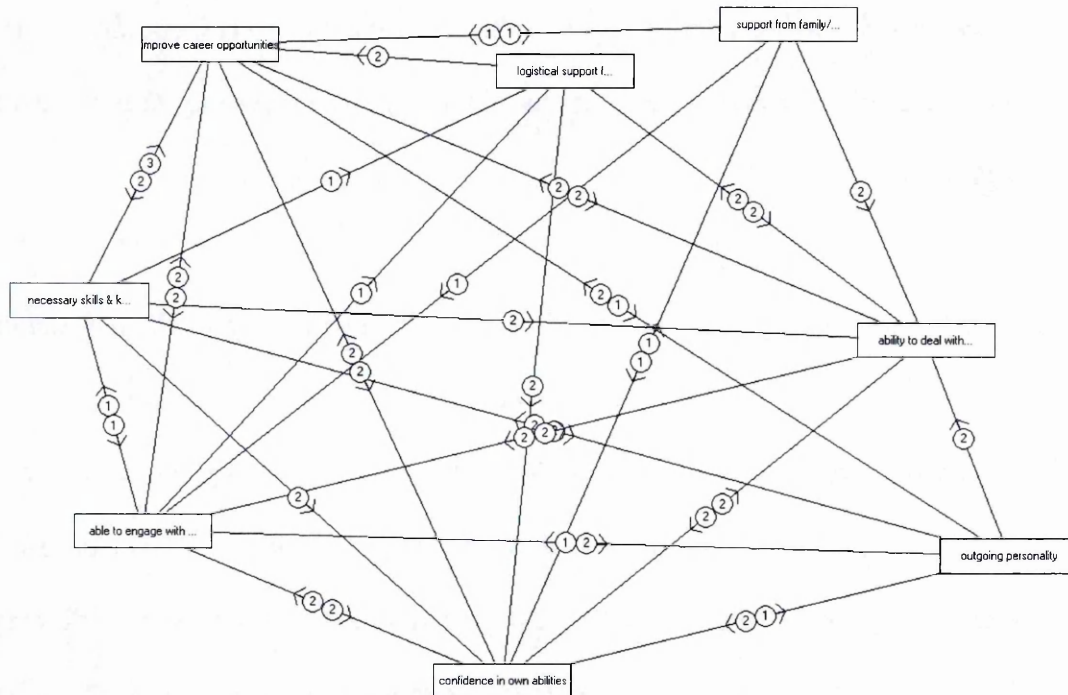
Figure 6-16: LP's complete causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	7	6
ability to deal with frustrations	7	4
support from family / important others	2	4
confidence in one' abilities	7	5
able to engage with people who are different	6	6
logistical support from home office	3	3
outgoing personality	4	5
necessary skills and knowledge	3	6

Table 6-13: LP's map link structure

Following are quotes from LP's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.4.2.2 *Interview*

6.3.4.2.2.1 Improve career opportunities, PO fit: demands-abilities, PO fit: needs-supplies

I looking for the job opportunity, so Shanghai is one of my, I can say, assignments

from the home office, yes.

More important but I think for me it's the career advancement, and enhance my

working experience with a different culture, and different people. Yes, basically

throughout my whole life what do I try for.

6.3.4.2.2.2 Ability to deal with people who are different

...think first of all the culture is quite similar with Singapore, the Chinese culture.

So the living environment, living standard, is also quite a similar place with

Singapore. So I think it's major consideration, factor.

6.3.4.3 *Gary*

Gary (Diploma) was Singaporean and sent to Shanghai as the purchasing manager as an

alternative to redundancy and had been at the operations in Shanghai for less than six

months. With him in China was his spouse. Although he did not state the locations or

context, Gary had three previous international postings.
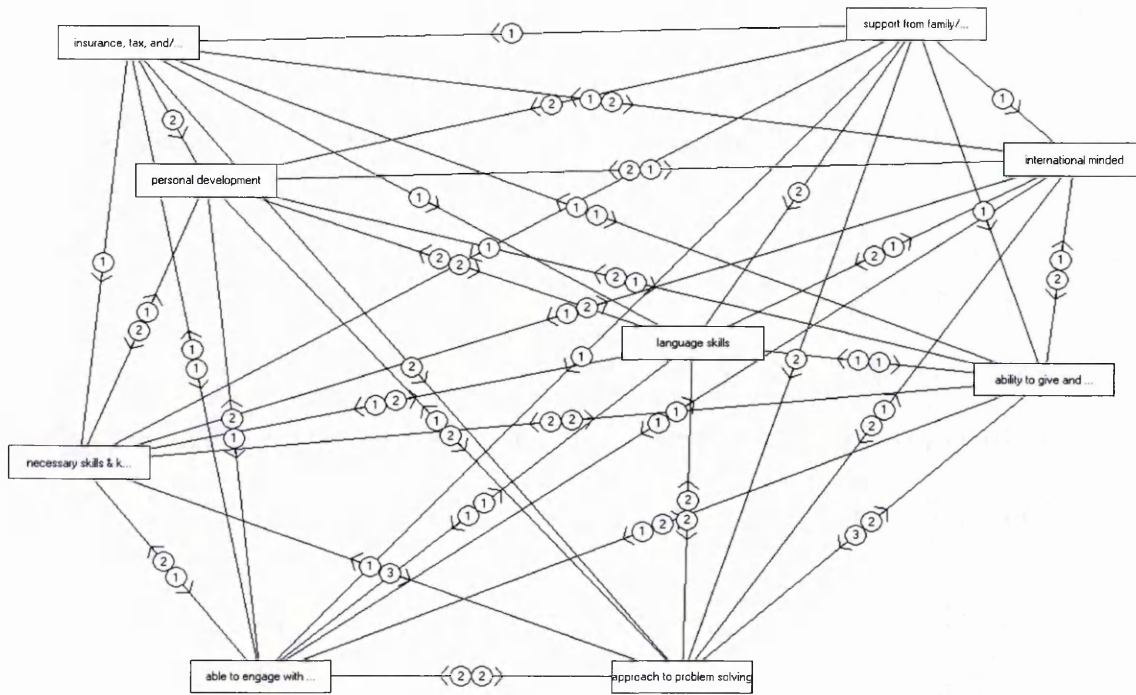
Figure 6-17: Gary's map complete

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
insurance / pension concerns	4	7
language skills	8	6
able to engage with people who are different	8	7
personal development	8	6
international minded (curious)	8	7
necessary skills and knowledge	8	6
approach to problem solving	8	6
ability to give and take to get along	8	7
support from family / important others	0	8

Table 6-14: Gary's map link structure

Table 6-14 suggests Gary considers *able to engage with people who are different* (ID=8, OD=7), *international minded* (curious), *ability to give and take to get along* (ID=8, OD=7) the most central constructs to his satisfaction. Only nine constructs were selected by Gary

and he indicates all the constructs are influenced by each other except *support from family/important others*. However, *support from family/important others* influences every other construct. Again, all the constructs are person oriented towards his improvement.

Following are quotes from LP's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.4.3.2 *Interview*

6.3.4.3.2.1 Reason for being in China, PO fit: demands-abilities, PO fit: needs-supplies

move together with the business, so we came here to China, was posted by the company, with this company, so for the past year to handle more of the projects.

6.3.4.3.2.2 Able to engage wit people who are different, international minded

China is a very special country. It's a bit different from where we come from. Although it's a communist country, so a bit of difference from what we come from. So when you come here you probably have to know more about the culture, you know, the way the locals do things.

6.3.4.4 *Patrick*

Patrick (BSEE), was the Singaporean client service manager who had worked in Shanghai for the past 2 and one half years. Patrick had no significant other with him and had been on three previous international assignments, two in China and one in America.

6.3.4.4.1 Map
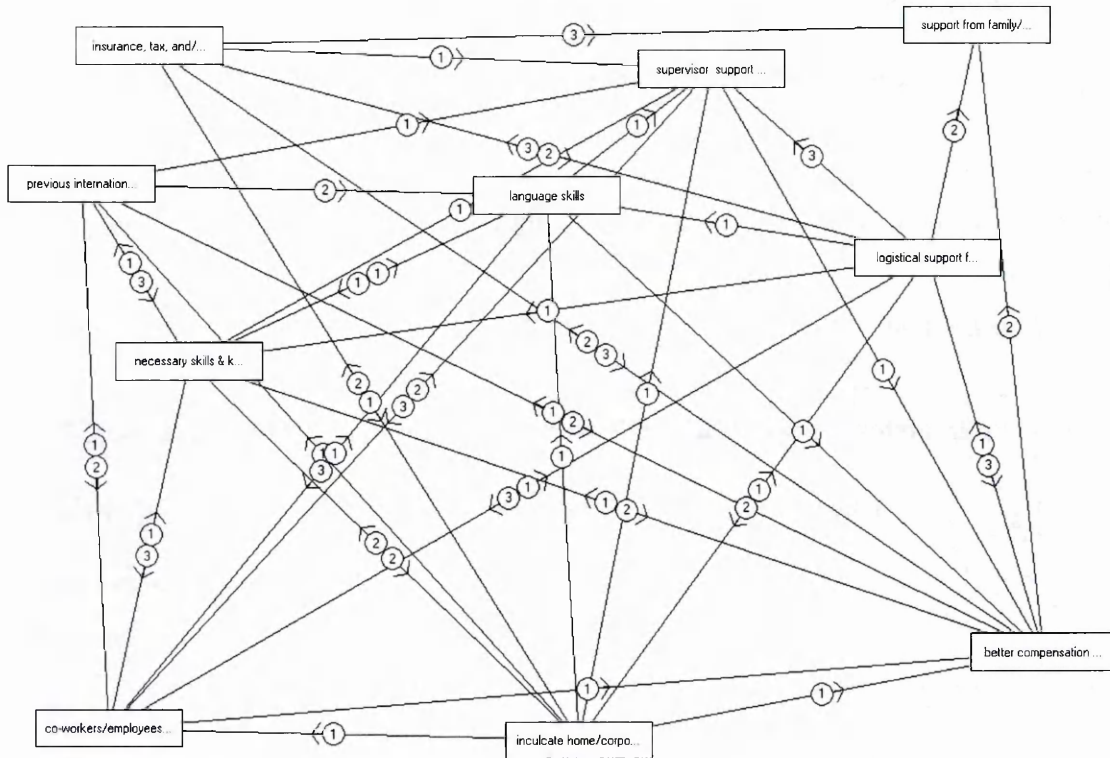
Figure 6-18: Patrick's map complete

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
language skills	5	4
insurance / pension concerns	3	5
supervisor support in host country	7	2
previous international experience	4	5
logistical support from home office	4	8
better compensation opportunities	8	5
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	6	6
inculcate home/corporate expectations/culture	3	8
necessary skills and knowledge	6	6
support from family / important others	3	0

Table 6-15: Patrick's map link structure

Most central to Patrick was better compensation opportunities (ID=8, OD=5), reinforcing

this financial theme was his inclusion of insurance/pension concerns. The organization

culture and support of from the home office were influencing every other construct selected (OD=8 respectively).

Following are quotes from Patrick's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.4.4.2 Interview

6.3.4.4.2.1 Necessary skills and knowledge, career development, PO fit: needs-supplies

I used to work in engineering so my previous background is very structured, …So I did the one course brush up to air freight …and [unclear] to R and D and development which gives me another aspect of… another different perspective of development, career development. And this project or this client service manager position gives me another totally different aspect … So it actually gives me quite a more rounded experience, and I would think this job actually also gives me the opportunity when I… if I ever happen to go back, to actually broaden my opportunities when I apply for a job.

6.3.4.4.2.2 Supervisor support in host country

I find that local companies such as… usually have some structure or system that are not clearly defined, and roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined, and problems arise because systems fail. So I would think in SP is no different. There's a lot of system fail because there's roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined.

6.3.4.4.2.3 Insurance/ pension concerns

The other issue that I deal with which is very, very important is medical [unclear]. I've been in many companies, medical is a basic necessity. Probably here is not defined. When I get sick I'm very worried because…

I'm a foreign man, there's no more family to take care. So that is a big problem.

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6.3.4.4.2.4 Language skills, necessary knowledge and skills i.e. set example, PO fit: demands-abilities

most important of course the person needs to start learning the language and to start learning the culture of the [unclear]. So the first thing you need to do. Secondly the other thing you need to do, because the person will be an ex-patriot, the incumbent must be able to set an example, you know. He must be able to say for example, show that he or she is better in terms of skill level, or that there is recommendations and suggestions to help the [unclear] improve, or to... there must be value that the person can bring

6.3.4.5 Winston

Winston (BSc) was a Singaporean who was in Shanghai with his wife and was employed as the Quality Assurance Manager. He had been in the organization for three and a half years and Winston had three previous international secondments.

6.3.4.5.1 Map

Winston's map is sparser in its link structure than most maps and contains organization oriented constructs. Table 6-16 indicates the constructs most central to him is his *approach to problem solving* (ID=6, OD=6) followed closely by *co-workers willingness to make decisions* (ID=6, OD=5). It is interesting, yet no explanation is available regarding the inclusion of *support from family/important others* as one of the most influential links yet it is not linked to any other construct. As with other maps because of the number of red links, the map was deconstructed to explore the issues.
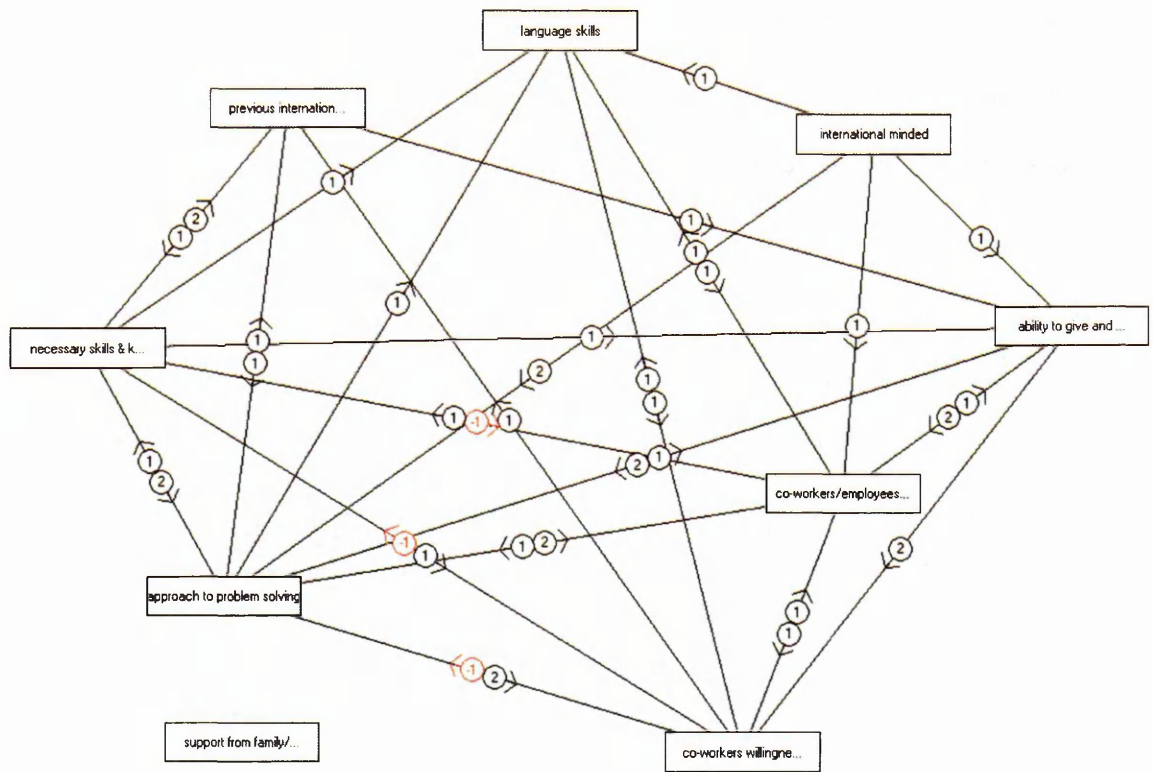
Figure 6-19: Winston's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
language skills	5	2
previous international experience	3	3
international minded (curious)	0	4
support from family / important others	0	0
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	6	5
ability to give and take to get along	5	3
approach to problem solving	6	6
necessary skills and knowledge	4	6
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	5	5

Table 6-16: Winston's map link structure

Reduction of the map to highlight the negative relationships suggests the issue focuses around decision making and problem solving in the organization. Most significant is the *co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make* was negatively influencing the *necessary skills and knowledge* and this was negatively influencing to *co-*

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workers willingness to make decisions. Alternately, *approach to problem solving* was

negatively influenced by *co-workers willingness to accept responsibility for decisions they*

make. As in other maps the negative relationships appear to be related to some aspect of

the organization, in this instance the co-workers behaviour. Secondly, again it appears

cyclical.
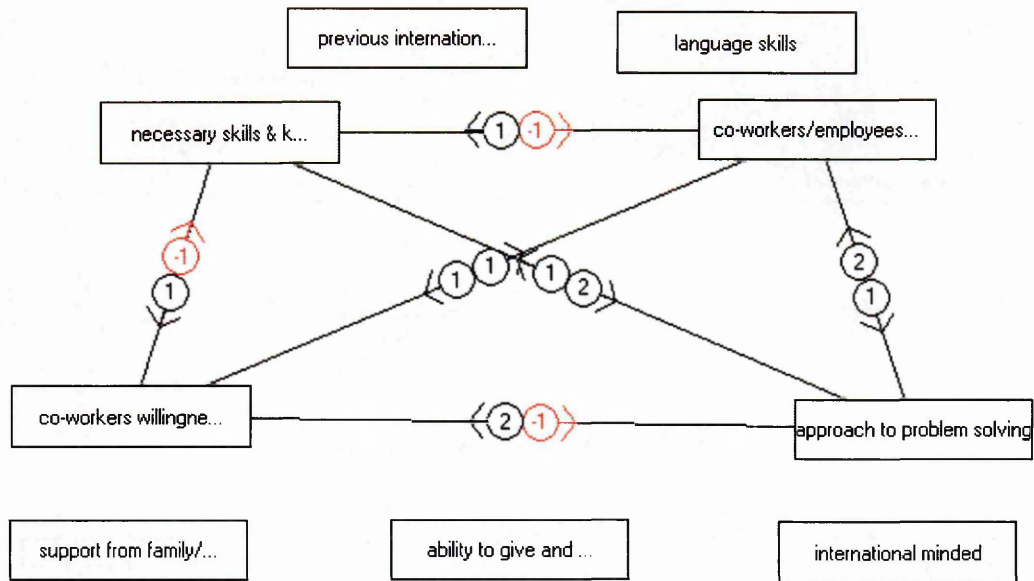
Figure 6-20: Winston's map reduced

Following are quotes from Winston's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.4.5.2 Interview

6.3.4.5.2.1   Career opportunities, PO fit: needs-supplies

Basically it's bread and butter issues. In my family, I'm the only one that's working

in the family. So if I can support, I will need a job

For me basically it's bread and butter. For me in a sense, I have been working for

almost 30 odd years, so I would say that I'm over my peak period. In SP Industrial

in a sense, is basically to provide the needs for the family.

6.3.4.5.2.2 International minded, personal development, PO fit: needs-supplies

And then in a way having an opportunity of working in Shanghai is good in a sense I can see more culture, more kind of people in the world itself, not only in China. I worked in Slovakia before, and also in Indonesia.

6.3.4.5.2.3 Able to give and take to get along, culture similarity, PO fit: demands-abilities

because of the kind of culture they have been sort of cultivating throughout the years, majority of the people that I've met, I don't say all, but most of them a sense are a little bit selfish, they do everything for themselves. When you are at that situation, you always have somebody [unclear]. In a sense I keep it as a secret for myself only after work that no other people should [unclear]. So in the way like the company [unclear]. I have seen for this past few years, I was in Slovakia for three years, Shanghai for two and a half; this is what I have also seen

Basically for us, ex-pats who work here, we are sharing our knowledge and our experience with them. Hopefully they can pick up experience and then they can grow, and the company will grow.

6.3.4.5.2.4 Language skills

So very important these languages to speak the languages, because in a sense they do not understand English very much.

6.3.5 From the community

The remainder of the expatriate participants were identified through a variety of sources as previously discussed and they are now introduced. These participants represent a wide cross section of backgrounds, countries, ages, education levels, job levels and both genders.

Several interviews rely on field notes as audio was unavailable due to poor quality.

6.3.5.1 Alan_Kiwi

Alan_Kiwi was a New Zealander who had been commuting from New Zealand to China on a monthly basis tasked with ensuring quality control of the garments manufactured in the factories of their suppliers. Finding it incredibly difficult to ensure quality and build relations from afar, Alan_Kiwi actively pursued a strategy of creating a fulltime office in Shanghai which would enhance the quality control objectives of the organization, yet also improve his work and life situation. Because he had developed the personal relationships with the Chinese suppliers he was selected to head up the office in Shanghai. At the time of this interview Alan, who was single, had been living in China for approximately two years and it was his first expatriate posting.

6.3.5.1.1 Map

Immediately, one notices a difference between Alan_Kiwi's map and most others. It is almost all red, that is, almost all constructs are having a negative influence. Exploration suggests an organization issue(s); however, there is still a significant amount of person level constructs. Figure 6-22 presents the deconstructed map and as can be seen because of the amount of negative relationships, little new insight is provided.
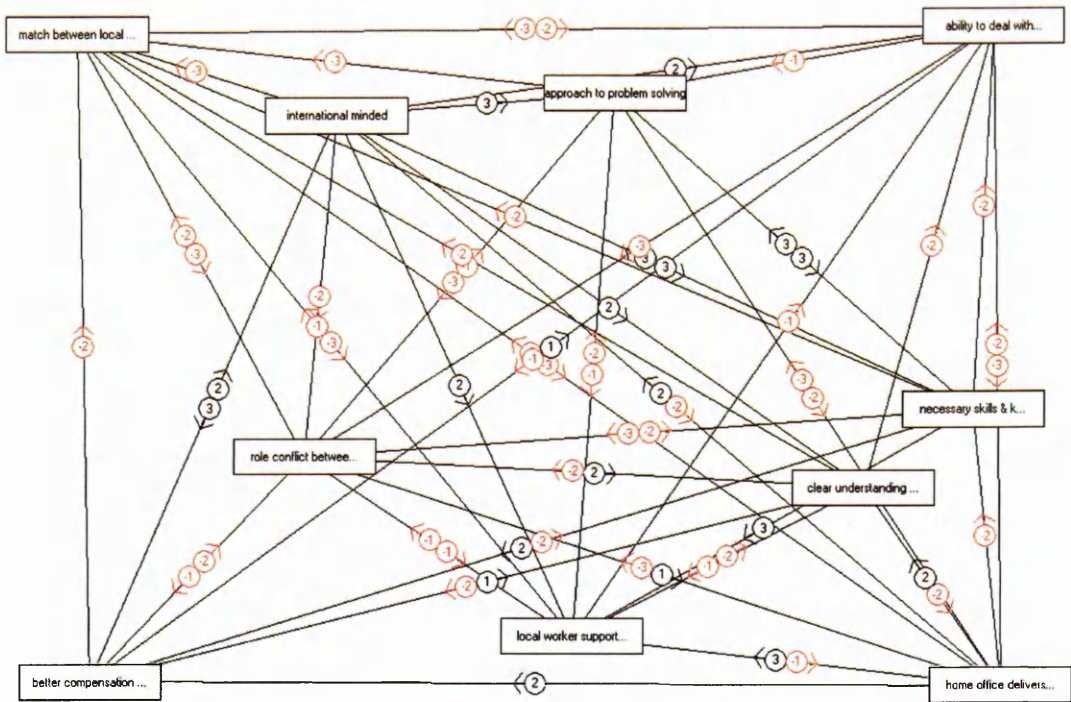
Figure 6-21: Alan_Kiwi's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
local worker support in host country	7	6
ability to deal with frustrations	7	5
clear understanding of why on assignment	5	6
international minded	6	9
approach to problem solving	3	5
necessary skills and knowledge	6	7
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	5	4
role conflict between home office and posting	9	7
home office delivers on promises	9	9
better compensation opportunities	7	6

Table 6-17: Alan_Kiwi's map link structure

Table 6-17: Alan_Kiwi's map link structure indicates the constructs most central to Alan_Kiwi's satisfaction is *home office delivers on promises* (ID=9, OD=9) followed by *role conflict between home office and posting* (ID=9, OD=7). Alan_Kiwi includes both organization and person level constructs. When considering the central ID, the constructs most influenced by other constructs are *role conflict between home office and posting* (ID=9) and *home office delivers on promises* (ID=9). The constructs identified as most

influencing other constructs and affecting his satisfaction are *home office delivers on promises* (OD=9) and *international minded* (OD=9)

Because of the complexity in attempting to determine the relative importance of the negative relationships this researcher calculated an average weight based on the number of links. This allowed the inclusion of negative and positive weightings of the links. What this calculation highlighted was *role conflict between home office and posting* appeared to be the crux of the issue as the (mean ID= -2.33 and mean OD= -2.75) which is a medium bordering on strong negative relationship. These weighted ID and OD reflect the fact this construct was identified as the most central construct in Alan_Kiwi's map.

The construct *home office delivers on promises also* was being influenced substantially (ID = -2.44) and thus Alan_Kiwi's satisfaction, yet the outward influence was a weak negative influence (OD = -.57). Also highly negative was Alan_Kiwi's *ability to deal with frustration* (OD= -2.2); he was not able to.
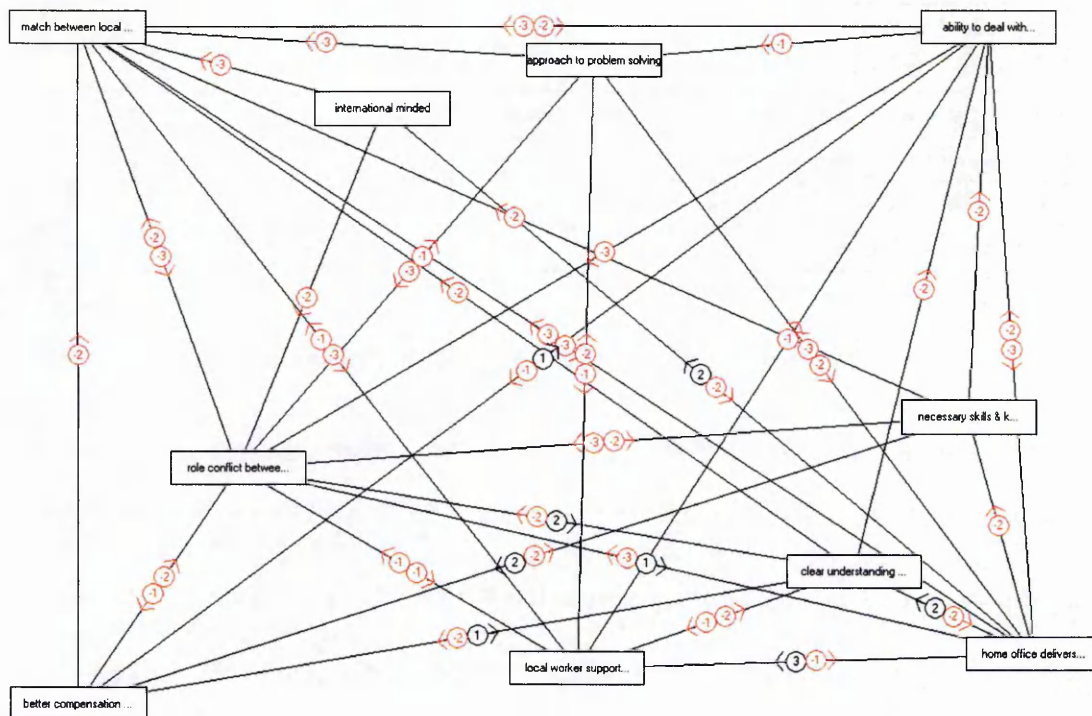
Figure 6-22: Alan_Kiwi map reduced

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
local worker support in host country	7	6
ability to deal with frustrations	7	5
clear understanding of why on assignment	5	6
international minded (curious)	6	9
approach to problem solving	3	5
necessary skills and knowledge	6	7
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	5	4
role conflict between home office and posting	9	7
home office delivers on promises	9	9
better compensation opportunities	7	6

Table 6-18: Alan_Kiwi map link structure

Following are quotes from Alan_Kiwi's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.1.2 Interview

6.3.5.1.2.1 Selection, PO fit: demand ability, PO fit: needs-supply, international minded, necessary skills and knowledge

I've been an Operations Manager for a large New Zealand sale [?] company.

We've been dealing out of China for 20 years, getting the product made here, and

I've been with the company for seven years, and for the first five years, I was

travelling to China on an average of four times a year, three weeks per trip, so I

know China very well.

About three years ago, my company decided to... disband the operations

department per se in New Zealand and set it up in China, and so in the one breath I

was made redundant, and in another I was asked would I like to take on a role in

China as Project Manager, to oversee the transition and assist with that, and also

make sure that everything continued on the way it had been with us. I accepted the

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role without any question. I really enjoyed China. I like China, so coming here to

live was not a problem for me.

6.3.5.1.2.2 Clear understanding of why on assignment, eyes of home office

my job was to make sure we were choosing the right suppliers, and forming good

relationships with the big suppliers, we have a good quality, but at the same time,

making sure that the costs were competitive, they were reliable, all of those things,

so they could deliver on time, and I've been doing that for some time.

6.3.5.1.2.3 Support and settling in, language

My local office, okay, we had a general manager here in our office who was

Chinese but who's lived in Australia for quite some time. He was an operations

manager in Australia and got transferred here to help set up the [unclear] manager

because he speaks Chinese, and he knows, he's lived in Australia, so he was the

perfect person for the job. He was very supportive of me when I came here ....

6.3.5.1.2.4 Language, match between local knowledge and HO expectations, clarity of roles, different business practice

we have to be very, very careful to make sure that the suppliers that we use speak

good English, understand our business, and that our own people are trained to

understand the Chinese people, so how things get lost in translation, so how you

have to be very, clear in your specifications and what your requests are, that there

two meanings, two ways of taking it, all of those ways of doing business, and that's

part of the training I do with the people in New Zealand and Australia.

6.3.5.1.2.5 Ability to deal with frustration, role conflict between HO and posting

So frustrations I've had is that we've had many, many changes because of the

downsizing originally, getting rid of very, very good people we had in New Zealand

and Australia, to get the jobs done here, and then deciding to go back, now I've got

a bunch of new people back in New Zealand and Australia who do not know how it

goes and how it works and now they're having to be retrained, and my frustration

that the person now who is in control of everything, is not really interested in that

side of the business. She's not interested in making sure they have the right

training and the right understanding of the way the culture works here, how you do

business here, how easy it is to upset people here by saying the wrong things, and

how conflict has to be handled very, very differently in this country, than it does in

their own country

6.3.5.1.2.6 Match between local knowledge and HO expectations, role conflict between HO and posting

We're not, and this is one thing I've got a conflict with the current person, is

because I had to keep reminding her of the fact that we are a very, very small

company, even though she might think we're big.

6.3.5.1.2.7 Clear expectations, approach to problem solving, match between local knowledge and HO expectations

To me the most important thing is that you must have, the total company outside of

China must have a very, very clear understanding of why they have a person in

China. That is critical. I think too many times they just put people there as just in

case, as opposed to what are the issues, how do we fix them, and how do we

measure those issues, and how does that person expect to control when he's in a

foreign country.

6.3.5.1.2.8 Ability to deal with frustrations, culture, international minded, language skills

You have to accept the frustrations of working in a country where they don't speak

your language, you don't speak their language, their attitude toward a lot of things

are totally different than yours, and you have to accept that you're in their country.

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You can't change attitude that is traditional attitude. They do things certain ways. You can change... in an office environment you can change things. The way they think and the way that they calculate, and the way they resolve things, they do it the way they've been taught to do it, and that's the most frustrating part.

6.3.5.1.2.9 Approach to problem solving, eyes of hoe office, ability to change

it's very difficult, first of all, to take on responsibilities. That's fine if you go through the job description, exactly what you want them to do, they will not go outside of that.

... my situation and Caroline's, we've got jobs maybe 20 or 30 operations per garment. It's very important, and one way we deal with this is because the labour is cheaper here we have... we increase the numbers of quality checks within our factories, so we check every operation so we will say to this person, this is wrong and you've got to fix it because the next person isn't going to say

6.3.5.1.2.10 Ability to deal with frustration, local worker support in host country, face

Yes, you've got to think ahead. You've got to think ahead. You've got to look at, hey, this is wrong. I'm supposed to getting this today, get on the phone and say, well, where's it, you told me it's coming today, you know. It is... that's the most frustrating thing and Chinese people don't seem to think outside of the job description that they have and they feel that by going outside, they're going into someone else's area and that's losing face for the other person.

6.3.5.1.2.11 Role conflict between home office and posting, ability to deal with frustrations, match between local knowledge and HO expectations

'What's happened in the... over the last 12 months is that there's been some changes in management back in New Zealand. They feel that they've lost control

by having Chinese people doing merchandise control, so the merchandise

managers in New Zealand and Australia would prefer to have their own

merchandise controllers working beside them, so we're taking a step back in time,

and we've basically transferred, or we're in the middle of transferring right back to

where we started.

6.3.5.1.2.12 Ability to deal with frustrations, role conflict between head office and posting

The problem is there's one senior person in the company who's making these

decisions, and she's got the power, and unfortunately, the people who are listening

to her, are believing what she's saying and I, you know, every other international

company's setting up offices here and successfully, well, not successfully, but can

make them work if you work on them and you know what you're doing, and the

reasons why you are here. I think it's a reflex [?] step, so I... one of the reasons

why I'm leaving the company. Even if they were not going to renew my contract

this year when it expires, I would still leave because I don't believe that the

decisions that are being made now are the correct decisions.

6.3.5.1.2.13 Local worker support in host country, ability to deal with frustrations, clarity of purpose

When you came here, was it very clear why you were coming here, and the clarity

of purpose you had, or was it kind of like [overtalking]?

AL   No, no, when I first came here they just wanted to make sure that they had a

Western person here to oversee all the changes that were going on, and then they

later developed projects for me.

6.3.5.1.2.14 Ability to deal with frustrations, role conflict between HO an d posting, ability to

deal with people who are different, eyes of home office

The circumstances have changed considerably and they want to take everything

back and I would make a prediction that their office probably won't be here in six

months' time... they'll take it all back to control themselves, which I believe is a

completely wrong step. And the other thing that is wrong is that they have taken

the operations function out of the manufacturing company. If you don't have

operations manufacturing experience in your company and you allow your sales

people to try and control it, all of the long-standing relationships that have been

built over the years between my suppliers, myself and the respective people, is

going to go out the window.

6.3.5.2 Darrell

Darrell (advanced diploma in business), an Australian, was the manager of operations for an American owned international organization which specialized in the manufacture of slurry pumps. He had been commuting to operations in China from Australia and when the decision was made by the organization to locate an expatriate manager permanently in China, because of his experience, he was offered the opportunity to move to. He had been in China with his wife for approximately one and a half years when I interviewed him.

6.3.5.2.1 Map

The most central constructs in Darrell's map is his *ability to deal with frustrations (ID=8, OD=8) and his approach to problem solving (ID=9, OD=7). Approach to problem solving* (ID=9) is the most central constructed when considering which construct is being influenced by the other constructs; this construct is influenced by all other constructs selected. Darrell's map indicates that the construct that most influences all the other selected constructs is his desire to *improve his career opportunities (OD=9).*

One medium negative relationship (-2) exists, *match between local knowledge and HO expectations → co-workers/employees willingness to make decisions*, therefore, the map is

not deconstructed. This relationship suggests there is real disconnect between the home office and what is occurring in the China factory because Darrell's co-workers are unable to make decisions.
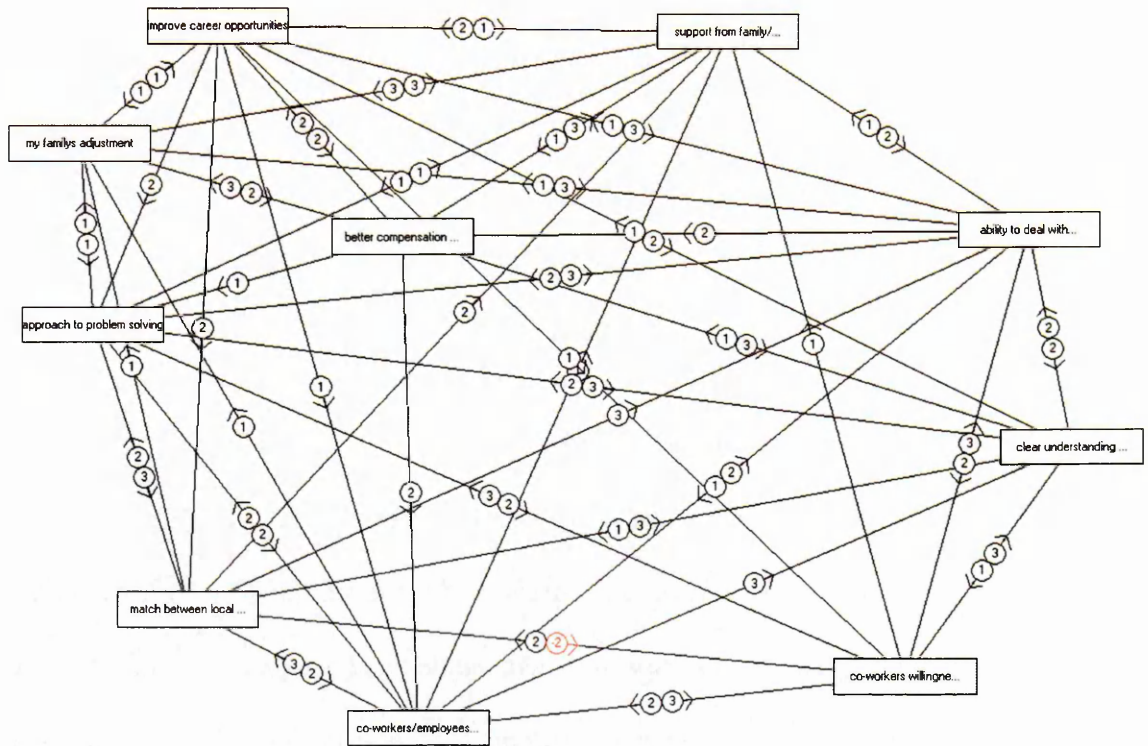
Figure 6-23: Darrell's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	5	9
ability to deal with frustrations	8	8
support from family / important others	8	5
clear understanding of why on assignment	7	6
my family's adjustment	7	5
better compensation opportunities	5	6
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	6	7
approach to problem solving	9	7
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	5	7
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	6	6

Table 6-19: Darrell's map link structure

Following are quotes from Darrell's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

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6.3.5.2.2 Interview

6.3.5.2.2.1 Selection, PO fit: demand-ability

was the operations manager for a company in Australia, and we'd started sourcing in China, and... from a global perspective, and that had been developing for a couple of years and we decided to make a permanent presence. I... because I had experience with the manufacturing and rolling out of ERP system, I came over to start the ERP system, and one thing led to another, and we sort of used that as a sounding board, testing ground, and eventually, after about four months of rolling out the ERP they made an offer for me to have a two year posting.

6.3.5.2.2.2 PO Fit: demand-abilities, clarity of roles

There were several early considerations. One of them was recruiting from outside the company, but again they, because of the activity level, the decision was made that they really needed to find someone with some level of experience, and there's not many people in our organisation with my level of experience in operations and production, and understanding of the whole process, and products.

Yes, my company's mid-sized, but fairly casual, so we actually developed a lot of the expectations in unison. There were obviously some specific goals that were set, but, you know, the method of how to achieve those and the detail of the outcome was not well refined and a little bit fuzzy, but that is very relevant with the company. As long as we do see some improvement we're quite satisfied, you know, that it was more, for us, it was more about making sure that we're heading in the right direction.

6.3.5.2.2.3 Settling in

Essentially I had... because I'd had the... I was in transit and rotating here, a lot of the groundwork we'd done. On previous trips I'd already identified accommodation. I brought Dena for a look around, so we essentially came here fairly organised. We knew... we had drivers in place and help and accommodation and all those issues, so generally speaking, it was fairly well organised.

6.3.5.2.2.4 Selection, PO fit: demand-abilities

I think we've done fairly well in selecting our team. We had a fairly intensive training level when we first moved here so we only opened our office in June of 2008, so we had a fairly aggressive recruiting process, and that's one of the reasons why we decided to be sure we put experienced people in the senior positions, as well as bringing in some other expats for support and specialised training.

RO   Senior Chinese people or expats?

DA   Senior expats, but essentially in an office of 21, I'm the only expat. There's one other expat but he's not permanent. He'll only be here for a few more months.

6.3.5.2.2.5 Approach to problem solving, ability to deal with frustrations, co-workers willingness to make decisions, understand political dynamics of the host country co-worker

DA   One of the things I discovered very early on, because we're in the manufacturing, is most of my people deal with schedules, and making commitments about schedules, so very early on I discovered that we weren't giving clear delivery schedules or advising of issues or providing solutions. We were essentially

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operating as a post-box, and the vendor would give us a problem, and we'd go

back to a head office or another individual and ask for a solution.

So those things were obviously very apparent, so I did a local course about

managing Chinese people, started understanding about the risk aversion in their

culture and why that's so relevant, and then started changing my management style

a little bit, positive reinforcement, trying to generate small work groups of Chinese

people rather than have the direct meetings. Several of the meetings now I've

entirely handed over the manufacturing manager, sorry, the production manager

who's Chinese, and essentially I don't partake in them at all. And I've found that

we've got a much level... a higher level of success and they are beginning to

understand their responsibilities and therefore make decisions as part of that role.

6.3.5.2.2.6   Approach to problem solving, co-workers willingness to make decisions (age)

So with bringing them along, a bit of changing, and a bit of education, they are

becoming willing to accept responsibilities and make decisions?

DA   Yes, absolutely. They're quite comfortable with... if they, in my mind, it's

about, more about mentoring than managing, and you really need to mentor them

to the point where they feel confident in their own skills and abilities. Once they've

reached that level of confidence, then they start naturally making decisions and

taking the responsibility associated with that.

I see the older people, who've had the education and the experience working with

the international companies, are much better suited. The younger people tend to

have a much higher level of expectation, but just as much risk aversion and

decision-making issues as some of the older people in lesser positions.

6.3.5.2.2.7 Approach to problem solving, (corruption/bribery/guanxi)

Yes, and essentially we've got a particular relationship with our major vendor who we're actually leasing the office from and does most of our steel fabrication. He has quite a senior position. He was a senior army officer and a member of the party for some time, so he has that influence within the local organisation, so he tends to be a great expediter of things for us when needed. But I'm always wary of, and cautious about the whole Chinese way of doing business. Obviously being an expat I'm aware of it. I've clearly made it known to all of my people, you know, one on one, and as a group, that that's not an acceptable way of going about doing business.

6.3.5.3 Eddy

Eddy was from Northern Ireland and had worked his way up from boilermaker to site supervisor and he had been in China for five years overseeing the construction of new ships for his American organization. Eddy was interviewed in Shanghai before he moved to the Dalian construction site to begin the new build. Although Eddy did not have his family in China, he talked extensively about their importance in his life. He had four previous expatriate assignments.

6.3.5.3.1 Map

Most central to Eddy's satisfaction was being *internationally minded (ID=5, OD=6)*. Importantly, his family is most central as his efforts influence this construct (ID=6); he was in China for opportunities and thus improved salaries. From talking with him, he was in China and Korea previously because it provided employment advancement opportunities unavailable in Northern Ireland. The improved salaries allowed him to send his children to one of the better public schools in Northern Ireland and university. The most central OD was *international minded* (OD=6). He was very passionate about his work and he enjoyed the challenges of working in an international situation
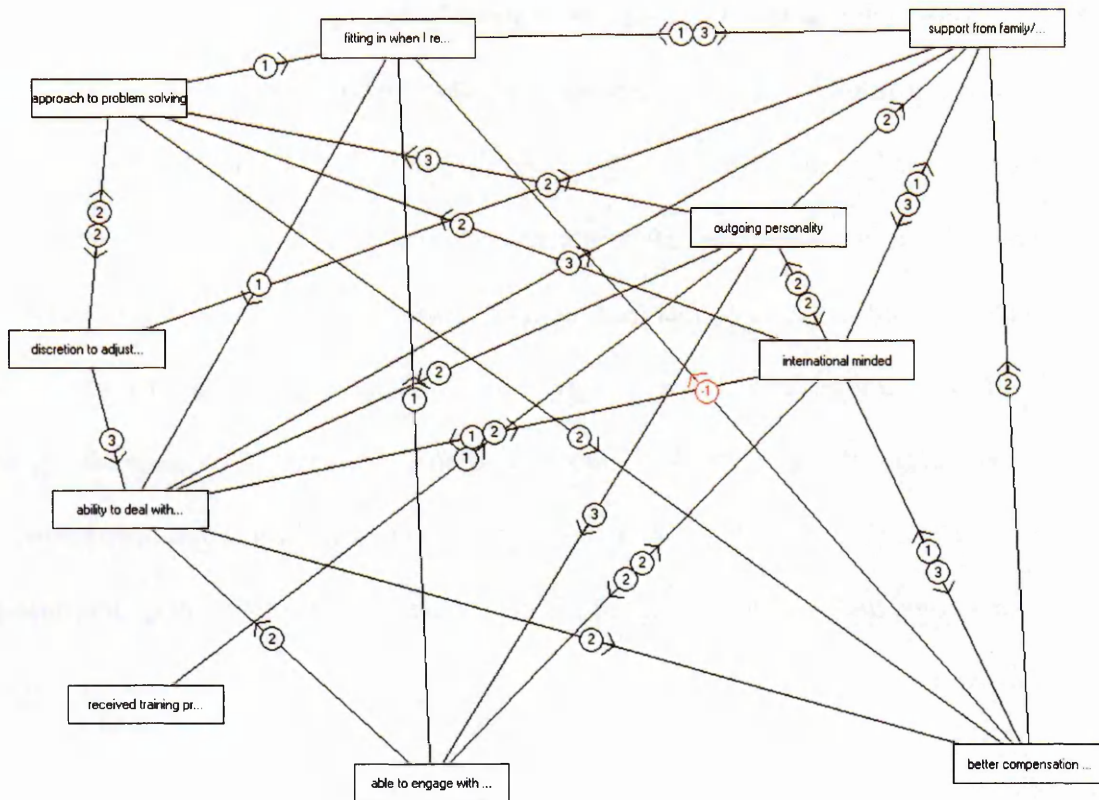
Figure 6-24: Eddy's causal map

Because there is only one negative relationship, *better compensation → fitting in when he returns home*, the map was not deconstructed. Eddy seemed somewhat uneasy about his success although he appreciated the opportunities it created for him and his family. Many of his friends were unemployed long term back in Northern Ireland.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
fitting in upon returning home	4	2
ability to deal with frustrations	5	3
support from family / important others	6	2
able to engage with people who are different	2	3
better compensation opportunities	3	3
outgoing personality	2	5
international minded	5	6
approach to problem solving	3	3
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	1	3
received training prior to arrival	0	1

Table 6-20: Eddy's map link structure

Following are quotes from Eddy's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

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6.3.5.3.2 Interview

6.3.5.3.2.1 Previous international experience, PO fit: demand-abilities

After spending almost seven years in Korea I was transferred to China; at the beginning as a new construction manager for Solay [?] China. That meant any new projects in China I was in charge of.

6.3.5.3.2.2 Culture, ability to engage with people who are different, able to adapt, respect

The thing that keeps coming back is culture: you have to understand the culture. Mainly whenever they speak... in Korea it was broken English; in China it is the same. You have to adapt, and you have to respect these people; and if you respect them they will respect you.

6.3.5.3.2.3 Passion, PO fit: needs-supplies

the thing about it is the passion I have for ship building is when they first cut. It's like a jigsaw puzzle, and what happens is when you cut the first piece, put the first piece of the jigsaw down, and then you have ten months of the puzzle, and at the end of the day, when the ship is sailing away, your heart is thumping because you've actually been involved from the very beginning. It is like the birth of a child and then they leave home, and that is it. So, that is the passion.

6.3.5.3.2.4 Support from HO and settling in,

I was quite fortunate that I knew Alan here. Through the ship building industry the marine side of it is very small; we all more or less know each other. I was quite fortunate that I knew a guy from the UK. He married a Chinese girl, and I employed a translator and a secretary, and she was able to help me adjust when I first came to China. I wasn't put into a foreigners' compound where everything was had it should be; I had to seek and find myself. I had to seek apartments, I had to seek transport, I had to open bank accounts; and it was a challenge.

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No. What has happened now is that because of the initial problems that we've had

when we came to Shanghai with apartments, landlords, the Chinese saying don't

touch it till it's broke; what happened now is that we had so many complaints from

the 15 guys that what I did was recommend to my company that we move into hotel

serviced apartments where everything is there.

6.3.5.3.2.5   Approach to problem solving, ability to deal with frustration, language skills

Well, fortunately in ship building all of the drawings are done in English. A lot of

it is by sign language. Some ship builders provider translators, so if a guy is on a

particular job and he has a problem then the translator will relay this to the floor

man or to the manager; so this is problem solving. If we get no satisfaction like

that then they come back to the office and they write their grievance in English, and

our secretary does it in Chinese, and then this is taken to the shipyard in writing.

6.3.5.3.2.6   Ability to deal with frustration

The quality we have in shipyards is poor in China. A lot of us compare China with

the same kind of quality that you get in Korea; but the difference is vast. In China

there are so many subcontractors with inside the shipyard; maybe 20 or 30

subcontractors. They are not... whereas the workers are not employed by the

shipyard, so they are subcontracted.

6.3.5.3.2.7   Able to engage with people who are different, discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary

in China you have to be open-minded and, let me say, you have to work with them if

you want a good job. They make mistakes and we make mistakes, but we all have

to sit down and work it out. The best thing to do is is always leave a little bit of the

door open for the Chinese to... never put the Chinese in a corner, because they will

come out fighting. Don't always say: no, no, no.

6.3.5.3.2.8 Co-workers willingness to make decisions, co-workers willingness to accept responsibility for decisions they made

That is a no-no in China. They won't accept responsibility in China; they will not.

If it is a big issue, trying to find the person that is in charge is very difficult. They

will not take decisions.

6.3.5.3.2.9 Support from family/important others

... importance of your family?

ED   Very important...

ED   In actual fact I'm, I'm in touch twice a week with my family... Then my wife

will come out every three months, stay for a month.

6.3.5.3.2.10 Work environment

Normally we work six days a week; we work six days a week. And it is not nine to

five; it is not nine to five. In our project, which was finished in February in

Shanghai, I was up every morning, out of my apartment at six o'clock, and I was

back eight or nine o'clock every night....

And then with the time difference in our head office in New York and China; so I

got quite a few phone calls at five o'clock in the morning from my boss saying: I'm

sorry I interrupted you, were you having your dinner; when in actual fact it's five

am in the morning.

6.3.5.3.2.11 Ability to deal with people who are different, corruption/guanxi

This happened to me in 2003 in China where they asked me to help the Chinese,
they asked me to work the Chinese New Year, which I did. I sent all my site team
home and I stayed myself. And they set up these inspections, and for one week, and
not one inspection was passed because not one inspection was ready. And when
the shipyard came back the manager approached me with a large envelope and
said to me: thank you very much for working; we appreciated it. And he gave me
an envelope, which I refused. He said: no, no; no problem. I said: yes, it is a
problem; I can't accept this. I don't even know what was in envelope. But then he
said to me: if you don't want this we can give you a plasma television, we can give
you stereo systems; what do you want. I don't want anything, thank you. This
happens. This is China for you. You kind of just accept it, based on your own
integrity and your company's integrity, you don't participate.

6.3.5.3.2.12 International minded, experience

At the end of the day it is a fantastic experience. I've been doing it a long time now
and I love it; I really do. I've got a passion for it.

6.3.5.4 Herb

Herb (BEng) was from the American mid-west and worked as the unit manager for an
American company that specialized in injection mouldings for auto parts, making
dashboards. Herb had been working on a special project in his American factory and when
the operations were transferred to China, because he was familiar with the project he was
offered a transfer to China. He was the only person from his unit to be transferred and Herb
had been in China with his wife and son for less than 10 months. This was his first
expatriate experience.

Herb's interview highlighted three concerns. Firstly, there was an issue around language. He could not speak Mandarin and had to rely on an intermediary. Second, he was trying to understand the organization dynamics. Finally, he seemed to want the Shanghai operation to mirror the USA operation in how he managed.

6.3.5.4.1 Map

As can be seen in Herb's map, his perception of satisfaction is complex. What is evident is there are a significant number of negative relationships.

Exploration of his map constructs, Figure 7-33, suggests the most central constructs overall are *ability to deal with frustrations* (ID=8, OD=8) and *local worker support in host country* (ID=9, OD=7). The most influential ID construct appears to be *local worker support in host country (ID=9)* and the most central OD construct appears to be *ability to deal with frustrations* and *match between local knowledge and HO expectations* with ID=8 respectively.

If the map is deconstructed, Figure 6-26, to highlight the negative influences a much clearer picture emerges. There appears to be a negative issue focused around language and a second negative issue focused on managerial issues.

Interpreting the map, perhaps his situation can best be viewed as following: Herb has expectations from the home office placed upon him which are not matching the reality on the ground at the operations in China. Herb employs the same management style he used successfully in America - talk, have co-workers 'buy in', take responsibility, and make decisions. However, the reality he was finding is co-workers are unable or unwilling to make decisions or take responsibility as he interprets it. An important aspect of this

problem he feels is his Chinese language inability. Herb suggested 'there is still a slight

communication barrier.'
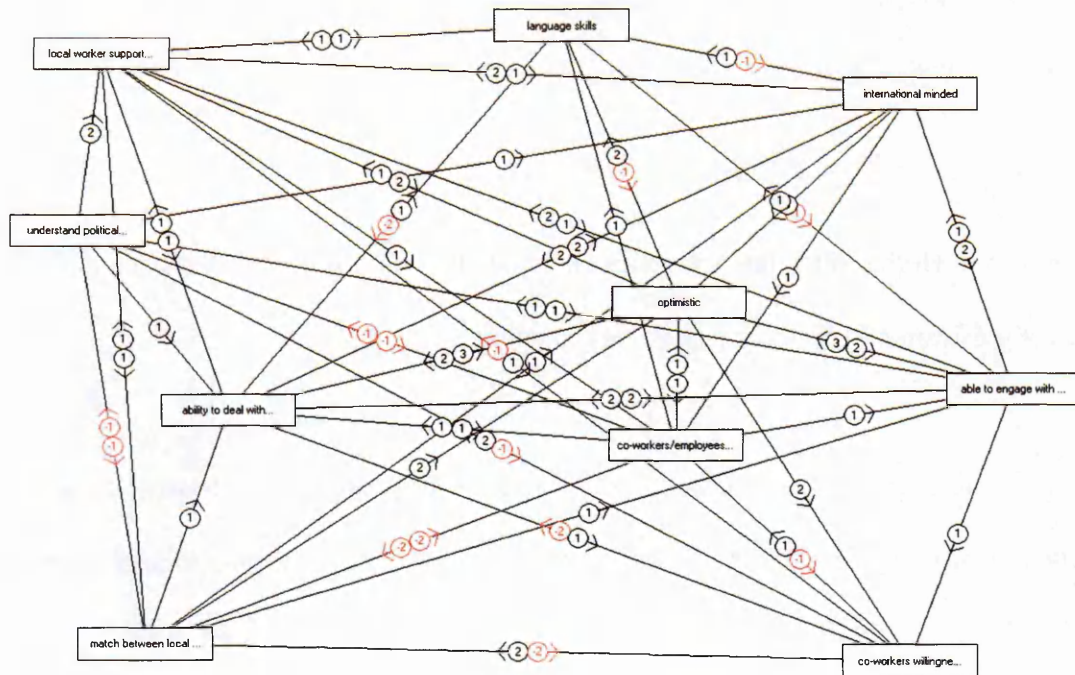
Figure 6-25: Herb's complete map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
language skills	6	5
ability to deal with frustrations	8	8
local worker support in host country	9	7
able to engage with people who are different	8	7
international minded (curious)	6	6
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	7	7
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	4	7
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	4	8
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	7	5
optimistic	7	6

Table 6-21: Herb's map link constructs

Able to deal with frustrations (ID=8, OD=8) and *local worker support* (ID=9, OD=7) had

the most links in the overall map (Table 6-21) and thus appear to be the most central

constructs. When the map is deconstructed because of the amount of red (Figure 6-26),

there appears to be a person level issue impacting Herb's satisfaction which is centred on *language skills* (ID=6, OD=5); there also appears to be an organization level issue centred on *co-workers willingness to take responsibility* (ID=7, OD=5).

It appears Herb's lack of language skills is negatively influencing his *ability to engage with people who are different*, his *optimism,* his *ability to deal with frustration* and his *international mindedness.* A second loop appears to centre at the organizational level; furthermore, it appears several issues telescope into a more general organization level frustration. The central issue in the organization level appears to be multidimensional.

All the negative influences issues appear to end at or influence the *co-workers willingness to accept responsibility for decision they make.* Regardless of which chains or cycle is followed, the issue appears to be between the home office and its China operations.

Match between local knowledge and HO expectations → *co-worker willingness to take responsibility for decisions made* → *ability to deal with frustration* is a moderate negative (-2) influence; yet this disconnect is also negatively influencing indirectly as well, for example, *Match between local knowledge and HO expectations* → *co-workers/employees willingness to make decisions* → *co-workers willingness to accept responsibility for decisions made* → *ability to deal with frustrations has a moderate negative influence; Match between local knowledge and HO expectations* → *understand political dynamics of host country co-workers* → *co-workers willingness to make decisions* → *ability to deal with frustrations* has a weak negative influence (-1).

What is notable is the cyclic nature of the organizational issues in the lower pyramid. This map highlights the interplay between the person and his co-workers both in America and China.

Reconciling these two loops, these two negative situations, appears to be Herb's *ability to deal with frustration*. (ID=8, OD=7) as it is the only direct link between the person and organization constructs and thus the most important construct in the map.
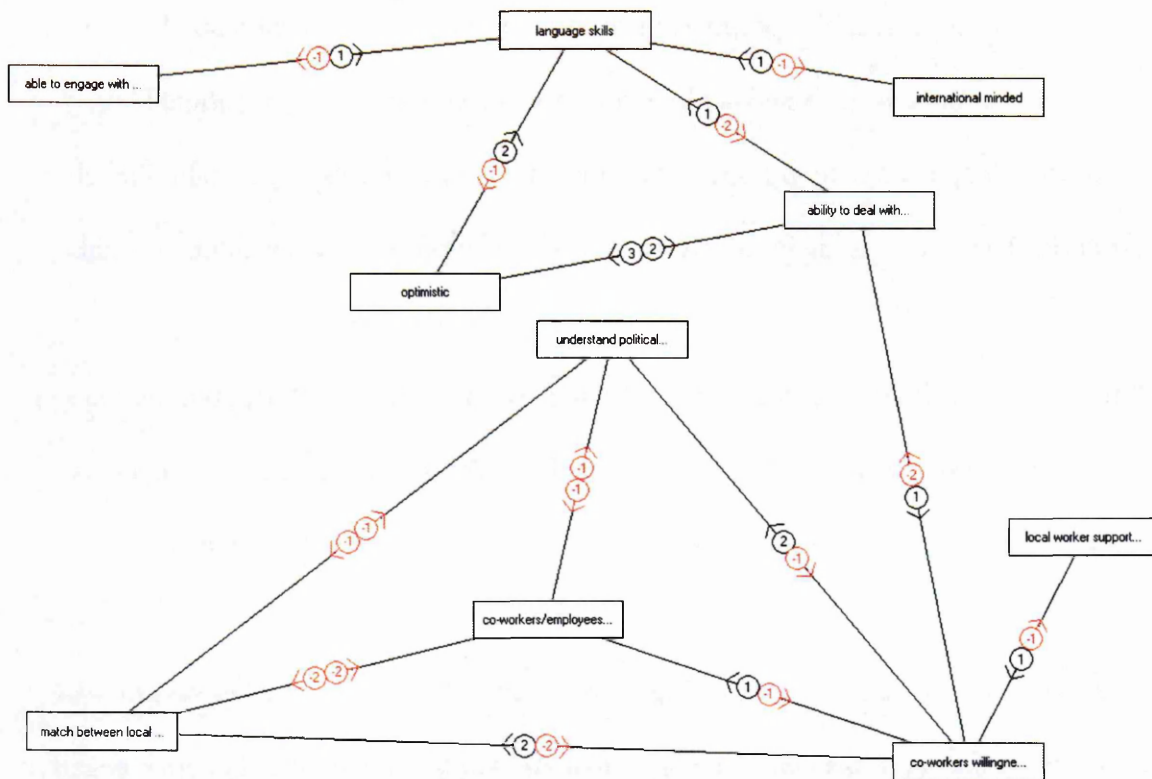
Figure 6-26 : Herb's map highlighting the issues

Following are quotes from Herb's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.4.2 Interview

6.3.5.4.2.1 Language skills, ability to deal with frustrations, able to engage with people who are different, local worker support in host country

there is still a slight communication barrier. So conversations, even if it's at the management level or whatever, certain conversations that would… you could reach

a conclusion within, you know, maybe a ten minute period and you're dealing with

maybe an hour,

I interact well with him. I have a limited amount of resources in terms of English-

speaking staff that assist me, although I do have one process engineer who speaks

fairly good English and he's fairly skilled. So my immediate support is good so I

have somebody that I can count on to help me to get things done.

6.3.5.4.2.2 Language skills, understand political dynamic of host country co-workers, local worker support in host country, co-worker willingness to make decisions, co-workers willingness to take responsibility for their decisions

I think the willingness to try to learn some of the language, and your attitude

towards them and your willingness to be respectful and to listen, but at the same

time say, I want to do this because this is why it's a good idea, and sell your case,

rather than just come in and say, and this is the best way to do it, let's do it.

... sometimes the lines of responsibility aren't drawn as clearly as what they need

to be. I'm used to a fairly rigid reporting structure. You've got this manager, this

supervisor, these team leaders report to this person. There's an accountability, a

line of accountability, and sometimes that's not very clear here, so it's... we're still

working to resolve some of those issues. And then there's also occasionally the

issue of, you know... how to explain? Maybe sometimes, certain personnel are

hired who maybe have a relationship with another person who hired them, that type

of thing.

6.3.5.4.2.3 PO fit: needs-supplies; PO fit: demand-abilities

factory that I was working in was downsizing. And I was involved with a fairly

large project. The project was running in the US, and then we were also doing a

second line here in China. And then eventually, the line in the US was to transfer

to China once the China line was up and operational, so I was offered the

opportunity to come here just prior to that line transfer and basically facilitate the

line transfer, and then help during this ramp-up phase of production

6.3.5.5 Howard

Howard (Bachelor degree) was from England and had been sent to Shanghai two years ago

as the Managing Director to oversee the development of a 5 star hotel. He actively pursued

an international career and the hotel industry afforded him the opportunity to achieve his

goal. Over his career he had been on 13 previous expatriate postings.

6.3.5.5.1 Map

Howard's map, Table 6-22, reveals a very interconnected map; all constructs are

influencing the others. There are two weak negative influences, *confidence in one's*

abilities → language skills and *ability to give and get to take to get along → move out of*

comfort zone.
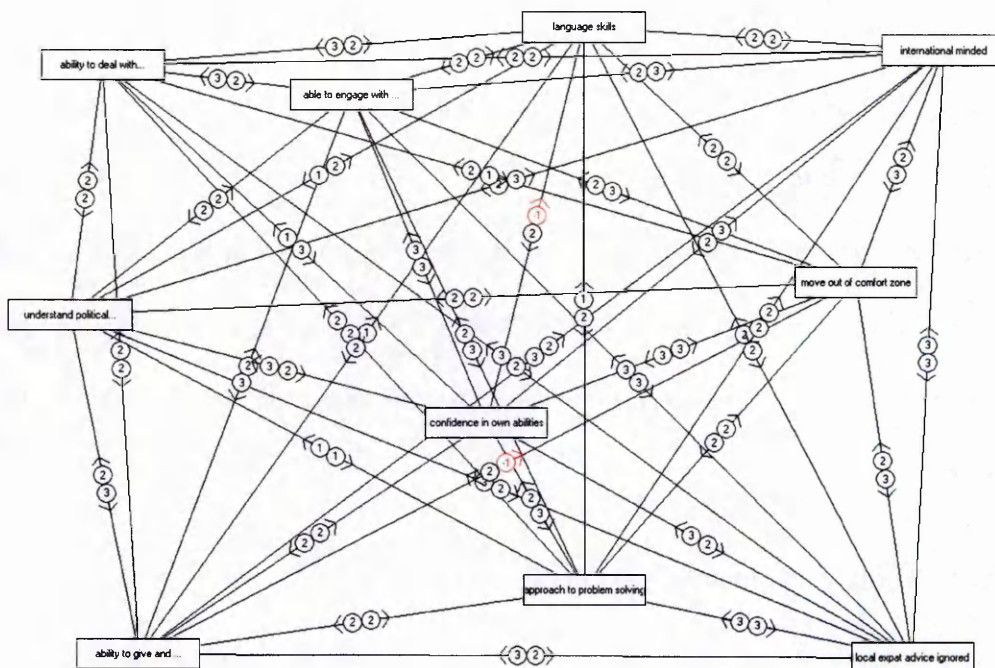
Figure 6-27: Howard's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
language skills	9	9
previous international experience	9	9
confidence in one' abilities	9	9
able to engage with people who are different	9	9
international minded (curious)	9	9
ability to give and take to get along	9	9
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	9	9
approach to problem solving	9	9
move out of comfort zone	9	9
local expat advice ignored	9	9

Table 6-22: Howard's map link structure

Following are quotes from Howard's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.5.2 Interview

6.3.5.5.2.1 International minded, personal development, move out of comfort zone, personal development, PO fit: needs-supplies

I made that decision, conscious decision, some 38 years ago, that I wanted to see

the world. And I think that with this business I've been very fortunate and very

privileged to work in some great location and met a tremendous number of people.

It's been difficult, it's been frustrating, it's been lonely at times, depressing, but I'm

here today in Shanghai and I hope to stay as long as I possibly can. Not for the

monetary rewards but more so for learning about other people

6.3.5.5.2.2 Able to engage with people who are different, confidence in one's abilities, personal development

you learn along the way as well. You learn about cultures, you learn your

capabilities. I've been privileged, within Asia certainly, to open eight hotels, from

construction site up to running a hotel for a year or so and moving on to another

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property. So that's a tremendous test of you own abilities but also a test of building teams of people and them going on a journey with you. I mean, it is a journey and to open a hotel that has many different facets of teaching people, having the right people and having a vision to be able to have something on paper as construction drawings to actually may a year to two years later to actually see that finished product. And that's a wonderful achievement.

6.3.5.5.2.3 Local expat advice ignored, role conflict between home office and posting

you've got the knowledge, you've got the awareness of how to deal with people and a situation. You've got to really think on your feet. And what frustrated me at times is that you work for a company or you work in a city and very often it's a bit like a battlefield. You're in the trenches dealing with day to day things and then you've got your commanders that are high on the hill in some corporate ivory towers, whether that be in New York or London or Hong Kong or Beijing or wherever it is in the world. You are the guy in the team, on the field, and you're the one who should make the call, rather than being directed or dictated to by somebody in an ivory tower. And that frustrates the hell out of me..

6.3.5.5.2.4 Local culture, role conflict between home office and posting,

There are brand standards or standards you should have that are an integral part of that company. But at the same time you've got to take into account the local cultures and there's a vast difference in culture between Beijing, where we have HappyTime hotels, and Shanghai. So there is a huge difference in that respect, of cultural differences..

6.3.5.5.2.5 Personal development, move out of comfort zone

rewarding, it's not just financial rewards, it's the enrichment of learning about the people but also seeing what your capabilities are.

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6.3.5.5.2.6 Move out of comfort zone, language skills, ability to engage with people who are different, personal development

Not wanting to get out of a comfort zone. For example, I like photography, and on my days off I cycle around Shanghai taking photographs. I make a fool of myself, perhaps, going on a bike with a basket and a camera in the front but it's great.

Now I have a smattering of Chinese I can get buy on. But it's an experience. Whether that's in Shanghai – and Shanghai is not really China, it's a sort of vast metropolis of internationalism and so on. But, I mean I've lived in other cities within China, Nanking which has few expatriates, and I've done pretty much the same thing, local supermarkets, out on the bike, and it's simply because that's what I want to gain by being overseas in this environment or that environment.

6.3.5.5.2.7 Able to engage with people who are different, international minded

Listen, observe, learn from your mistakes, have the ability or the courage to actually say yes, I've made a mistake, and let's move forward. Learn about the country or countries you're going to, learn about the people, and have some sort of touch points so that you can actually converse, about whether that's sport or theatre or any of those things that you can connect with. ... I think that's most important. And don't impose your way of life onto whomever you're working with. Develop those people you are going to work with and learn from them a well.

6.3.5.6 JD

JD (BS), an American educated at US Naval Academy, Annapolis, was an old China hand who had been in Shanghai for 10 years. He was the General Manger of China Distribution for the American MNE specializing in scientific and medical devices. With Joe on his second international posting was his second family. His first marriage came to end because of his international posting.
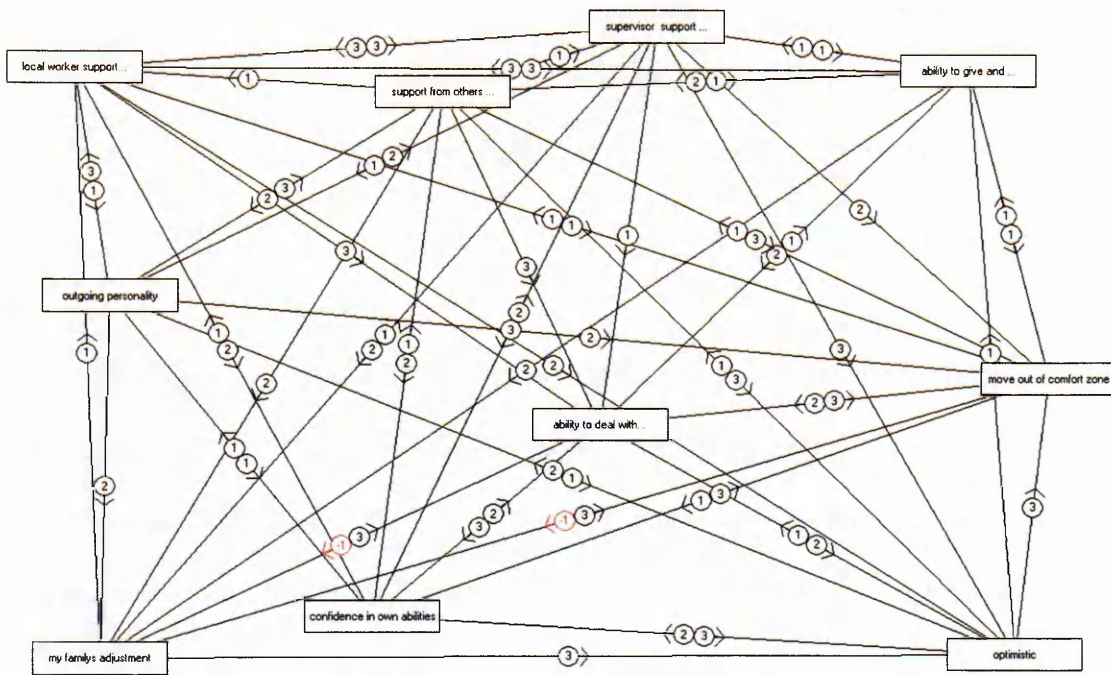
Figure 6-28: JD's causal map

Most central to JD as evidenced from Table 6-23 is his *ability to move out of his comfort zone* (ID=9, OD=6). Considering just the OD, the influence on other constructs, the most central construct is *support from others in the community at large* (ID=9) followed closely by *ability to deal with frustrations (ID=8).* The most important OD or construct influencing the other selected constructs is *support from other in the community at large* (OD=9).

Family is noteworthy as JD identifies his *family's adjustment* as one of his top 10 constructs. He does not select *support from family/important others* as one of the most important constructs; however, JD identifies both *support from others in the community at large* and *supervisor support in host country and local worker support in host* country as important.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
supervisor support in host country	6	8
local worker support in host country	7	7
support from others in community at large	5	9
ability to deal with frustrations	8	5
confidence in one' abilities	7	7
my family's adjustment	6	5
outgoing personality	5	7
ability to give and take to get along	6	6
move out of comfort zone	9	6
optimistic	7	6

Table 6-23: Joe's map link structure
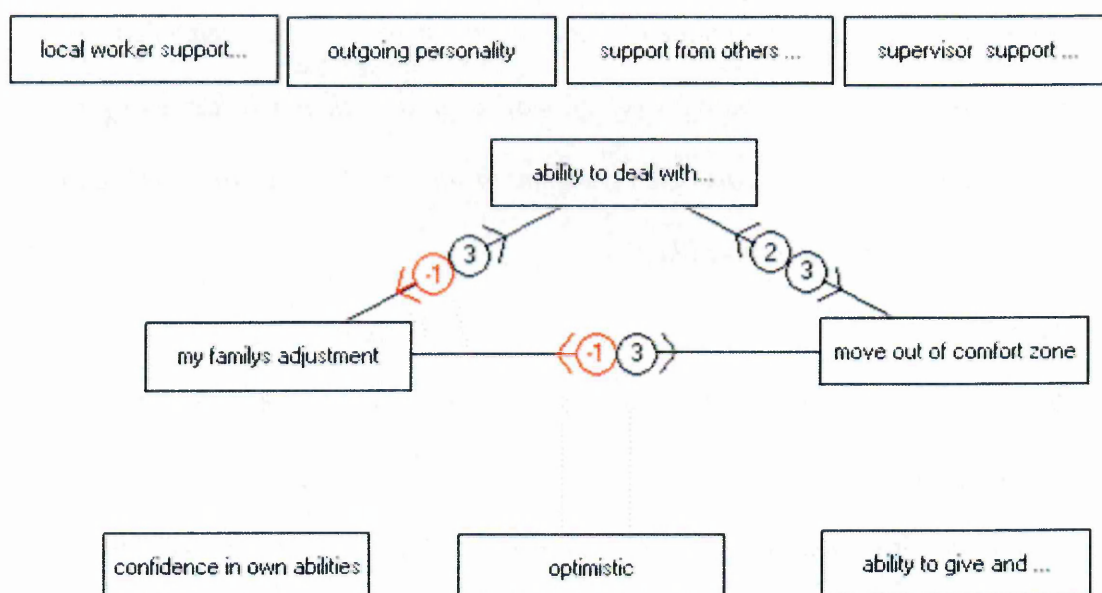
Figure 6-29: JD map reduced to highlight negative relations

JD's map was deconstructed to explore the negative relationships. Figure 6-29, reveals that JD's desire to *move out of his comfort zone* and his *ability to deal with frustration* are exerting a weak negative influence (-1) on *his family's adjustment*.

Following are quotes from JD's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.6.2 Interview

6.3.5.6.2.1 Selection process, support from others in the community

after a couple of years of working out of Cincinnati one of the bosses said I think

it's best if we move you there, are you interested? And I said absolutely, I'm very

open to it and came out in 2000, first as just a black belt in Six Sigma and then

quickly moved into the sourcing leader for Asia for their indirect sourcing

programme

had a cultural training programme for three days where we flew to New York City

and met with Chinese Americans, which I would say was helpful in the extent that

to some degree it gave me an idea of what to be sensitive to. So, then when we

moved out here we had about a week of, maybe not a week, maybe three or four

days where we had an escort take us around to some of the local sites, where to

shop, where to go eat, things like that.

But that wasn't really a critical factor for me, I think what worked for me is that

very early on we were fortunate enough to meet a group of guys that, we actually

moved about two blocks down from a pub called O'Malleys, and we went there and

we met a group of guys, Declan and others that quickly made us feel welcome and

then going there about, you know, the first five or six times over the first few

months the network quickly expanded.

6.3.5.6.2.2 Career development, confidence in one's abilities, ability to give and take to get
along, PO fit: needs-supplies

positives over the last ten years have been certainly that China's received a lot of

focus in almost all major companies around the world. So, China has been a very,

very important initiative to most companies which because of that has created

exposure, like it or not, to all levels of the organisations

I've presented to everyone from my boss all the way up to the CEO and they've

taken very direct interest in what's happening in China

6.3.5.6.2.3   Ability to deal with frustrations

...I've never seen an organisation be able to correct or effectively manage the time

difference so I've been on both ends where they completely ignored it and they

always have an evening conference call. I've been on the side where we've tried to

adjust and flex, every other week we would adjust the calls or every other night we

would adjust the time. But at the end of the day you have to tell yourself that there's

no such thing as nine to five, I mean you're working around the clock and then the

way to manage that is I allowed myself, if I worked late I allowed myself to come in

at one o'clock the next day if I could do it, or I allowed myself to go play golf at

07:30 in the morning and sometimes I'd allow myself to take a Wednesday off or a

Thursday.

6.3.5.6.2.4   My family's adjustment, move out of comfort zone, personal development, PO fit: needs-supplies

this is my second marriage in ten years, I came over here with my first wife and I

think we quickly saw that we had different perspectives on how we saw this

international assignment to work out. I saw it as a great opportunity to meet

people, to expand the network, to spend time with people of all cultures but at the

same time I had to work a lot of hours and adjust to my working schedule and my

first wife I think saw it, I would say she had a pretty open mind and also wanted to

expand international networks but wanted a lot more time with me than probably I

was giving. So, the time demands were challenging and because there wasn't a pre-established social network of support I think it weighed heavily.

6.3.5.6.2.5 Match between home office expectations and local knowledge, move out of comfort zone, ability to give and take to get along, able to engage with people who are different

I think the most critical is, you have to be able to clearly communicate realistic expectations up to your overseas management, so a lot of people I think make the mistake of assuming that the US or the European way is going to work here. So, you really have to aggressively, and you can't underestimate the word aggressive, manage expectations with the home office. Number two, you really do have to get to know your local team, you have to understand that they're different and it's not just that they're... You know, I hear a lot of people say I just don't get it, they don't understand international business, it's just it's completely different in many ways and you have to be able to understand that and then figure out how to work together to reach the end goal. So, a lot of times I'll try to make sure that my team understands what the goal is and then we can be flexible on how we get there.

6.3.5.6.2.6 Face, universal respect

something where someone if they're embarrassed in any way, shape or form they're immediately subjecting themselves to being demoted socially in whatever environment they're in. So, if you need to criticise someone you criticise them in private and do everything you can to praise someone in public. And I don't think that's really that different than other cultures.

And that's there I'll never figure it out, so I've worked to build relationships with people I trust and I asked those questions before but still make the mistakes, still make mistakes, but at the end of the day I think it's about respect

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6.3.5.6.2.7 Co-workers willingness to make decisions, co-workers willingness to accept responsibility for decisions made

As far as making decisions I think it's very tough to get them to make decisions, especially if it's any level below business ownership, so a business owner might make a decision, anything below that they will not.

RO   Any thoughts on why?

JO   I think that the education system is a system where they're taught directly and indirectly not to question authority and that carries through.

As far as taking responsibility, again I think that goes right in line with challenges and making decisions; don't expect it.

6.3.5.6.2.8 International minded, step out of comfort zone, personal development

I would tell them that they need to see the world, they need to engage the world, they need to challenge themselves and try to do business throughout the world, and you know, not only will they be better off for it but the people they interact with will be better off for it.

6.3.5.7 Keith

Keith (MBA), an American, was the Managing Director of an automotive parts manufacturing organization and had lived with his family in China for 14 years and had previous postings to China. Keith actively pursued expatriation to China and was the participant who first talked about what it meant to be an American in China. He spoke at length of the value of his Marine Corp training in preparing him for international postings; he was also sent to Chinese language school.

6.3.5.7.1 Map

Table 6-24 highlights that central to his satisfaction are the person oriented constructs, *confidence in one's abilities* and *previous international experience* (ID=9, OD=9

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respectively). Like many maps many other person constructs cluster in importance; for example, ability to deal with frustration (ID=9, OD=8). Keith includes one organization construct, *ability to adjust roles as necessary* (ID=8, OD=8)
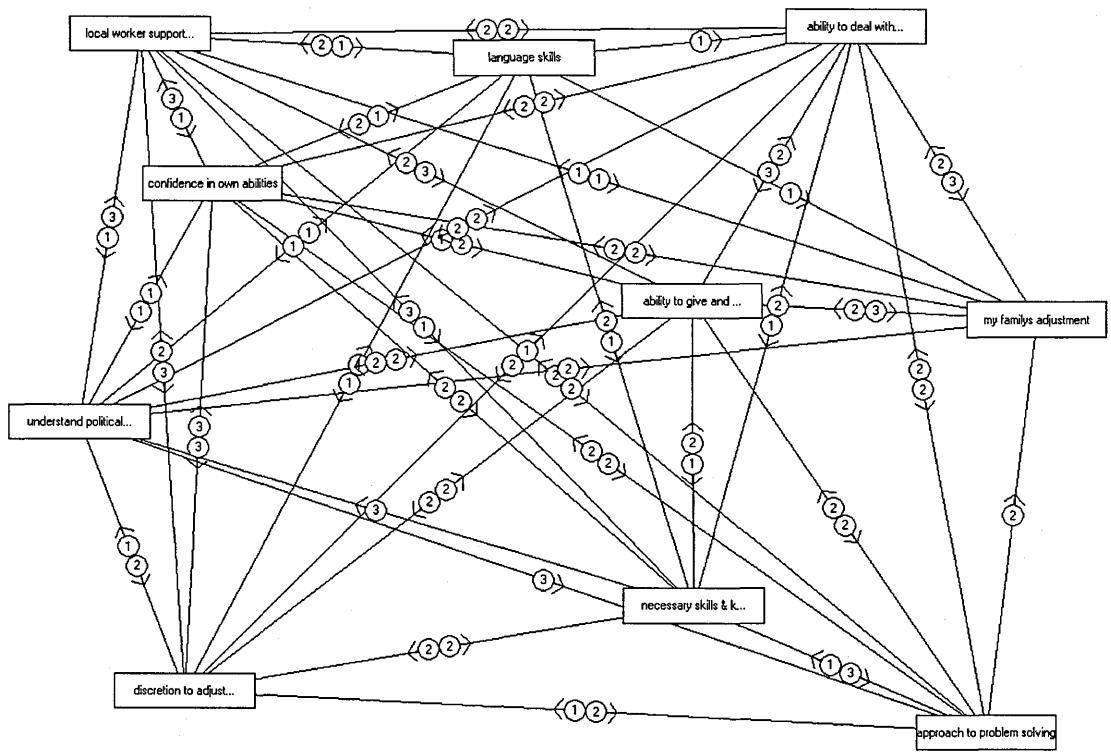
Figure 6-30: Keith's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
language skills	5	7
previous international experience	9	9
ability to deal with frustrations	9	8
confidence in one' abilities	9	9
my family's adjustment	7	4
ability to give and take to get along	8	8
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	7	8
approach to problem solving	7	7
necessary skills and knowledge	7	8
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	8	8

Table 6-24: Keith's map link structure

Following are critical points identified in Keith's interview.

6.3.5.7.2 Interview

6.3.5.7.2.1 Language skills

when I first attempted to go to university, and had to drop out rather than end up

a... a couple of F's ... what was I going to do, and the military seemed like the best

option at the time. I liked the marines better than the others, so I joined the Marine

Corp, and they sent me right back to school for a year and a half, to learn Chinese

6.3.5.7.2.2 Necessary skills/ knowledge, language skills, PO Fit: Need-supply, demand-ability

I worked in all departments, pretty much, and then wound up a couple of years at

the factories; finally managing two different seat [?] complete [?] assembly

factories, and based on my Chinese language skills and my growing ability to

manage the automotive facilities, convinced my father in 1993, that we should come

to China to see what the opportunities were

chose one here and I was promoting myself to be, and was chosen to be the person

that did all the contract negotiations and was going to be the first GM of the joint

venture, for three years.

asked me to move from General Manager of the Joint Venture into a business

development role, helping all ten of their product groups figure out how to do

business in China; where to do business in China; who to do business with, etc

6.3.5.7.2.3 Ability to deal with frustration, understanding the political dynamic

understanding the differences of doing business in China, than in other... than in

North America, is a challenge for anyone, and you know, accepting the fact that it's

going to be different and in... And trying to learn those differences, rather than

being shocked and surprised every time something pops up that isn't the way it was in North America, is key to having less frustration here, I guess. Having the business networks are actually easier here, I think, than in the US, because the community of expat businessmen is... seems to be smaller and more concentrated than what you would find in a Detroit, for example.

6.3.5.7.2.4 My family's adjustment

personal challenges I think, as most people, they're not accessible to their families so much anymore; their circle of friends, etc. I've always been kind of independent. ...That was less of an issue for me than it was for my wife. My wife had... I mean we got married, and I took her to Florida, and that was like the second time she had been out of Michigan.

This was quite a challenge for her...So it took her a couple of years to adjust really, and that was probably the biggest personal challenge. Physically, on the personal side, it was difficult to raise an infant here at the time. There was no Western...

No strollers could be bought here. They were all made here. You just couldn't buy them here; no disposable diapers; very little baby food, and so we used to fill suitcases and bring them over at the right times.

6.3.5.7.2.5 Discretion to adjust roles as necessary, approach to problem solving

when we formed the Joint Venture, we did not try and implement Western standard manufacturing, because number one, it wasn't required; number two, the pricing of our current products wasn't going to support upgrading everything,

We kind of accepted what was there, but we made a lot of improvements that... just in the way they were manufacturing, the way they were handling material, etc.

6.3.5.7.2.6   Necessary skills and knowledge, discretion to adjust roles as necessary

Changing the existing worker's mentality, I would say was the biggest challenge over time. You know, if you do want to go from where we were to world-class manufacturing, you're better off starting green field, [?] bringing in your training systems and HR people from overseas, and getting people trained from the beginning. But to take an existing workforce and turn a switch in their mind is very, very difficult. So when we did have to finally upgrade, it was... It was probably the biggest challenge; getting the workers to change their ways.

Were you successful at changing their ways, do you think; do you feel?

KL   Partly, partly, you know, we were successful enough to where we still... We were making better quality products and stuff, but it took a couple of crises to wake up the partner, or the Chinese partner, that there is a new standard out there, and my foreign partner too. You know, I was sending emails and... at the time, maybe faxes...?

6.3.5.7.2.7   Support from HO

KL   But I... At one point, I literally had to produce a paper trail that said look, I have been raising the flag for six months, and there's a new quality standard coming in. I asked for support from M Corp. China wasn't on their map. They didn't provide support. We had a launch failure. They sent in a swat team to, you know, try and fix everything. And had I not had that paper trail where I had been asking for help and they had been refusing, I probably would have gotten fired, because that's how M Corp works.

But they did relent and agree, and said yes, you have been warning us

6.3.5.7.2.8 Understand the political dynamics of host country co-workers

I think quanxi is an integral part of the Chinese doing business. You can get along without it, but if you understand it and use it properly, it will enhance your ability to succeed. You know, some people have associated only the negative side of quanxi with the quanxi, like the home-bound [?] or red envelope, and giving business to your cousin or your friends; you know, that's not really what quanxi is about. Guanxi is... If you're in North America, you can attend courses on how to network. The Chinese live it, and that's how I explain it.

6.3.5.7.2.9 Ability to deal frustrations, being American in China

Type A personalities, who'll either have a heart attack or go home frustrated within 18, 24 months, or be extremely frustrated and bemoaning everything that happens to them during their time here. You know that some of the people that I've seen that have stayed the longest, and seem to have been the happiest, a lot of them have military backgrounds,

I got it in the Marine Corps, and I know the army is taught similar things, ... It's when you're overseas you are a representative of the US. Whether you like it or not, people are looking at you as everything that they think about America.

6.3.5.8 Klaus

Klaus (BA) was the German Managing Director of a freight forwarding company and he was in Shanghai with his American wife and child. His first posting was to Hong Kong and he was reposted to Shanghai to salvage operations which were embroiled in corruption. He had been in China 21 years and Klaus did not separate the time on each assignment as they were with the same organization.

6.3.5.8.1 Map

Like others, Klaus' map is very integrated; he was adamant he only wanted to select eight constructs. His map indicates a balance of person and organization constructs are most central to his satisfaction.
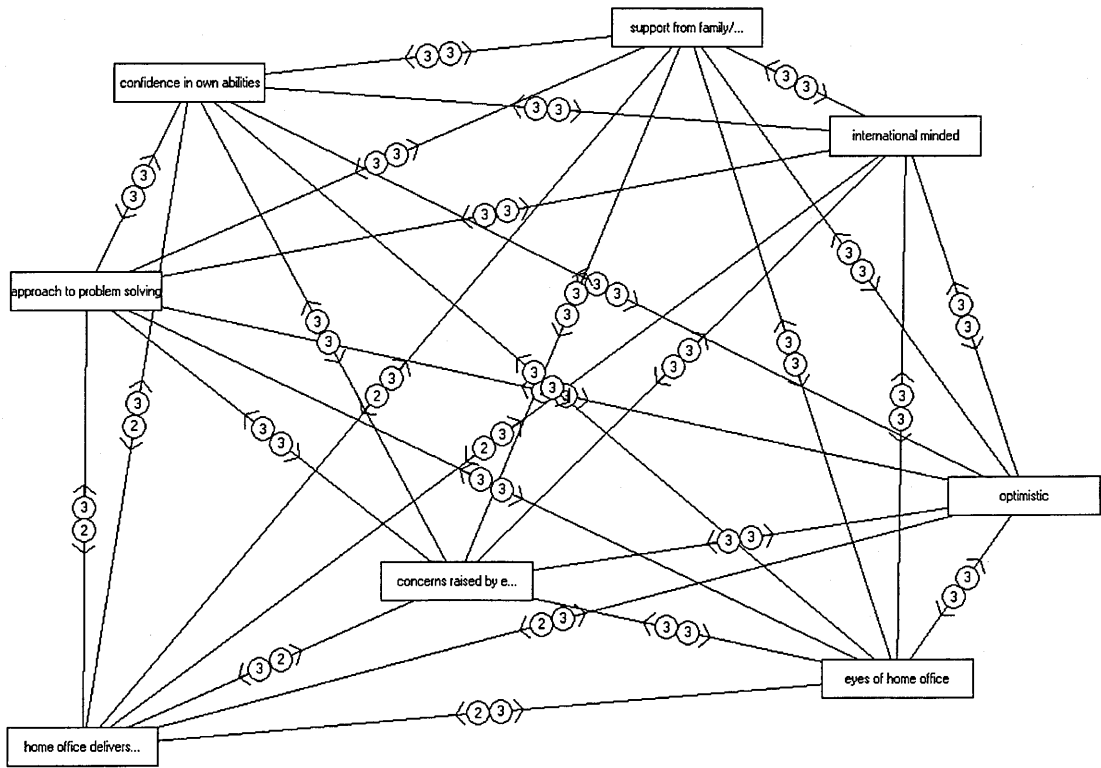
Figure 6-31: Klaus's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
support from family / important others	7	7
confidence in one' abilities	7	7
international minded (curious)	7	7
approach to problem solving	7	7
eyes of home office	7	7
home office delivers on promises	7	7
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by HO	7	7
optimistic	7	7

Table 6-25: Klaus's map link structure

Following are quotes from Klaus's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.8.2   Interview

6.3.5.8.2.1   Selection process, eyes of the home office, clarity of purpose, PO fit: needs-supplies, PO fit: demand-abilities

I was seven years in Hong Kong prior to coming to Shanghai and it was a business opportunity to take over as branch manager [?] in Shanghai that persuaded me in 1995 to move here. And the opportunity, looking at the... then was a short-term opportunity to come fix a branch that was a mess, and here we are 14 years later.

So the opportunity for me was seen as young, dumb and not questioning too much, and taking on the opportunity – maybe a little bit naive at that time, saying to myself I had a good track record in Hong Kong, and saying why not see if you can emulate that in Shanghai. Fortunately for me and my colleagues it worked out. But as I said, it was a rebooting of the company and an opportunity taken, ...and you have an opportunity to make a name for yourself, which I believe I've done over the last 14 years.

6.3.5.8.2.2   Selection process and how it changed, growth, skills and knowledge, language, PO fit: demand-abilities

I think 14 years ago when I was sent here to Shanghai there was not really a selection process. I had a very good relationship with my managing director in Hong Kong, who is now our group CEO, so it's gone... as he's developed, I've moved up. He's instrumentally pulled me along if you want to look at it that way. I see that as part of any expatriate's ability as well is being able to cultivate the management at home office to ensure that the growth is consistently there, not only from a company's perspective, but from an expatriate's perspective. But I think when I look back at it now, if we are hiring... We have five expatriates in China; this is really high. We have an internal process where we always look to hire

internally first before we go outside. But if I look at the process internally, it is

quite selective these days. I mean we don't just send people to China because, you

know, we need a westerner here or we need an Asian person here; it's really

specific to a set skill that we don't have.

6.3.5.8.2.3 One of the few comments on corporate culture, PO fit: demands-abilities, language skills

Language is not really the important one; it's can you bring the customers, can

you maintain the customers, can you mange, can you lead, are you what we

require? And I think the big difference between the expatriate manager and a local

manager today, I strongly believe – and I know it's my company's policy as well –

is that, does that manager, you know, hold the company's loyalty; does that

manager, you know, spread the company message, not just...?

6.3.5.8.2.4 Approach to problem solving, necessary skills and knowledge, move out of comfort zone

I'm given an immense amount of freedom. My boss sits 12 hours away from me

here, so there is never... I'm in one of the fortunate positions that I don't have a

management that micro-manages me. And I believe that is the same message that I

pass onto my director reports here, is that I'm not interested... If I have to micro-

manage somebody, I will definitely not have them with the company.

6.3.5.8.2.5 Lose touch with HO politics, fitting in when I return home after being gone so long, PO fit: demand-abilities

The negative effects of course is the distance. If you are losing the political touch

to your HQ, you're not so involved in the corporate politics that people are at HQ.

And after 21 years abroad, as my own director has told me, you become almost

indispensible to the company – except in China. You know, they want to keep you

out here because the simple reason is that... Maybe, you know, I find that over the years I've lost the skill set to deal with the corporate politics.

... you become very Asia-focused or very China-focused. I call it the golden handcuffs – you know, you're unable to leave and... You're not unable to leave the company, but you're unable to leave the area, because of the simple fact that you're not able to operate in other areas. On the good... sorry, bad side, good side, whichever you want to look at it, I just feel that you lost maybe the common touch that is required at head office, and you sort of... you come back as sort of the prodigal son every six months and people think, oh he's just come back for another six month vacation.

6.3.5.8.2.6 Critical to success, fitting in; expectations, patience, flexibility, approach to problem solving, ability to deal with frustrations, language skills

Maybe it's a gut feeling that one has when one meets a person for the first time – you either know that this person is going to fit in here or not. And I don't think it's people who say oh it's a language thing, it's a cultural thing; I think it's just a person's adaptability or inability to adapt to the local things here. I think the best thing that I've always said to people who've arrived here is lowering your expectations. If you are looking at the expat life perhaps in Singapore or in other, let's say nicer climbs [?] than in Shanghai, then lower your expectations. I think people here come here too quickly and are disappointed, instead of just saying; okay I need... maybe I should adjust myself.

The suggestion we be, be patient. You need an enormous... If you... Especially out here in Asia, you need [unclear] patience. There are too many issues that rise too quickly and people tend to lose their heads here and try to solve things on a

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western or a text book manner; whereas here being flexible and showing a lot of

patience... And sometimes a little bit of subservience helps as well.

6.3.5.9 Lauren

Lauren (MSc) was an American on her first international assignment and was the Director of Operations for an HR Consulting firm. She had been in China less than three months and had actively pursued an international posting with the owner of the organization. She was single.

6.3.5.9.1 Map
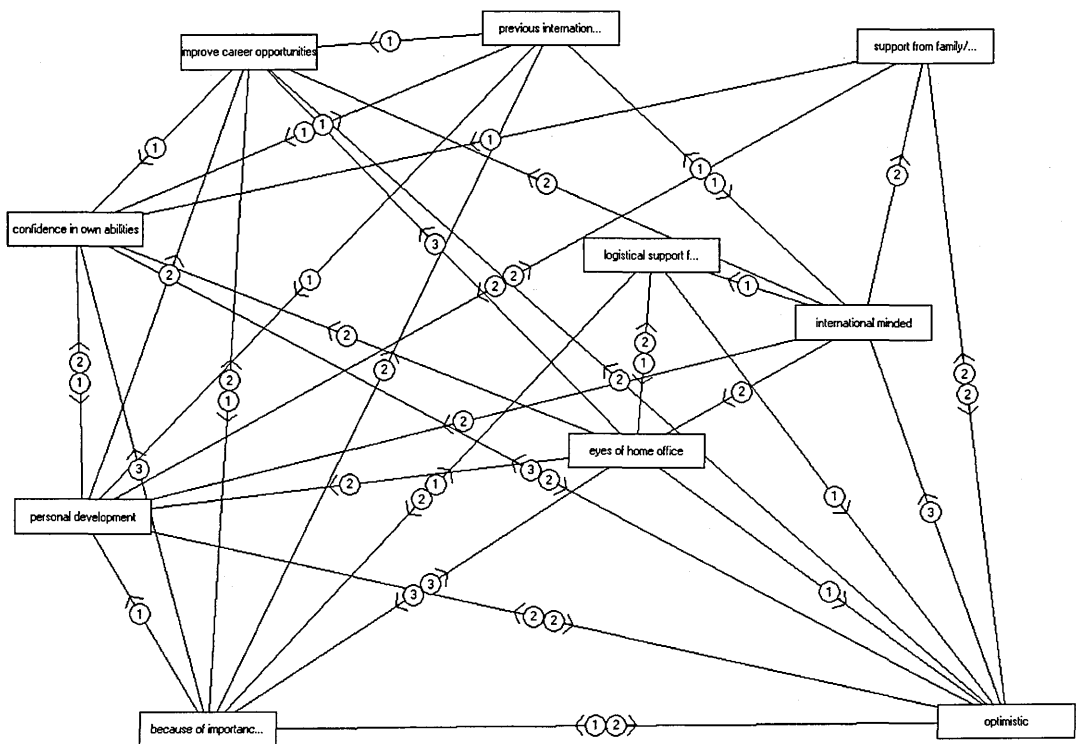
Figure 6-32: Lauren's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	6	2
previous international experience	3	4
support from family / important others	3	3
confidence in one' abilities	7	3
logistical support from home office	3	3
personal development	7	4
international minded	2	6
because of importance of China, receiving more scrutiny	4	7
eyes of home office	3	6
local worker support in host country	6	6

Table 6-26: Lauren's map link structure

Lauren's map indicates that most central to her satisfaction is *local worker support in host country* (ID=6, OD=6).Her map also includes four organization constructs. when considering just the ID, *personal development* and *confidence in one's abilities* are most central (ID=7), that is, these two constructs are influenced the most by other selected constructs. The most central OD construct is *because of the importance of China, receiving more scrutiny;* Lauren considers this construct to be directly influencing seven other constructs.

Following are quotes from Lauren's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.9.2 Interview

6.3.5.9.2.1 Selection process, previous experience

I've been coming to China for the last year for a couple of short trips for my clients that I used to be managing their global implementation of our software program. ... In the process, I had spent some time in some various cities, met the Connexa people over here and built relationships with them.

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6.3.5.9.2.2 Selection process, PO fit: demand-abilities

There were four other candidates and my specific skill set that relates to delivery of our software programs, consulting, and projects, was determined as a specific need over here so, aside from the regular role of Director of Operations for APAC, they wanted me to focus specifically on getting this team trained in filling the gaps because that was my expertise. So I think that was my competitive working image and the reason why I had this opportunity. I also had had a chance to develop a relationship with the President of GM for our China division, so he was involved in that process and comfortable, so that was helpful as well.

6.3.5.9.2.3 Logistical support from HO, support from family/important others

It was very easy because the apartment was owned by the company, furnished by the company and so I literally went from the airport to my new home. So I didn't have to do any of that so actually it was basically handed to me.

RO   So it's all been expedited and very stress free.

LA   Yes. I mean obviously me having the decision on Thursday and being on a flight on Tuesday, it was quite challenging for closing down my life in the US but again, support from my family I mentioned as one of the important things; I was lucky to have rich parents who could take care of all that stuff so over here it was pretty easy. .

6.3.5.9.2.4 Clarity of purpose, eyes of HO

I just want to make sure I understand. So you've come over here with a very clear understanding of why you're here. What your role and function is supposed to be.

LA   Yes. And I think part of that is because it's a small company. We have only 1,500 people. This role reports directly to the CEO and the CEO has a vested and

personal interest in China so he's a bit more passionate about the vision over here and what he wants to have done. ...

I think having clear expectations and constant communication. So although I work for the US Company and the CEO, a lot of my stuff comes from the President of the China Group. So just making sure that everyone's on the same page and understanding because I can already see things getting mixed in that so I think that's the biggest one.

6.3.5.9.2.5 Local worker support in host country, language skills, previous experience in China, eyes of home office

Yes, I am fortunate that there are a couple of people here who were educated in the US in Chinese and they have really been so instrumental in supporting me as being able to help with language things and being able to help with cultural things and things like that so overall, it's been pretty easy and I think that it's been because I've been here before.

6.3.5.9.2.6 Logistical support from HO, HO expectations

And that's just purely because of the client demand there which is positive reinforcement that they liked what I was doing. It's fine; it's exhausting. I think that's my biggest challenge, is trying to find a balance and I'm new here so I'm still getting into the... trying to find a balance and a rhythm of: how do I get my day job done here, how do I still support what I have to in the US, how do I keep my health, have a social life, and try and get settled in Shanghai. It's that balance that I'm struggling with and I know that a lot of people struggle with that because there's certain... I think there's a lot of people in the US that are respectful and understanding that I'm 13 hours later, and they're flexible, and they will get up early one morning and I'll get up early the next time. But then there's a handful of

people at the parent company that have no concept of anything outside their eight

to five; they don't care. And that is a challenge of 1 am phone calls, of 5 am phone

calls.

6.3.5.9.2.7 Co-workers willingness to make decisions (nb opposite Joe)

There really isn't one. I just make a decision. I think actually I find people are a

bit surprised when I ask for their opinion or ask what do you think we should do.

They're just looking for that kind of authority and just tell me what to do.

6.3.5.9.2.8 Personal development, international minded, PO fit: needs-supplies

Do an expat Assignment. Yes, I'd say it's just... there's a difference between just

internationally travelling because I have travelled the world for my job and again

it's in and out, in and out, and really getting into someone's culture, it's just... open

your mind is not even a strong enough phrase for this and what's the phrase I want

to use, it opens the front gates almost, of there's so much more out there and

there's so many different ways of doing things and you learn so much, not about

other cultures but you also learn about yourself. That's what I would say, seek out

an expat.

6.3.5.10 Mark

Mark (MBA) was an American from Michigan who was Sales Director for an automotive

parts company that specialized in upholstery and had lived in Shanghai with his wife and

young daughter for approximately six years. He had one previous international posting

which was also in China.

Mark identified two points of great importance to him. While he enjoyed living and

working in China he acknowledged decisions would have to be made regarding the

education and upbringing of their child in the near future. Like Keith, he thought quite a lot

about being an American in China. The other concern Mark had was given the collapsing

state of the American automobile industry, what opportunities would there be for him back

in the USA.

6.3.5.10.1 Map
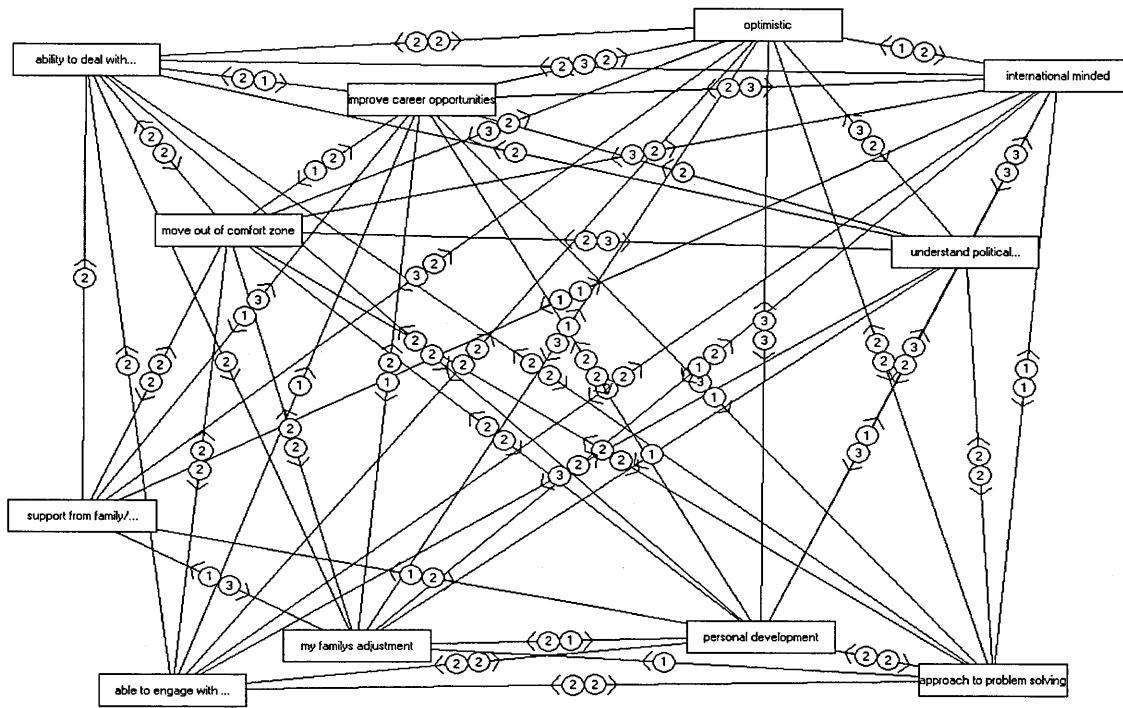
Figure 6-33: Mark's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	1	8
ability to deal with frustrations	9	6
support from family / important others	6	7
able to engage with people who are different	6	8
personal development	10	10
my family's adjustment	9	6
international minded (curious)	9	10
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	6	9
approach to problem solving	8	9
move out of comfort zone	10	10
optimistic	10	10

Table 6-27: Mark's map link structure

Mark's map identifies person constructs as most central to his satisfaction. Table 6-27

indicates the most important constructs were *personal development, move out of comfort*

zone, and *optimistic* (ID=10, OD=10 respectively). Mark identified one more OD as most central, *internationally minded (curious)* (OD=10). He had selected 10 constructs as most central to his satisfaction.

Following are quotes from Mark's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.10.2 Interview

6.3.5.10.2.1 Improve career opportunities, personal development, PO fit: needs-supplies

the biggest reason was, like I mentioned earlier, was to expedite my personal, my career development. I saw this as an opportunity to be different than thousands, tens of thousands of sales people in Detroit, and create a little niche of experience and expertise in China

Having experience over here I felt I had asset value, you know, experience in doing business, and the option was for me to go back to Detroit – that was my first option – which wasn't a good option.

6.3.5.10.2.2 Able to engage with people who are different, understand the political dynamics of host country co-workers, approach to problem solving

China is an exciting market, but it is frustrating in that they're... business is done differently here, the culture is very different. And while I understand that you can't change a culture and a way of life and the way of doing business in Asia overnight, I recognize it is frustrating, but it is also exciting to be part of that. To see the changes over the years, because it is moving, they're now becoming more internationally minded and more open to doing business the way the rest of the world are accustomed

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6.3.5.10.2.3 Support from family, family adjustment, improve career opportunities

talking to others, they all said the same thing, stay in China as long as you can. It's easier said than done because it's very expensive, but I made that commitment and the family bought it into it, that was the key. Once they bought into it and then it worked out.

6.3.5.10.2.4 International experience

I think the best thing that any parent can do for their kids is get them outside of the US, travel, go to school abroad, it just helps you become more open minded and not always see things from in my case, the American perspective.

6.3.5.11 Michael

With previous international experience gained in Singapore, Michael (BA), an American, was offered an opportunity to head up China operations for his organization which specialized in the manufacturing of scientific and medical equipment. As the General Manager for China operations of the MNE, Michael and his family had lived in China for two years. He thought it was an exciting challenge as the company was 'late getting into the China market' because of their focus on Europe and North American operations.

6.3.5.11.1 Map

Michael who has international experience displays a complex map. The most central constructs in Michael's map are person oriented, *personal development, move out of comfort zone* (ID=9, OD=9), *and outgoing personality* (ID=9, OD=9). Considering just the
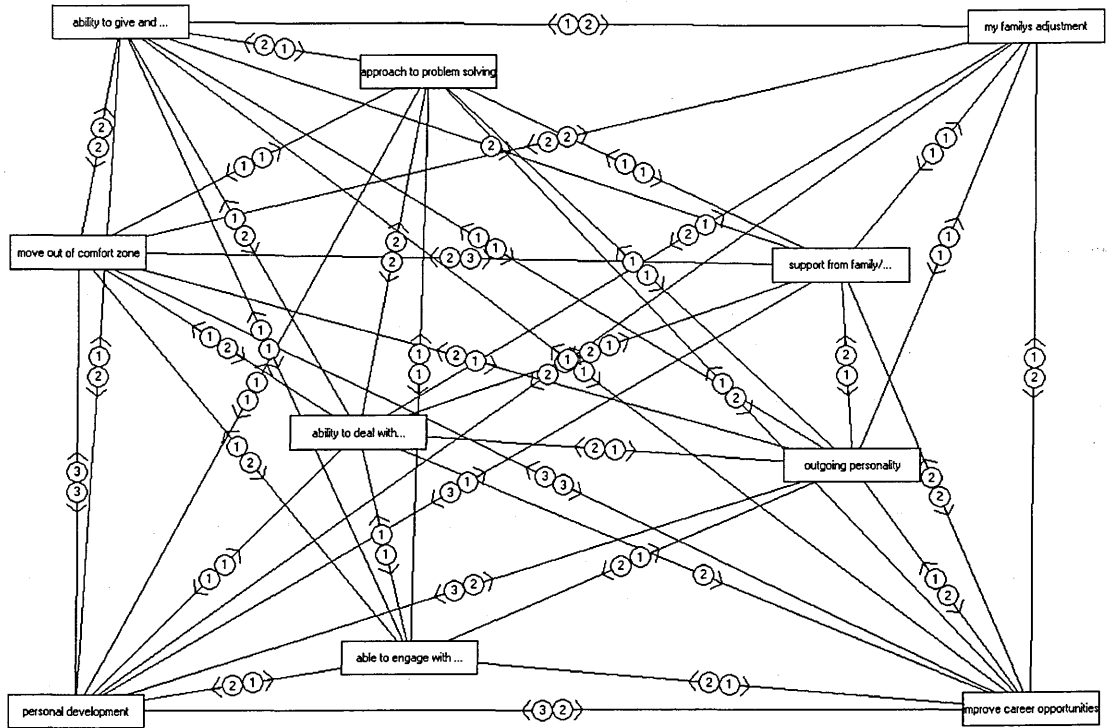
Figure 6-34: Michael's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	9	8
ability to deal with frustrations	8	9
support from family / important others	8	7
able to engage with people who are different	7	7
my family's adjustment	7	7
outgoing personality	9	9
approach to problem solving	8	8
ability to give and take to get along	8	9
move out of comfort zone	9	9
personal development	9	9

Table 6-28: Minnesota's map link structure

ID, the most salient constructs are *improve career, personal development, outgoing personality, and move out of comfort zone* (ID=9 respectively). Michael considers *ability to deal with frustrations, outgoing personality, ability to give and take to get along, move out of comfort zone and personal development* (OD=9) as most influential. However, the other constructs cluster at OD=7 and OD=8 respectively, that is, al constructs are highly involved in his satisfaction.

Following are quotes from Michael's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.11.2 Interview

6.3.5.11.2.1 Selection, move out of comfort zone, improve career opportunities, PO fit: needs-supplies (from perception of his hiring)

was in progress of moving he out of the blue offered a job here and it was really

kind of an interesting opportunity and I had learned a little bit about this company

and thought it was a pretty interesting and exciting company to be at, so I decided

to take a little bit of a leap into the unknown and try working at Thermo Fisher, so

here I am

6.3.5.11.2.2 Selection of expatriates, PO fit: demands-abilities (from perception of Vice President)

There is no formal programme, very haphazard kind of approach to it, so it hasn't

been structured in that manner. They have been driven more just based on what

are the needs and opportunities, and so they needed somebody to run the company

here. They didn't have anybody to do it, and so if a foreigner was available... if a

local was available they would hire them, if a foreigner was available they would

hire them. There was no structured approach to it.

6.3.5.11.2.3 PO fit: demand-abilities, PO fit: needs-supplies

Well, there was no strategic plan here. I think really what I was hired to do was to

pull this company together as one company, create a strategic vision, and plan on

what we would do to grow this thing and really drive it, accelerate it, so all the

investments we're doing this year was a result of that homework in that first year

when we were trying to flesh out the details, so now it's really executing that

strategic vision and helping with the organisational change management and so forth.

6.3.5.11.2.4 Personal development, professional development, PO fit: needs-supplies, PO fit demands-abilities

You know, you figure we have, you know, 1,300 people, ten out of that 1,300 is not a lot. That's a pretty small percentage, and then the benefit of that is you get a lot of cross-cultural relationship building, you get a lot of knowledge transfer in both directions, and then also those expatriates build up skills and capabilities that later in their career will be quite valuable on a global perspective if you're running businesses and so forth, so my argument is that they ought to pick high potential candidates from Europe or the US, and I ought to pick what jobs I'm interested in having [unclear].

6.3.5.11.2.5 Necessary skills and knowledge

Well, the... it depends on the function. Sales functions I don't have a problem finding talent. ...

The problem jobs are really the senior management positions, so anybody, you know, that reports to me, those are tough jobs to fill, and the primary reason is that that person has to have a mix of street smarts for doing business in China, but also the ability to step back and communicate with the CEO and executive vice presidents of our company, and to find somebody that has that skills set is pretty tricky

6.3.5.11.2.6 Skills and knowledge, ability to deal with frustrations

People with no experience, you kind of... your expectations are a little bit lower, right, and what I would find oftentimes is that people that we hire with three to five

years of experience have, you know, the base level knowledge of certain things that are really at the level of somebody with no experience, and what in taking about specifically are things like Six Sigma, you know.

6.3.5.11.2.7 Ability to deal with frustration, necessary skills and knowledge, co-workers willingness to make decisions

... autonomous, self-directed, and teamwork, you know, they're two different things but they go hand in hand, and the concept of being self-directed and having a team that's empowered to make decisions is not well established in this culture here, I noticed at 3M and at Thermo Fisher, and so there's a certain amount of coaching, development, training and a certain amount of frustration that goes with trying to get that kind of mentality going. It's more of a command and control type of thing that people are used to here.

MI   It gets overwhelming too because they'll ask me... you know, I'll be pulled into making decisions, and it's so easy to get sucked into this, but I'll get sucked into making decisions about the colour of this frigging carpet.

RO   Well, do you have any thoughts on why it's like that?

MI   Yes, I think so. I think it's rooted in a couple of things. One is nobody has any brothers or sisters here, right, so they don't get into this notion of working in a family team unit, you know, you're not sharing things, you're don't have to do any listening [?]. Two, the whole education system is very hierarchal, rote learning and all the rest, and then, three, there's no team sports in anything.

6.3.5.11.2.8 Approach to problem solving

Well, you've got to start coaching and training and you put in place systems. You know, we teach... this thing behind you here is something that I had... I wrote one

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day, and I find that every day I have to point to these three things that people need to do, and this is just basic stuff to me, but the boulder [?] is lean Six Sigma thing,

Then number two, that project charter, a project charter is used to help a team of people define what it is they're going to do to work together, and that needs to have champions, process stakeholders, and team members on it, and 99.9% of every project we have in this company fails because they never do that first step of defining who the team is, and so nobody owns it, there's no engagement, nothing.

6.3.5.11.2.9 Able to adapt, move out of comfort zone, ability to give and take to get along, international minded, patience

the first one would be some sort of adaptability I guess would be the word to use. Some... certain people are kind of rigid, you know, like they would want this folder to be organised like that, they would not be comfortable with it being askew. That personality is probably not going to work here, you know, so somebody that's adaptable / flexible.

6.3.5.11.2.10 Move out of comfort zone, international minded

The second thing is I think curiosity is a characteristic that I would look for in an expatriate because, you know, people don't just come up to you and say all right, here, let me teach you about my country, about our culture, and about the things that we do and so forth. You have to have kind of a curiosity to ask questions about it, be interested in it, and you know, kind of intrinsically motivate a curiosity towards understanding the situation.

6.3.5.11.2.11 Work ethic, ability to deal with frustrations, ability to give and take to get along

work ethic, so generally speaking you end up working a hell of a lot more hours in these kinds of jobs than you would if you..

Like if I had this type of job in the US I'd probably work 20% to 30% less in terms of hours, and the reason is because you oftentimes have to do teleconferences late at night or super early in the morning. You have to do more... you have to get your hands dirty more. You have to do more the things that other people might do for you in the... in your home country. You have to do a lot more coaching, training, development type of efforts here because of the nature of the skills sets here, so I think those would be three.

6.3.5.11.2.12 Ability to deal with frustrations

Another one that's just coming to mind here is a little bit of patience too. You can get frustrated as hell here, you know, with the language, with the skills sets, with everything being new and different, so that's a biggie

6.3.5.11.2.13 Guanxi

I think it is overrated, over-applied to being a Chinese only thing. To me it is absolutely... it's just... it's a degree of intensity perhaps, is the only difference, but to me there is absolutely zero difference between America, UK, France, Japan, China, anything related to those two words, and so on the quan xi, that's all about relationships, right.

6.3.5.12 Peter

Peter (high school, certified actuary) was a Canadian actuary who was the Technical Director for a British insurance firm. He had been back in China for approximately one and

a half years after working in India. For Peter, returning to China with his family was a homecoming of sorts as his wife's family had left China during the Cultural Revolution and she still had family in the Shanghai area.

Peter was in the insurance and finance sector and faced some issues others did not. In China, the insurance and financial industry was very different from in the west. It was heavily regulated; the Chinese had a very limited experience with insurance thus growth and expansion would not be easy or perhaps even possible. Given the nature of the industry, Peter mentioned his organization was downsizing operations.

6.3.5.12.1 Map

Table 6-29 indicates the two most salient constructs appear to be *eyes of home office* (ID=7, OD=9) and *necessary skills and knowledge* (ID=7, OD=9). The majority of constructs are focused on his development.

Peter registered as satisfied on his survey yet the amount of negative influence warrants further exploration.

It appears in Figure 6-36 that being the *eyes and ears of the home office* although it has its rewards as evidenced by the positive relation with *better compensation*, overwhelmingly it appears to negatively influence the other constructs associated with it. Peter also sees a negative influence *of knowledge and skills* on the other constructs.
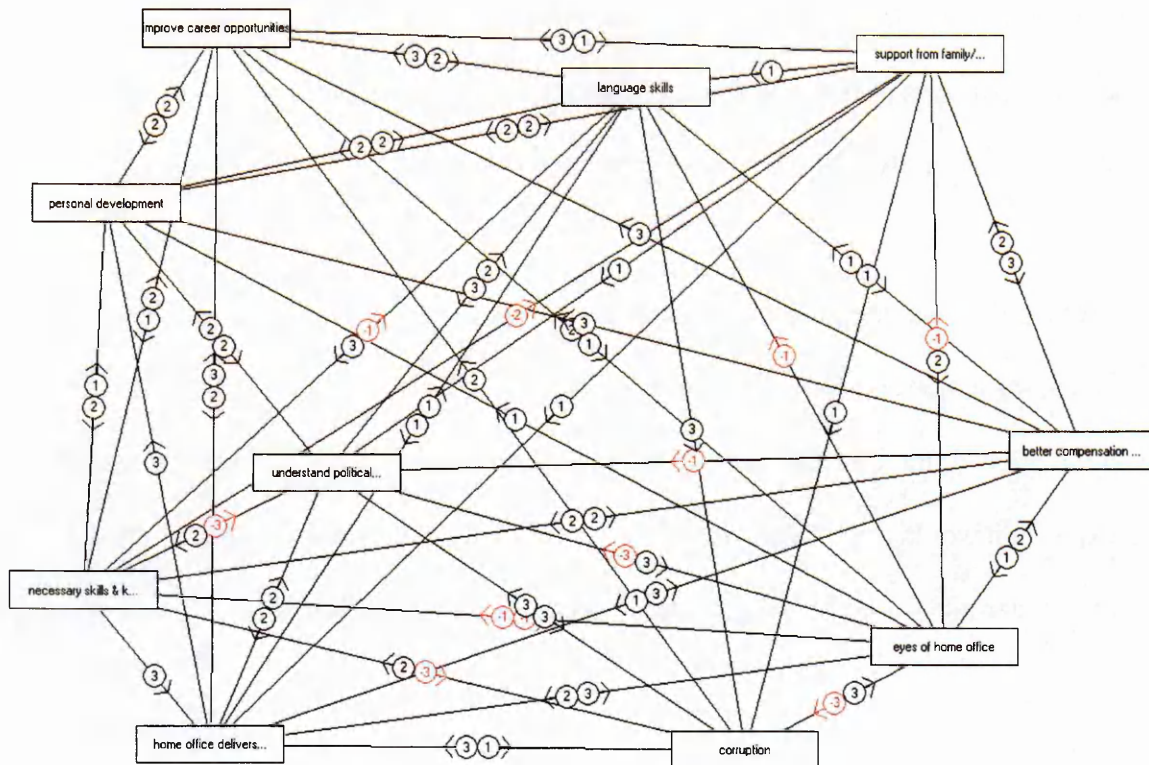
Figure 6-35: Peter's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	8	6
language skills	8	7
support from family / important others	5	8
personal development	8	5
better compensation opportunities	5	8
corruption	6	5
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	8	6
eyes of home office	7	9
necessary skills and knowledge	7	9
home office delivers on promises	8	7

Table 6-29: Peter's map link structure

When the map is deconstructed to highlight the negative influences in Peter's perception of his satisfaction (Figure 6-36), a symmetry is apparent. Both *necessary skills* and *knowledge and eyes of home office* are unidirectional and have strong negative (-3) relationships with *corruption* and *understand the political dynamic of the host country co-workers*. It would

appear that not having the requisite skills, support from family/important others, or language skills were the concerns experessed.
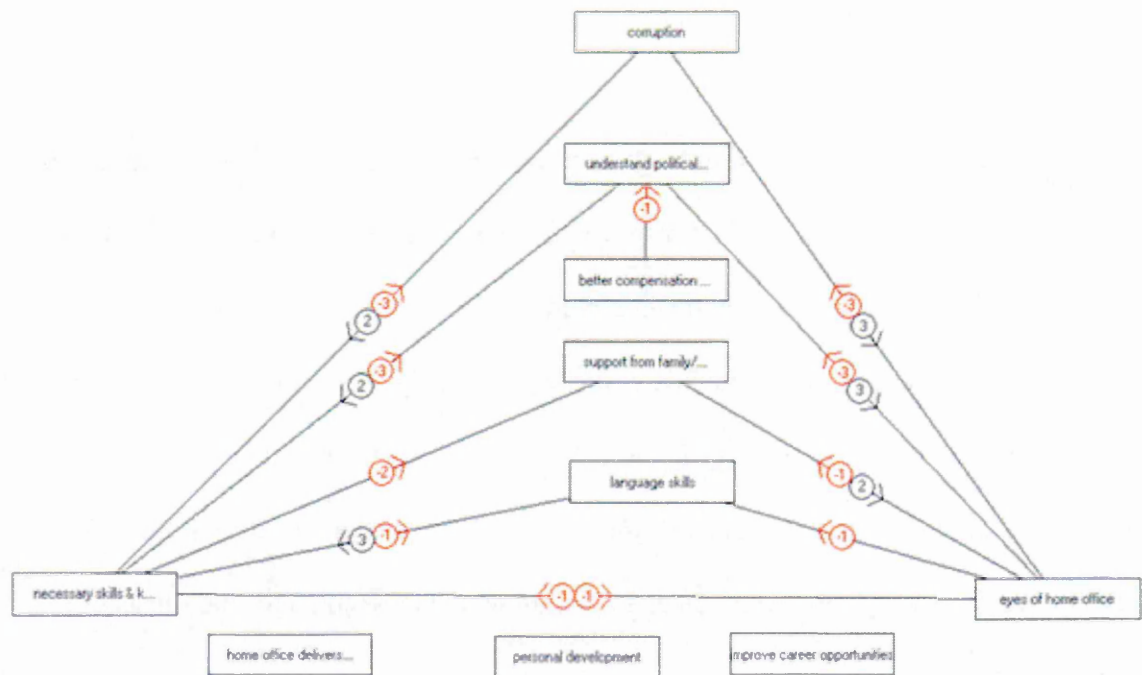
Figure 6-36: Peter's map reduced

In his interview and getting know phase, Peter talked about how his wife wanted to stay in China, he was interested in a career move; he had children but no mention was made about their adjustment in China. Second, because of the nature of his industry corruption and politics weighted heavily. Third, there was a lack of skills and knowledge and this was having a negative influence on all aspects of his experience. He lacked language skills and his co-workers lacked an understanding of the insurance industry. Finally, and the most important reason as evidenced by the number of red links and the strength of the links was *understanding the political dynamic*.

Peter was satisfied with the organization; in his interview it was clear this was an exchange to fulfil his goal, living in China. Perhaps, he was able to recognize or accept the negative part of the environment in which he worked and shrug it off. When looking at his

complete map and the weighted averages of the constructs chosen, it is evident that with

Peter his personal situation far outweighs any other concerns. He rates very highly on

career development (ID= 2.5, OD= 1.50), *personal development* (ID= 2.00, OD= 2.00) and

better compensation (ID= 2.20, OD=1.50)

When the black links are explored in conjunction it becomes apparent that the family plays

a strong support role in Peter's life. It also appears that Peter is focussed on himself; his

career, his income, and his personal development. As mentioned in his interview he

actively sought to get back to China, his wife and her family was from Shanghai and he did

well in China. In his post-interview, he did mention the bureaucratic nature of the

organization he worked for. Figure 6-36 suggests the family offers positive support for his

role of being the *eyes of the home office*, a position which he seemed to find distasteful (as

did John with ChinAmAir).

Following are quotes from Peter's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.12.2 Interview

6.3.5.12.2.1 Selection process, improve career opportunities, PO fit: demands-abilities, PO

fit: needs-supplies

FinancialChina were gearing up their operations in China, didn't specifically have

an opportunity in China at the time so the offer was India for a three year

assignment. And after only a year of being in India some people retired here, and

knowing my aspirations they came directly to me and said would you be interested

in coming to Shanghai, which I quickly jumped on

it's been about 18 months now. The business here continues to be a challenge; it's

heavily regulated. Local Chinese authorities are very restrictive and insurance and

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financial institutions are developing and expanding their networks deeply within China, which has led now to further downsizing of our office.

When I think of... because I meet a lot expats here who can't wait to go home; I'm here fighting to stay and I can't hold a job.

6.3.5.12.2.2 Understand the political dynamics, corruption, eyes of home office

So I'd say the country culture was less dramatic of a change as the corporate culture was, so it's trying to get your head around the corporate lingo, and the philosophies and appetite for the corporate business, and this sort of thing – that is a bigger challenge to me than, you know coming to work or living in Shanghai.

But it goes deeper – there's the actual money that changes hands, the additional commission, the bribery, the kickbacks, and things of this nature that happens at various levels. I, as a purchaser of insurance within my organisation would expect that my broker or the insurer who was providing me coverage would kick something back to me for buying it from them.

in the beginning, when we looked at the business out here, we would do business with organisations – when I was with an American company for instance – that went to America. And if they were American what was the percentage ownership of Chinese, and if it was too much ownership by Chinese, they were too much embedded within that guanxi type of environment so we couldn't compete, I couldn't kick you back your extra commission under the table because my company doesn't allow it. ...

RO   I even talked with somebody this morning that the company had a very

strong policy, none of the red envelopes, full stop.

PT   No, ours does too. I mean, we completely disallow it, gifts over a certain

value have to be declared if you receive them, you know, we watch what we buy

other people in terms of gifts and this sort of thing so we're very much in the same

boat.

RO   Right. So how do you deal with the conflict then?

PT   Well, that's the problem; we're not dealing well, which is why [inaudible]

and, you know, the global economy also had an impact greatly on our business.

6.3.5.13 Priscilla

Priscilla (Bachelor degree) was the Senior Analyst in a Chinese owned marketing firm and

was from Singapore. She had been posted to Shanghai for just under two years and like

many of the other Singaporeans in this project she had been offered a position in the China

operations because organizations were moving parts of their operations to China. Her other

option was a layoff. At the time she was also 'looking for something new'. Given her

experience, Priscilla was looking forward to more international opportunities.

She was in Shanghai on her own. Although she spoke Mandarin, she talked at length of the

inadequacies and differences of her Mandarin dialect and how she felt inept.

6.3.5.13.1 Map
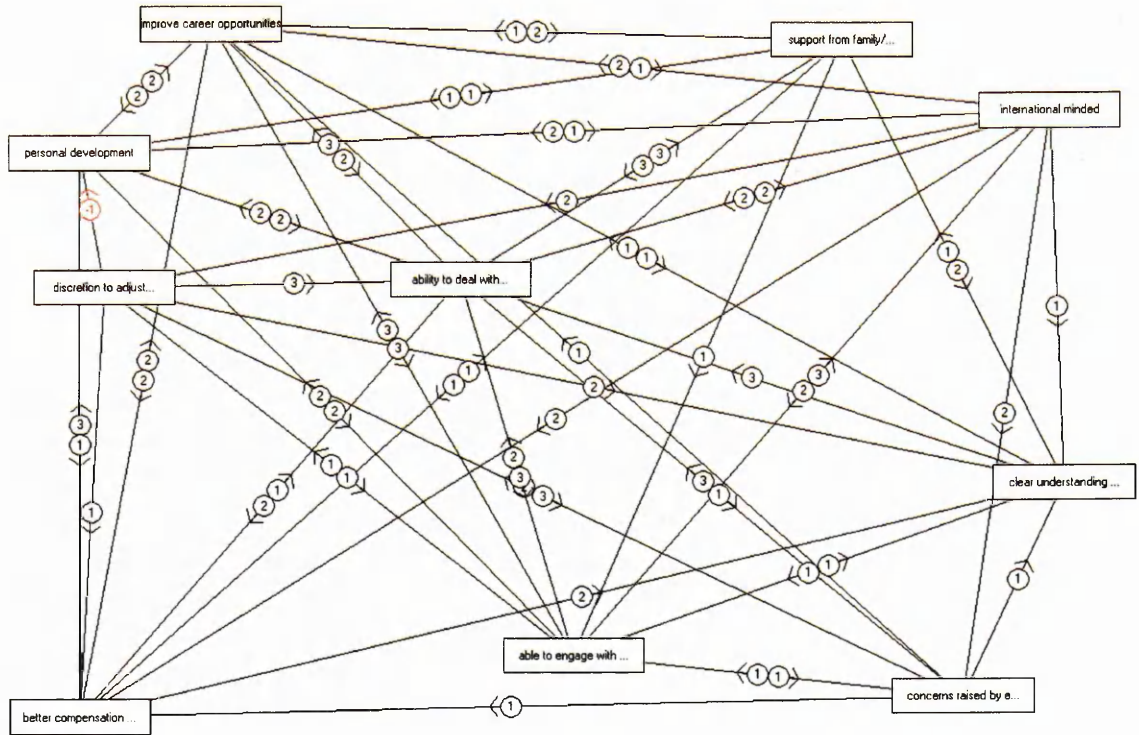
Figure 6-37: Priscilla's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	8	7
ability to deal with frustrations	9	7
support from family / important others	5	6
able to engage with people who are different	8	7
clear understanding of why on assignment	7	4
personal development	7	6
better compensation opportunities	7	5
international minded (curious)	4	8
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	3	6
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by HO	4	6

Table 6-30: Priscilla's link structure

Priscilla's map, Table 6-30, identifies her *ability to deal frustration* (ID=9, OD=7) as most central to her satisfaction followed closely by her desire to *improve her career* (ID=8, OD=7) and her *ability to deal with people who are different* (ID=8, OD=7).

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There was a negative influence (-1) between *discretion to adjust roles and methods as necessary → personal development*. Deconstruction of her map was not pursued because there was only the one link. It would appear an inability to modify how she operated had a negative influence on her personal development.

Following are quotes from Priscilla's interview highlighting the issues important to her.

6.3.5.13.2 Interview

6.3.5.13.2.1 Personal development, improve career opportunities, PO fit: needs-supplies

> *...wanted to try something different. I was wanting to leave Singapore for a while and the opportunity came up, so I just took it*

> *the key advantages for a foreigner working in Shanghai is, of course, that you get to develop a different set of skills. You're faced with different challenges, more challenges, because you are thrown out of your comfort zone, and because Shanghai in general I think is a pretty demanding place. It's easier for me because I know the language, so I can imagine how difficult it will be for someone who doesn't know the language.*

> *...one of the good things about being in Shanghai, especially being in Shanghai during the world recession, is that, you know, I get more opportunities than my friends who were in Singapore at that period of time.*

6.3.5.13.2.2 Ability to deal with frustrations, personal development, able to deal with people who are different

> *So aside from language skills, you also learn how to deal with people who just see things differently, and adapt to it. I think the key advantage is in recognizing that*

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there are differences and working to resolve the differences. Some people can't take it; they are really frustrated, and those are the people who move, maybe within a year or something

6.3.5.13.2.3 Ability to deal with frustration, discretion to adjust roles

in China people probably don't speak up as much about what they think, so I think, you know, the initial frustrations are that something happens and then you wonder why people knew about, you know, the problem earlier but did not point out the problem. ... So I think, you know, the way to deal with that is basically to just keeping tabs on things as they happen, so just keep asking. Even if no one speaks up, just keep asking them: is there something wrong? Then we can prevent it probably from happening.

6.3.5.13.2.4 PO fit: needs supplies

I wanted to try something different. I was wanting to leave Singapore for a while and the opportunity came up, so I just took it.

6.3.5.13.2.5 PO fit: needs supplies, step out of comfort zone

... advantages for a foreigner working in Shanghai is, of course, that you get to develop a different set of skills. You're faced with different challenges, more challenges, because you are thrown out of your comfort zone,

the most important thing is like, you know, developing different skills. It also... Probably one of the good things about being in Shanghai, especially being in Shanghai during the world recession, is that, you know, I get more opportunities than my friends who were in Singapore at that period of time

6.3.5.13.2.6 International minded, personal development

open to different cultures; you know, internationally more minded like perhaps in

there: you know, not easily frustrated.

6.3.5.13.2.7 Clear understanding of why on assignment, PO fit: needs-supplies

if like me they want to experience something different, then I would it's a great

experience. But be prepared for some, I'd say, trauma that I experienced, but... you

know. And I think what you had on your survey there, one thing that I really agree

with very strongly, that is being clear about why you are coming, because everyone

has different reasons. So if you are... you know, if you are someone who doesn't

want to leave your comfort zone and all that, but you would move for a... like a big

pay package and stuff like that, if that's what you thought, then, you know, yes;

that's a very strong reason for coming as well, yes.

6.3.5.13.2.8 PO fit: demands-abilities, clarity of purpose

being a good fit with the organization is important, and that means there are a few

aspects to that. First of all, it's a skill set that... you know, you need to have the

right skill set the company wants. Secondly, it's like a similar outlook, or similar

perspective in... you know, towards the work that you do. And then clarity I think is

important as well

6.3.5.14 Roz

Roz (MBA) was unique. She was an American, less than 40 years of age and the Vice

President of an American healthcare/medical product SME. She had been in Shanghai with

her spouse and children for five years to develop the operations and had become the

premier income which allowed him to resign his position and begin retraining as a sports

teacher. This was her second expatriate assignment in China.

Because she had been involved in commuting from America to establish operations in China, when decisions were being made as to who would head up the operations, Roz was encouraged to apply. She felt her experience helped prepare her for the change and she also appears be one of the few who had a thorough pre-departure selection process. She and her family participated in a series of interviews with psychologists to gauge their suitability.

She also was concerned with being American. Roz also wanted to inoculate her children against developing a sense of privilege and disregard for others.

6.3.5.14.1 Map

Roz's map contains only person oriented constructs. The constructs are balanced and reflect a concern for her development and her families well being. She is one of the very few and the only western expatriate to be concerned with insurance matters. A possible reason may be she is American; alternatively, she may have family with health concerns.
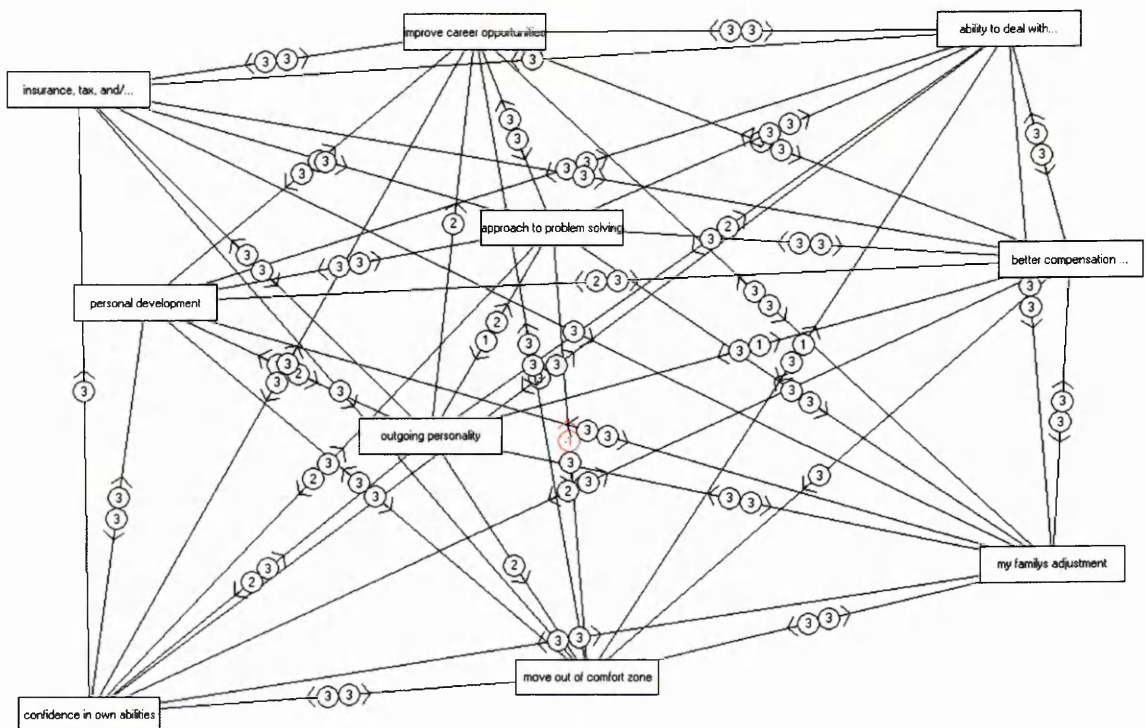
Figure 6-38: Roz's causal map

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There was one weak negative influence (-1), *move out of comfort zone* → *approach to problem solving*. Therefore, put in context with her interview; deconstruction was not warranted because it was only one weak negative relationship.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
insurance / pension concerns	4	6
improve career opportunities	9	8
ability to deal with frustrations	8	9
confidence in one' abilities	8	9
personal development	8	8
my family's adjustment	9	8
better compensation opportunities	8	8
outgoing personality	7	9
approach to problem solving	9	8
move out of comfort zone	9	6

Table 6-31: Roz's map link structure

Following are quotes from Roz's interview highlighting the issues important to her.

6.3.5.14.2 Interview

Roz's interview was conducted at the local Starbuck's. There was a group of rambunctious children next to us and thus the formal audio recording is unavailable and this section draws on the field notes.

6.3.5.14.2.1 Family adjustment, career opportunity, personal development, PO fit: needs-supplies

She was in Shanghai with her family for opportunity. As she recollected, the job and her success was enormous in China, beyond her achievement in the USA to the point where it afforded her husband the opportunity to return to …. She also saw great benefit of giving her children an opportunity to live in China.

Concerns she expressed were two-fold. First, because of the circles they moved in and the availability of domestic help, she was concerned that her children were developing appropriate values and respect for people. Second, like other Americans, she expressed concern that her children were developing enough of an American identity. She also commented on how she considered it important that as an American it was important to comport herself appropriately. She expressed a sense of responsibility, that she was an informal representative of her country and her country would be judged based on her behaviour.

6.3.5.14.2.2 Optimism, approach to problem solving, personal development

Roz suggested she needed to be very flexible in her dealings with the Chinese and westerners how came to do business. Optimism was critical.

The most telling comments were she compared her experience very favourable and intense, 'like being at college, only having money.' The other most telling comment was while meeting her at a subsequent social event, she comment how she was very pleased that someone was interested in her experience and success. More importantly, she was had 'given the propaganda in her previous interview.'

Her view of guanxi was she put no stock in the concept, in her view, the Chinese approached business simply as an exchange.

6.3.5.14.2.3 Selection process, PO fit: demands-abilities

Although she had been travelling to China to develop operations and was encouraged to apply of the posting when the HO decided to place someone in China fulltime, she went through rigorous screening process. She was interviewed by a psychologist, her family members were interviewed individually, and they were interviewed as a group.

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6.3.5.15 Sebastian

This was Sebastian's (Dipl-Ing) first international posting and he had been in China with a large German MNE focussed on household products for approximately 10 months. He was the R and D manager sent to manage the lab and was also fulfilling his personal goal of working in Asia. Sebastian was single.

6.3.5.15.1 Map

Exploration of Sebastian's map indicates the most central construct is *his ability to deal with frustrations* (ID=8, OD=7) followed closely *by improve career opportunities* (ID=7, OD=6). The other links most central if one considers just the ID or OD are his *personal development (ID=8) and his ability to deal with frustrations* (ID=8). The most central construct influencing other constructs is his *optimism (OD=7)*. Like many of the other maps, Sebastian's map is very focussed on person constructs.
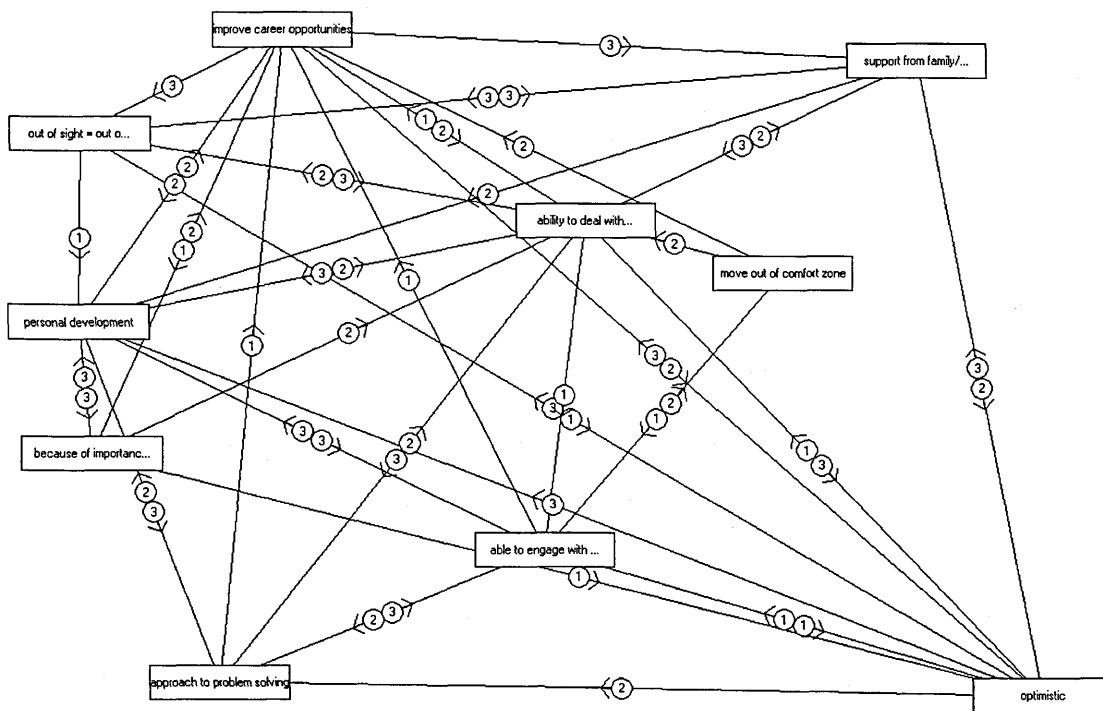
Figure 6-39: Sebastian's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	7	6
ability to deal with frustrations	8	7
support from family / important others	4	4
out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunity back home	4	4
able to engage with people who are different	5	5
personal development	8	5
because of importance of China, receiving more scrutiny	2	4
approach to problem solving	4	4
move out of comfort zone	1	3
optimistic	6	7

Table 6-32: Sebastian's map link structure

Following are quotes from Sebastian's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.15.2 Interview

6.3.5.15.2.1 Clarity of Purpose

it was quite clear of what was expected from me; to build up new products, to improve our process that we have here; that is and will be the main thing.

6.3.5.15.2.2 Support in settling from HO

No, it was quite well organised; when I arrived I have been picked up by one of our company drivers. I've been directly transported to the service department; that is what all of our expats do; first they live in the service department.

...some things there; we have worked together with a real estate company who have all the experts for health things, for apartment search, for driver's license, and also for registration. So that they were getting in contact with you, and you just had to make an appointment and they were dealing with all the rest.

6.3.5.15.2.3 Ability to deal with frustrations, able to engage with people who are different

Challenges I faced, generally the behaviour of the Chinese colleagues, because the Chinese never lose their face; so the person who is doing the mistake is you, either if it was you or not; and there have been a lot of problems in the past, and it was our, it was everybody's fault, but they are very easy with putting the fault to somebody else – and that's always the Germans. That is one big challenge, because you cannot, by my opinion, I cannot obviously disagree with them, because I need them, and in my case, I'm very young and they are quite experienced. So, I don't want to be too much like a smart guy, and so the biggest challenge is how to get the things done, to deal with their mistakes or the faults that have been done, and to use the input of my German colleagues which have the experience, and which have the advice, how to make it clear to the Chinese guys.

positive; yes, that either you have, or, even if you have such a big trouble, and they will slap your hat because you did a mistake and they will say it's your fault. The evening, we go out for dinner with them and they drink, and business is not talk. It's just about being together, having fun. We don't talk about work. Some kind of this, I've also experienced in Germany, but not that much. Here, it is more developed, this behaviour.

6.3.5.15.2.4 Ability to deal with frustrations, approach to problem solving, support from HO

Yes, most of the times it's quite helpful, because it's not only reporting from my side, what are we doing, what have we done, what it results; it's also asking about some things and where they have lots of experience which they share with me, and yes, it's...

Ask people who have dealt with the situation; it's not always easy to find somebody who has lived here for several years; it's easier to get someone who has been here

for some business travel, business trip. Talk to them; ask them; take their advice; and then discuss these issues with the company, and another thing is, be open-minded. Things may go wrong, things will go wrong; don't lose focus; be open-minded, because everybody is behaving different, everybody acts different.

6.3.5.15.2.5 PO fit: needs-supplies, PO fit: demands-abilities, personal development, career development

my job is manager of the R&D department, to build up a new department which has not existed before, ...And why did I do this; why am I here; because I always wanted to go abroad and Shanghai fitted to my expectations.

very close to home, although you find differences, of course, but it, the necessity of adapting to this, is not so much, and it all fitted to my personal planning at that time, and still does.

6.3.5.15.2.6 Selection process, PO fit: demands-abilities

I needed to be picked for this; I had in total four interviews, one with a head-hunter, three with the company in Germany with the headquarters. After that I had a look and see trip to here to get to know the company, to get to know some people I have to work with; also, you can call it somehow an interview, and of course, to know, to get to know the city, because I have never been to Shanghai before. I should base my decision on a little bit more experience.

So, after that, yes, of course, all the contract discussions and then I needed an apprenticeship in Germany to get to know all the processes; also to get to know the people, because there is a lot of things every day, almost every day, which you have to discuss with them, with some problems which you face, and you need solutions,

you need experience, and you cannot have the experience, but you know to whom

you have to talk to

6.3.5.16 Sian

Sian (Bachelor degree) was an English woman who had been working in Shanghai for five years as nurse. She had previous experience in other parts of the world and met her significant other while in Shanghai.

6.3.5.16.1 Map

Exploration of her map via Figure 6-40 indicates a highly interconnected map and her central constructs are all person oriented. There is little differentiation in the connectedness and thus influence amongst the constructs selected. ID ranges from seven to nine and OD ranges from seven to nine.
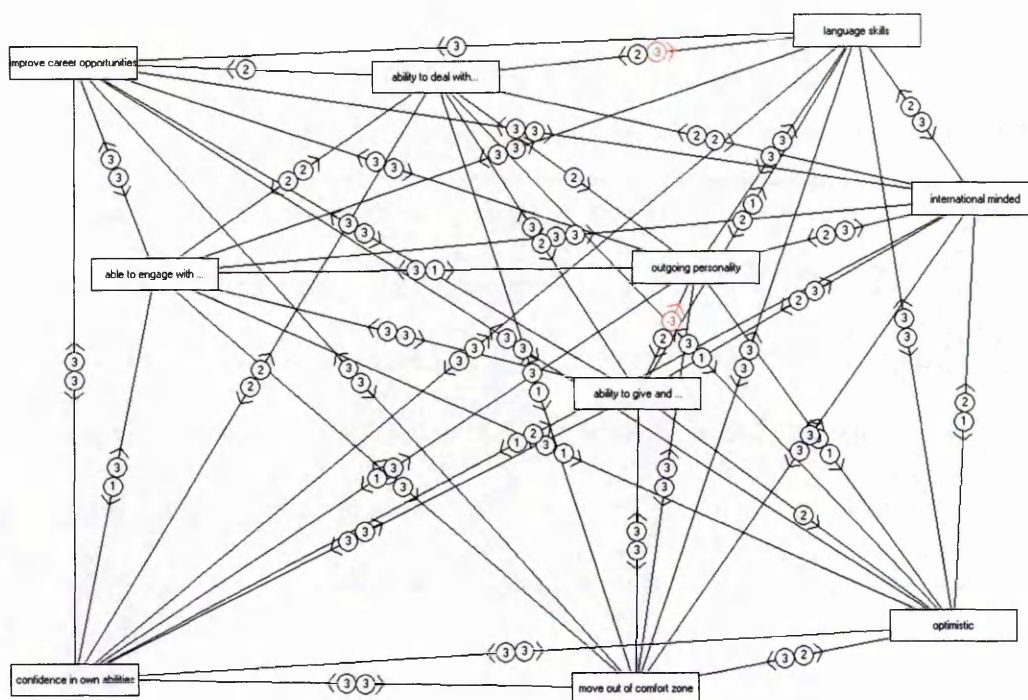
Figure 6-40: Sian's causal map

There are two negative relations that are both very strong negative (-3); *ability to deal with frustrations → language skills* and *ability to give and take to get along → outgoing*

personality. The map was not deconstructed because the two negative relationships appeared unrelated.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	9	7
language skills	8	9
ability to deal with frustrations	7	9
confidence in one' abilities	9	9
able to engage with people who are different	9	9
outgoing personality	9	8
international minded (curious)	9	9
ability to give and take to get along	8	9
move out of comfort zone	9	9
optimistic	9	8

Table 6-33: Sian's map link structure

Following are quotes from Sian's interview highlighting the issues important to her.

6.3.5.16.2 Interview

The audio recording was unsatisfactory and thus the following is drawn from the field notes.

6.3.5.16.2.1 Move out of comfort zone, language skills, personal growth, confidence in one's abilities

Sian related that her biggest concern in going to China was fear of leaving home. However, since leaving she felt her confidence had grown enormously. She had learnt Chinese to a high level.

6.3.5.16.2.2 Ability to deal with frustrations

Critical to her doing well she felt was being able to find humour in her daily life and see the absurdity of many things.

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She reflected Roz's conclusion that living in Shanghai had a certain level of

intensity and she found it very easy to make friends

What she found difficult was the locals staring at her as a blonde woman she also

found the derogatory comments off-putting. She felt the assumption was they could

get away with them because they assumed she could not speak Chinese.

6.3.5.16.2.3 Outgoing personality, language skills, move out of her comfort zone

Critical to her success was being an outgoing person. Learning the language

improved her confidence. Working for a Chinese hospital moved her out of her

comfort zone as they were far removed from the NHS quality.

6.3.5.16.2.4 Improve career opportunities, international minded (curious), PO fit: needs-supplies

It was a great career opportunity and she got to see first hand the change in China.

6.3.5.17 Simon

Simon (A levels, UK) who was from England was the Managing Director of an advertising

firm and his main reason for being in China was to 'tick a career box' that he felt was

missing. He had been in China for over four years and with him in China was his son who

would be returning to England at the end of the school year. He noted he also would be

returning to England soon as he had a mother and other children in the UK. Like many in

this research cohort, Simon also had previous international experience.

6.3.5.17.1 Map

Table 6-34 indicates the central constructs are *local expat advice is ignored* (ID=8, OD=9),

received training prior to arrival (ID=9, OD=8), and *able to engage with people who are*

different (ID=9, OD=8). Again, improve *career opportunities* and *personal development*

factor strongly into his central constructs. Because of the negative links, the map is deconstructed in an attempt to clarify issues.

Figure 6-42 indicates several issues appear to be occurring. Firstly, *concerns raised by local expats taken seriously by HO* influences negatively *received training prior to arrival (-2)* and *local expat advice ignored (-3).* This would suggest a serious organization issue.
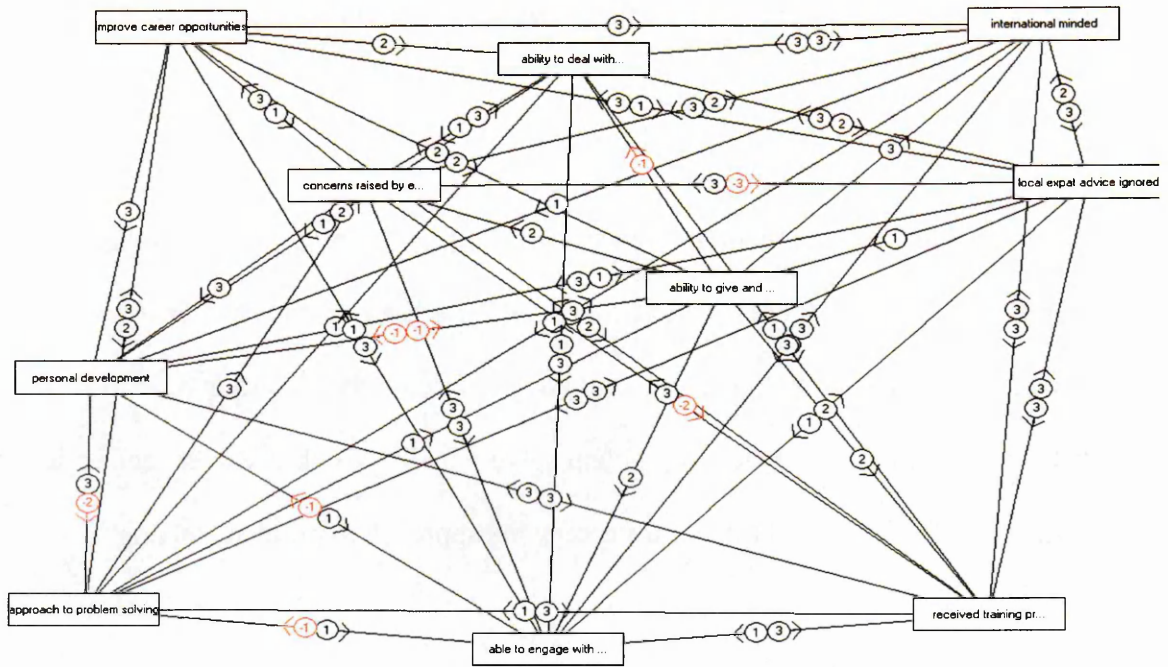
Figure 6-41: Simon, complete causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	6	9
ability to deal with frustrations	9	6
able to engage with people who are different	9	8
personal development	9	6
international minded (curious)	8	7
ability to give and take to get along	4	7
approach to problem solving	6	9
local expat advice ignored	8	9
received training prior to arrival	9	8
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by HO	8	7

Table 6-34: Simon's map link structure

The second negative relationship appears to centre on his *personal development;* Simon's *personal development* is negatively influenced or frustrated by his *ability to engage with people who are different* and *his ability to give and take to get along.* Furthermore, *his ability to deal with frustration* is tested by his *ability to give and take to get along. Simon's ability to engage with people who are different negatively influences his personal development.* Thus, the indirect negative influence Simon's *ability to engage with people who are different* has on *his ability to deal with frustration.* It would appear Simon lacks flexibility.

Returning to personal development, this construct is negatively influenced by ability to give and take to get along. There is a moderate negative influence between personal development and his approach to problem solving (-2). Simon's ability to give and take is negatively influencing his approach to problem solve. Finally, his ability to engage with people who are different is negatively influencing his approach to problem solving.

Based on the evidence within this core, it would appear two issues exist. Firstly, there appears to be an inability to be flexible whether by choice or because of restriction placed upon him. Second, there appears to be an issue with his head office.
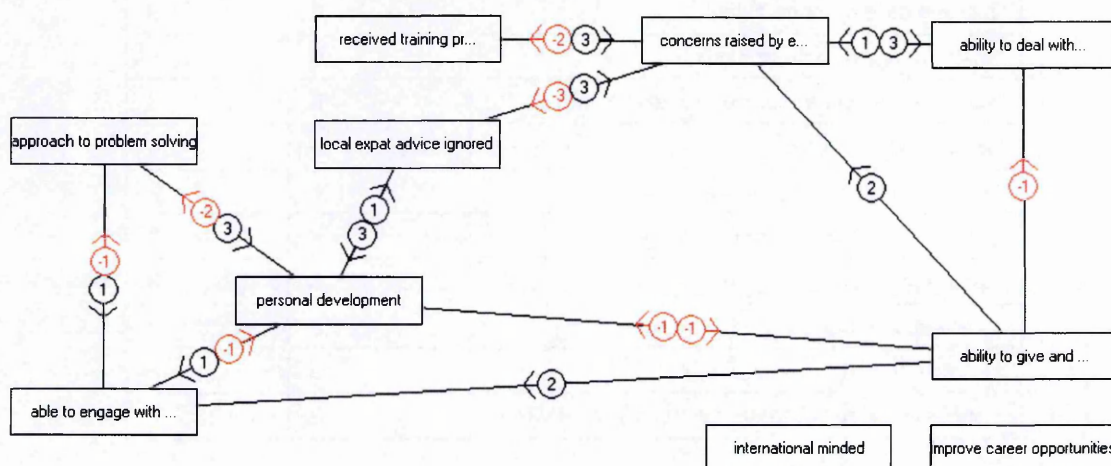
Figure 6-42: Simon's map deconstructed

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Following are quotes from Simon's interview highlighting the issues important to him. Because of the noise at the interview location, the following quotes are from written notes taken at the time.

6.3.5.17.2 Interview

6.3.5.17.2.1 Personal development, improve career opportunities, PO fit: needs-supplies

Simon was in China for new challenges and international experience. As he put it 'it was a box that needed ticking on his cv.'

He was an advertising consultant and was frustrated because most of his clients were western; the Chinese clients wouldn't pay for his service, nor would they hire him.

He was very frustrated as he had been promised support from his HO yet it never materialized.

6.3.5.17.2.2 Language skills, improve career opportunities, able to engage with people who are different

He felt his lack of language ability was a real impediment to his development of clients.

6.3.5.17.2.3 Received training prior to arrival, support from head office

He had no pre-departure training of any kind.

He liked living in Shanghai, however, he would be leaving as his son was with him and he would be returning to England at the end of the school year. His son was having a hard time in school.

6.3.5.17.2.4 Ability to deal with frustration, able to engage with people who are different

Simon also found at times the stress over bearing and would almost bring him 'like a child to tears.'

6.3.5.17.2.5 Local expat advice ignored, concerns raised by expats taken seriously

Simon felt the following changes would make an expatriate's adjustment much easier, as would constant feedback and continual monitoring especially by the HR department. Some rudimentary language lessons and a welcoming party to introduce new expatriates would be beneficial.

Although it was an enriching experience, he was quite adamant that you give up life when you when you went in his capacity to China. Work was first, second and last.

6.3.5.17.2.6 My family's adjustment

He was quite displeased about the focus was on the person not his family. Clients wanted stuff immediately and it was wreaking havoc.

6.3.5.18 Stacey

Stacey (Bachelor degree) was American and the Communications Manager for a Chinese corporation that manufactured construction equipment. She was expatriated from North Carolina to their headquarters in Laizhou City, Shandong, a 3rd tier city far removed from the international enclaves such as Shanghai. This was her first international posting and she had been in Laizhou City for nine months. Stacey openly shared how she counted the days until she could move as she found it very difficult being one of the few westerners in the city. She was lonely and envious of the lifestyle afforded expatriates by MNEs in places such as Shanghai. She had no command of Mandarin.

Given the challenges she faced according to her survey and map it would appear she is sanguine. Her interview reflects a conflict; she is pleased with her personal growth yet unhappy with the situation.

6.3.5.18.1 Map
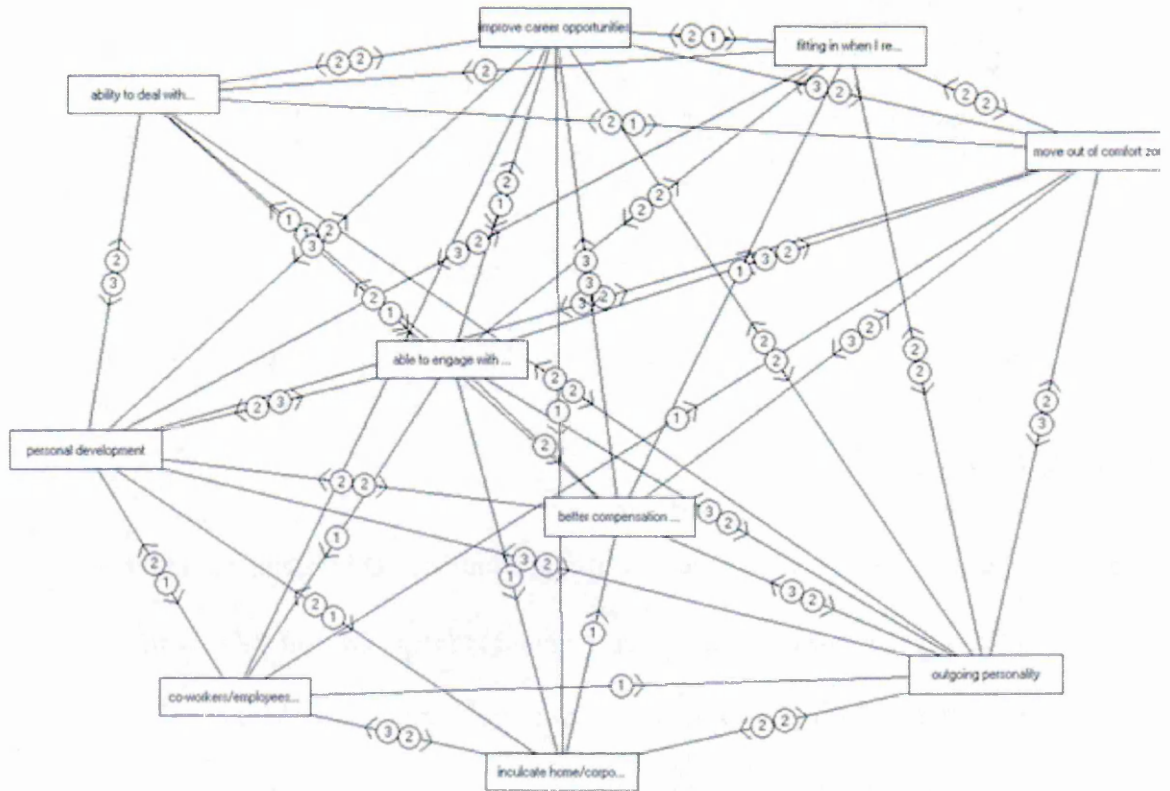
Figure 6-43: Stacey's map

Exploration of Stacey's map reveals that most central to her satisfaction is *personal development* (ID=9, OD=9). Considering only the ID, the most central constructs being influenced by other constructs are her *outgoing personality* (ID=9) *and personal growth* (ID=9). These constructs are affected by all of the other constructs selected. Stacey considers being *able to engage with people who are different (OD=9)* and *her personal development* (OD=9) to be the greatest influencers on her experience and the other selected constructs. It is noteworthy that that she selected two organization constructs, *inculcate home/corporate expectations/culture* and *co-workers/employees willingness to make decisions.*

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Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	8	8
fitting in upon returning home	6	6
ability to deal with frustrations	7	6
able to engage with people who are different	6	9
personal development	9	9
better compensation opportunities	7	6
outgoing personality	9	8
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	3	5
inculcate home/corporate expectations/culture	5	4
move out of comfort zone	8	7

Table 6-35: Stacey's map structure

Following are quotes from Stacey's interview highlighting the issues important to her.

6.3.5.18.2 Interview

6.3.5.18.2.1 Selection process, improve career opportunities, PO fit: demands-abilities

my current boss, called me about seven months later and said if I was still interested that the opportunity was available and so within about three weeks I ended up moving, packed up and packed up my apartment and put everything in storage and packed three suitcases and was on a plane.

problem and where I am in China is that there's no... marketing is a very interesting thing and anyone who's spent any time in China, you know exactly what Chinese marketing looks like versus a western marketing appeal, and one of the difficulties they have found in Lujo is finding people with international experience. And even national experience from a Chinese standpoint, it's such a... it's a provincial town

6.3.5.18.2.2 Selection process, move out of comfort zone, settling in support from HO

the selection process was essentially just me interviewing with my boss. There
wasn't much of a, you know, it was phone interviews. Actually, I never even spoke
with anyone here in China, to be honest with you. Got here, there was... there was
zero... zero help as far as getting settled in. I'll be here a tad over a year and a
half but they were going to put me up in the corporate apartments, corporate
dormitories, which are not a very nice place to be. I have pictures if you'd like to
see.

6.3.5.18.2.3 Ability to deal with frustrations, better compensation opportunities, move out of comfort zone, settling in support from HO

It's, you know, it was very telling the first day. I think this was the second time I'd
truly thought about going and getting back on the plane, was I walked into this
place and it was a fifth floor walk up, Chinese toilet, the girl who was with me
walks in and goes, oh, yes, this place is much nicer than mine. And all I can think,
oh, God. So it was very little help getting settled. ...

CA   ... I just wanted a western toilet, you know, that just didn't, the nicer didn't
translate, it translated to bigger. And so that, you know, that did not go well. I get,
my wages, I think I'm the second, oh, no, actually, I'm the highest paid person in
my division right now that lives in China. That's even including my deputy GM
boss, I'm paid higher than him but I'm not as well compensated as multinational
corporations.

6.3.5.18.2.4 Better compensation, able to deal with frustration

I know I've had some issues with some people because they know, you know, how
much money I've made and I can, you know, kind of get the impression that there's
a lot of kind of... creates a little bit of tension on their part, but I also, I mean I get

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my housing paid and I get my transportation, which is just a taxi back and forth to work, 800 RMB a month. But as far as in comparison to other multinational, it's nowhere close to it, you know, people have drivers and, you know, and all of that, all of that's paid for and we're just now trying to figure out how to get me insurance. So, we're struggling with that piece of it.

6.3.5.18.2.5 Personal development, being female, ability to deal with frustration

I kind of talk a lot of crap about it but, you know, I've learned a lot. I've learned a lot about myself and I think it's more of a personal... it's been a much bigger personal journey than anything else

So, you know, I've been very lucky and so I'm very comfortable in my own skin, but, you know, having to do it for this long of an extended time period has been something that's been very tough, and I think, you know, as a woman some of the things that I struggle with on a personal level is I don't have any women to talk to. I don't have, you know, those type of relationships because there's just... they're not available where I am.

6.3.5.18.2.6 Personal development, support networks, ability to deal with frustration, confidence

I've just grown a lot and like learned a lot, you know, personally but also patience is one of those things that I never had much of and I think that's... that's, you know, you just.. you sit back and you go, okay, well, this probably should take me actually three or four days to get done but it's probably going to take me 30 days, you know

6.3.5.18.2.7 Approaches to decision-making, ability to deal with frustration

my company seems to be ran by management by meeting is what I call it and you have to have everybody's buy-in and you have to have everybody's opinion, and it's

a very... and I don't know if... I don't know if it's the company or if it's the culture

that causes that.

CA   I don't know and I can't... I can't say. I have a sense it's a little bit of both

but I think the majority may be just the company and, but they, you know, it's very

tough to make a decision. It is, you know, and I make decisions all the time that I

don't think they know about, you know, it's kind of like, oops, but that one's very

hard for me and then also the getting out of... but that's the way we've done it,

that's... that's the way we've always done it, well, I understand that but we need to

think of a different way. Like that way's not working clearly, you know, so how

else can we do it? And I've found if you ask those type of probing questions, you

get a lot more response out of them as opposed to, you know, you just, you know, I

think a lot of... a lot of attitude is we'll do it my way, you know.

6.3.5.18.2.8 Personal development, ability to deal with frustration, improve career opportunities

CA   that's how hard it has been, you know, and I don't know if that, and, you

know, and I don't think it would be so hard if it was in Shanghai, you know. I don't

think, and if I worked for a multinational, and it's like, there are so many other

different factors. I think... I think jumping in the way I jumped in and... is such a

different and unique experience to what a lot of people have that if I knew what I

know now I wouldn't have done it.

CA   ... yes, and, you know, am I happy? No. Am I sad? No, but I'm at peace

and, you know, it's not the best thing for me personally but right now it's the best

thing for me professionally and I've got to take that in stride.

6.3.5.19 Tony

Tony (BEng), an Australian engineer, was the Marketing Manager and member of the Executive Management Team for a large Swiss based MNE that was the third largest railway equipment supplier in China. China was Tony's only international posting and he had decided to extend his posting because he enjoyed his experience in China; furthermore, China had become his organization's largest and most important market. He had been in China for six years and was single.

6.3.5.19.1 Map
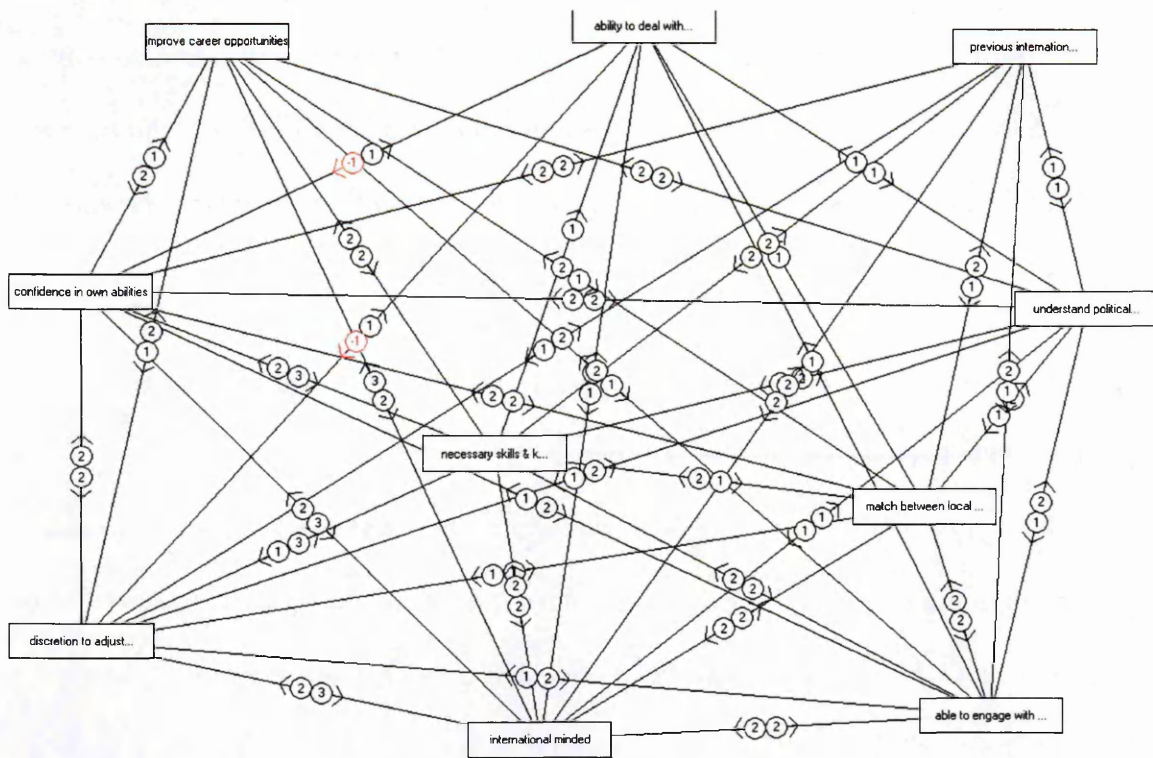
Figure 6-44: Tony's causal map

Table 6-36 indicates Tony includes both organization and person constructs as being most central to his satisfaction; *confidence in one's abilities, international minded, discretion adjust roles as necessary and match between local knowledge and HO expectations* (ID=9, OD=9 respectively).

The map, Figure 6-44, and thus is deconstructed to help reveal the potential issue. Figure 6-45 reveals two weak negative relationships (-1) *ability to deal with frustration* → *discretion to adjust roles as necessary* and *ability to deal with frustration* → *confidence in one's abilities.* This suggests frustration undermines his confidence and possibly an inability to adjust roles as required has a negative influence on his frustration i.e. it increases.

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	7	7
ability to deal with frustrations	7	4
previous international experience	7	7
confidence in one' abilities	9	9
able to engage with people who are different	8	9
international minded (curious)	9	9
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	9	9
necessary skills and knowledge	8	9
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	8	9
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	9	9

Table 6-36: Tony's map link structure
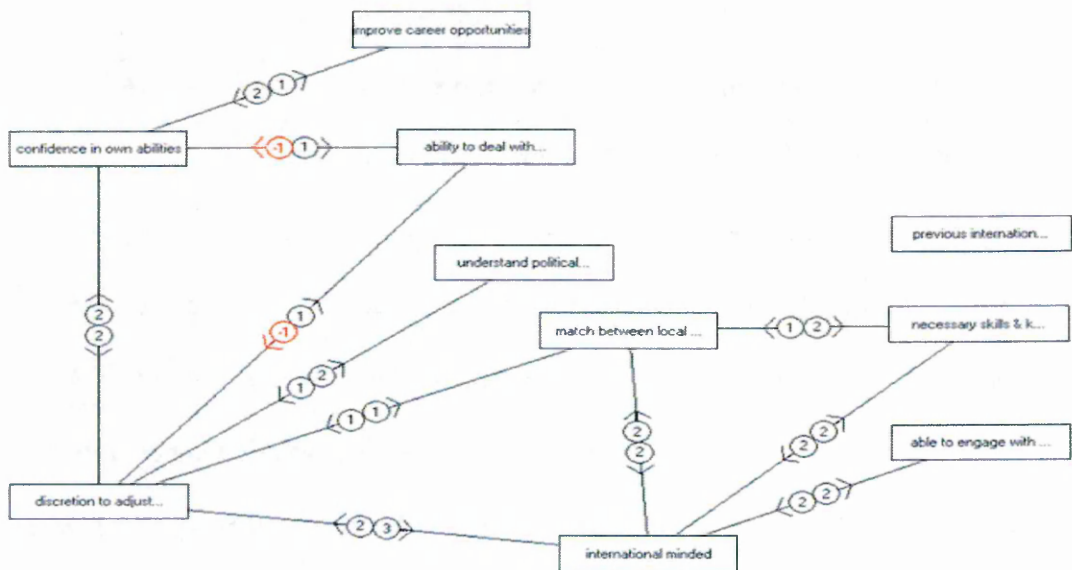
Figure 6-45: Tony, causal map reduced

Following are quotes from Tony's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.19.2 Interview

6.3.5.19.2.1 Personal development, international minded, PO fit: need- supplies

The main reason was the challenge. You know, working so long with the organisation in Australia and in parts of Asia, it became routine, almost mundane work, and there was no, no real challenge. So coming to China was new, it was dynamic, the growth potential was enormous, and I saw that as something interesting.

6.3.5.19.2.2 Previous international experience, selection

Most companies tend to say, okay, go on a reconnaissance trip for a week, and in a week it's like a holiday, you don't really know what it's like. In my particular case, I came to China four or five times in one year before the decision was made that I would move here. So they were all business trips, and to work with the people, and then you get a better understanding. So yes, could you live here? Because it is different.

6.3.5.19.2.3 Improve career opportunities, international minded, personal development, knowledge and skills, remuneration, PO fit: needs-supply

with all expat assignments, that, you know, it's the remuneration. People are always interested in the remuneration. For me, when I came here, that wasn't the consideration at all. You know, the company will pay me, and look after the fundamentals, and that's all I wanted. I was more interested in the challenge, where I see other expats do it for the commercial benefit, not really for their living standard or for the job or the career. They say oh, yes, I can make some money here. And that is the wrong decision to go. Because they're usually short term and don't benefit from it in their life at all.

6.3.5.19.2.4 PO fit: needs-supplies

Yes, they're very mercenary. They just want the money, that's it. I mean, even in our own organisation, we have, you know, the younger engineers that say yes, they want an overseas assignment, they push HR and say I want to do to America, and then they say why? Oh, I just want to live overseas for a couple of years. It's never about their career or their business, it's the fact that they just want to have, live overseas for a couple of years, and then go back into their job.

6.3.5.19.2.5 PO fit: demand -abilities

The main positive thing is the growth in the business. We've gone from, you know, in six years, from less than US$ 1 million in sales per annum, and this year we'll peak at about US$ 45 million, just in the railway business of our company. ...we've also managed to diversify our product offering.

6.3.5.20 Yoyo

Yoyo (Bachelor degree) had been sent from Japan by his employer, a major Japanese home electronics manufacturer, as their controller for the Shanghai operations. He had been in China for approximately two and half years and in the interim had married a Chinese academic and was now raising a family. Previously, his organization had posted Yoyo to America.

6.3.5.20.1 Map

In Table 6-37, Yoyo identifies the *match between local knowledge and head office expectations* (ID=8, OD=9) as most central to his satisfaction followed closely by the person construct *international minded (curious)* (ID=7, OD=9). The most influential ID were his *personal development* (ID=9) and his *ability to engage with people who are different* (ID=9). The most central OD were being *internationally minded* and *match between local knowledge and head office expectations* (OD=9)
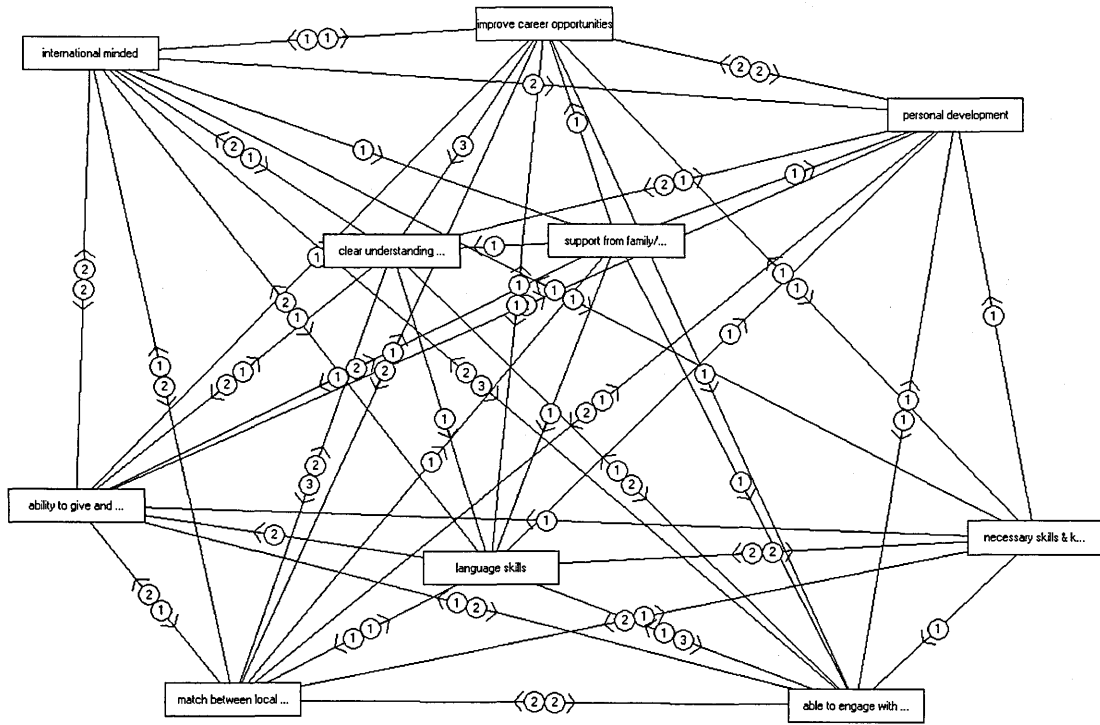
Figure 6-46: Yoyo's causal map

Construct	ID # links	OD # links
improve career opportunities	7	7
language skills	7	7
support from family / important others	3	6
able to engage with people who are different	9	6
clear understanding of why on assignment	7	6
personal development	9	4
international minded (curious)	7	9
ability to give and take to get along	7	7
necessary skills and knowledge	4	7
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	8	9

Table 6-37: Yoyo's map link structure

Following are quotes from Yoyo's interview highlighting the issues important to him.

6.3.5.20.2 Interview

Yoyo's interview was held in the gymnasium while his son played with my nephew.

Because of the noise and echo no audio is available and what follows is drawn

from the field notes and a follow-up email.

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6.3.5.20.2.1 International minded

Yoyo spent a great deal of time discussing the political-historical tension and history between Japan and China.

He had previous international experience in California and felt quite lucky to see the dynamic change in China.

6.3.5.20.2.2 PO fit: demands-abilities, (From the e-mail) Why does Sony bring so many Japanese expatriates to China?

1. China is important country to Sony.

2. Sony (as typical Japanese company) wants to implant Japanese way so it needs initial power in the early stage.

This may not last so long. We need to transfer a certain management area to local Chinese people.

6.3.5.20.3 Conclusion

This chapter began by reporting the reactions of the participants to the data collection process and by acknowledging the limitations of the ITQ and satisfaction questionnaires in examining expatriate satisfaction. By contrast, the complex and in-depth picture of expatriate experience was illustrated in the presentation of the expatriate's causal maps and the semi structured interviews which followed. While it may be possible to see some patterns at first glance a more thoroughgoing comparison of both the structure and content of the maps will be undertaken in the next chapter.

7 Analysis and Comparison of Causal Maps

In this chapter the results of the analysis and comparison of maps are presented. First, a visual inspection of the maps was performed, indicating that five maps had an unusual number of negative links or very few links at all. Whilst the map with very few links was deemed as an outlier, the remaining four maps, displaying negative links, represented the maps of dissatisfied expats. Then, an analysis by central tendency is presented, and key constructs are derived overall, and for satisfied and dissatisfied participants.

7.1.1 Exploration of the expatriate's causal maps

As discussed in the methods section, causal maps were created for each expatriate reflecting their perception of their satisfaction.

7.1.2 Visual map inspection

Beginning with a visual inspection of the causal maps and their matrix equivalent the first objective was to identify any outstanding features that 'leapt out at the researcher'; were there any substantial anomalies.

Five maps appeared substantially different from the other 30 maps. What made the first map, Figure 7-1, unique was the barrenness of the map relative to other causal maps e.g. Figure 7-2. The map in Figure 7-1 had a total of 6 links whereas the average number of links for other maps was 64.79 (2203 total links / 34 maps; 1 person did not complete a map). No explanation could be found for the anomalous barren map and it was decided to consider the map the equivalent of a statistical outlier.
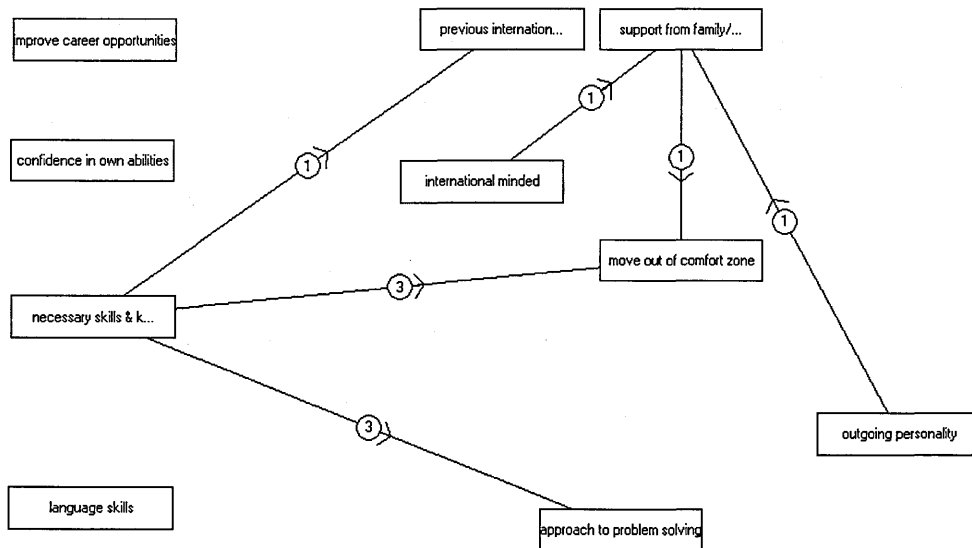
Figure 7-1: An Anomalous Causal Map, Jackson

The other four maps (Figure 7-3) had an inordinate amount of negative relationships between constructs or red in the map, highlighting the difference between two maps created by two expatriates, one who was satisfied (black, Elizabeth), and one who was dissatisfied (red, Alan_Kiwi) in Figure 7-2.

The aforementioned presentation indicates that deconstruction of the dissatisfied maps is warranted with an objective of identifying differences between what seems to be significantly different groups of maps. Focusing on the four dissatisfied maps, it became evident that the negative relationships appeared to focus around conflict with the home office or issues with their co-workers. Next in the finding is presented the measures of central tendency.
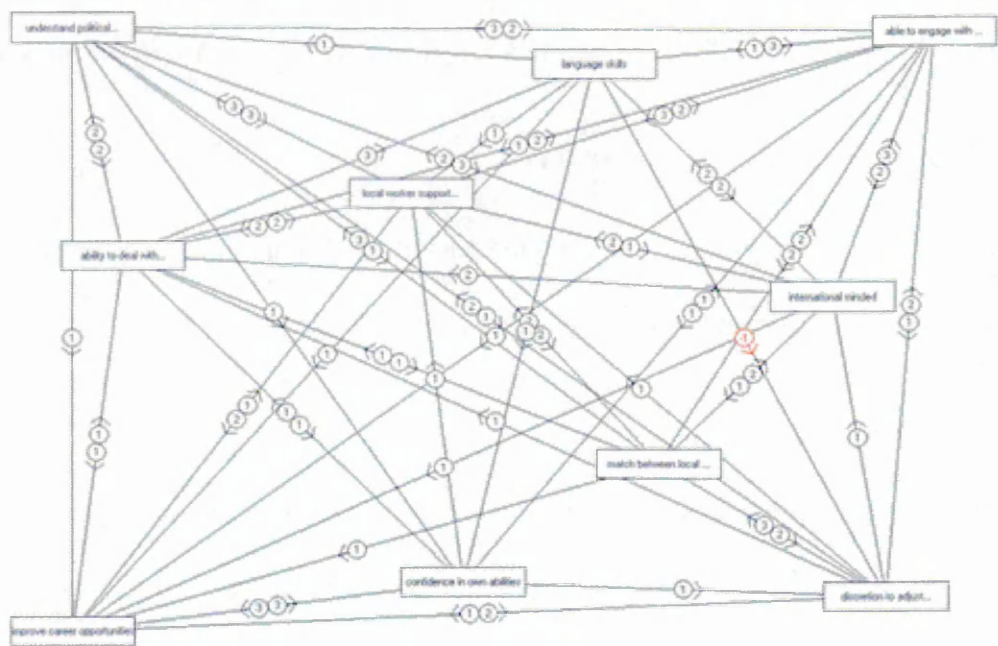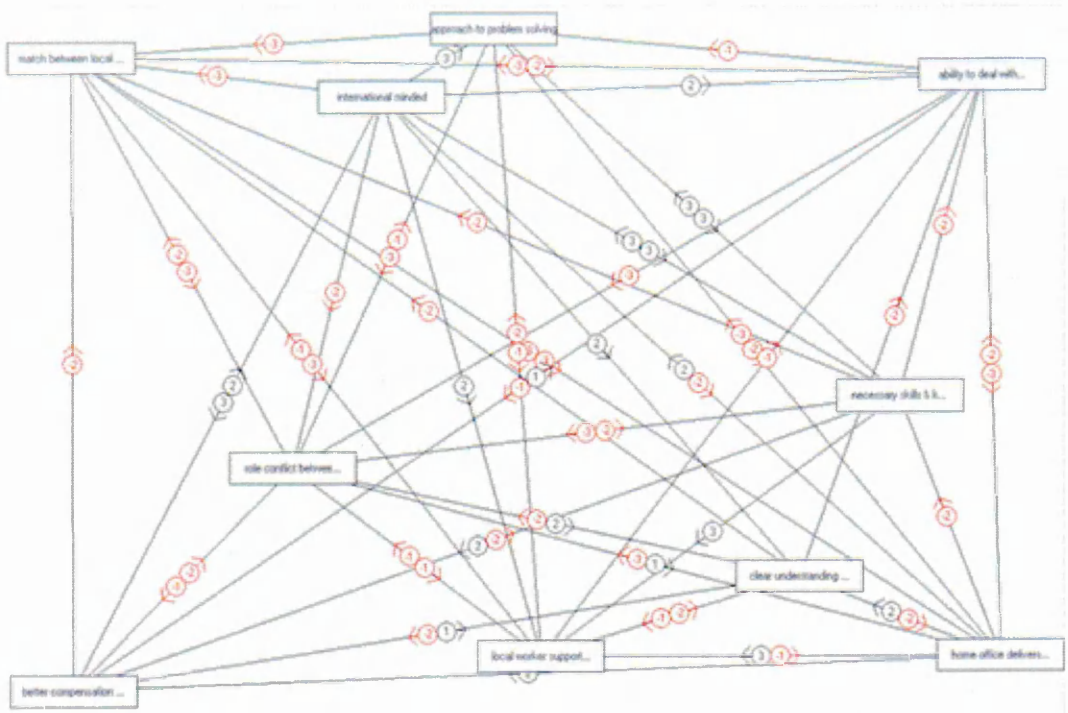
Figure 7-2: Two causal maps - one satisfied (black), one dissatisfied (red)

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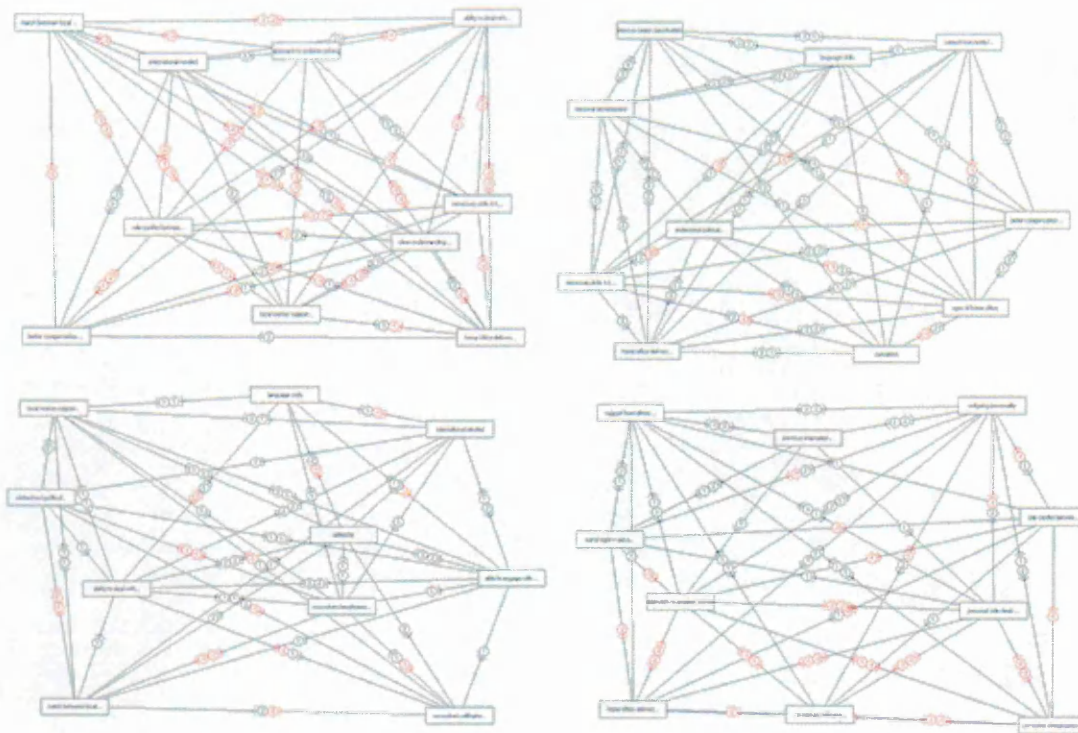
Figure 7-3: Four dissatisfied expatriate's maps: Alan_Kiwi, Alan_P, John, & Roger

7.1.3 Central tendency of constructs

Central tendency measures aim to identify the constructs that are most relevant to participants as this will enable a more accurate overall description.

7.1.3.1 Constructs selected

The start point is a simple ranking of constructs based on the number of expatriates who selected a construct; the greater the number who select a construct suggests a greater relevance to expatriates. Table 7-1 lists the 10 most selected constructs (a complete listing is available in Appendix B, Table 12-23). The constructs identified as most important by the overall group of expatriates are person oriented constructs e.g. *ability to deal with frustrations* rather than organization oriented constructs such as *clear understanding of the assignment*. The other point to note is the constructs *support from family/important others*

Constructs	# who selected	% who selected	rank
ability to deal with frustrations	23	66	1
improve career opportunities	21	60	2
international minded	21	60	3
able to engage with people who are different	20	57	4
approach to problem solving	19	54	5
support from family/important others	18	51	6
confidence in own abilities	18	51	7
personal development	15	43	8
necessary skills & knowledge	14	40	9
language skills	13	37	10

Table 7-1: Top 10 constructs selected by expatriates (n=35)

and *language* warrant further exploration. When ranked by the number of expatriates who selected either construct they are ranked in the top 10; however, as can be seen in Table 7-2, when ranked by the total ID and OD links, the influence of the two constructs wanes. A dilemma occurs as to which provides greater insight, the number who select a construct or the number of links. As Hanneman and Riddle (2005) suggest the number of links is representative of the influence of the construct.

7.1.3.2 Total ID and OD

Presenting the top 10 constructs maintains consistency with the process the expatriates used during the interview process in China and this process is consistent with the format established by researchers such as Markoczy (1994) and Markoczy and Goldberg (1995). (Appendix B, Table 12-24).

Just as the bulk of expatriates identified person oriented constructs as most relevant to the expatriate's experience, examination of the link structure reveals the influence these constructs have on their experience. Further examination suggests that the expatriates have identified a web of person oriented constructs focussed towards support of their goal. Table

7-2 below presents the 10 most important constructs for the overall group of expatriates based on the total number of links (ID + OD) and indicates that most central to the expatriate's experience appears to be *improve career opportunities*. The influence exerted by the constructs in Table 7-2 adds additional support and reinforces the complexity of the centrality of the person constructs.

CONSTRUCT	ID	OD	TOTAL
improve career opportunities	37	35	72
personal development	36	30	66
approach to problem solving	33	33	66
ability to deal with frustrations	32	32	64
confidence in one' abilities	32	31	63
able to engage with people who are different	29	32	61
outgoing personality	29	28	57
international minded (curious)	28	29	57
necessary skills and knowledge	28	27	55
optimistic	28	27	55

Table 7-2: Top 10 constructs selected based on links- overall

As noted previously, the constructs *language skills* and *support from family/important others* no longer appear in the top 10 most influential constructs when one explores the overall ID and OD link relationships. They are replaced by *international minded* and *outgoing personality*. Furthermore, the order of importance changes; in Table 7-2 the most important construct is *improve career opportunities* by a large margin over *personal development* and *approach to problem solving*.

If the ID are explored separately, Table 7-3, *language skills* remains important; however, *family/important others* is not amongst the most important ID constructs. Both of these constructs disappear from the OD construct list. Exploration of the individual demographics and maps provides possible reasons for the replacements.

With regard to *language skill,* it was observed that the expatriates who were from Singapore and had command of Mandarin all expressed the importance of language

abilities; only four westerners: Keith, Herb, Jackson (was from Hong Kong but identified himself as a Canadian; furthermore, Jackson spoke Cantonese) and Elizabeth supported this view.

The disappearance of *support from family/important others* may be accounted for by recognizing that half the people in the expatriate cohort did not have family in China (Table 12-7). If *support from family/important others* is recalculated based on the number who have family in China, this becomes the most important construct to an expatriate. Except for John all those with families in China identified family as the most important construct to them. Those without family in China include *support from others in the community at large* in the list of top 10 constructs (ID=15, OD=17, Total IDOD= 32).

The total score of influence of ID and OD masks that the influence of a construct may be differential, that is some constructs may have more of an influence on other constructs, whereas, other constructs are more influenced by other constructs.

7.1.3.2.1 Indegrees (ID)

Table 7-3 identifies that the top 10 most influenced constructs (ID); in particular they are focussed on their development. *Improving career opportunities* is most important as 37 or 95 % direct links from other constructs *influence improve career opportunities*. That is, all constructs except two are focused on improving their career opportunities in some capacity. Twenty eight or 72% of the constructs are directly influencing the expatriate's optimism.

CONSTRUCT	ID	%
improve career opportunities	37	95
personal development	36	92
approach to problem solving	33	85
ability to deal with frustrations	32	82
confidence in one's abilities	32	82
language skills	29	74
able to engage with people who are different	29	74
outgoing personality	29	74
international minded (curious)	28	72
necessary skills and knowledge	28	72
Optimistic	28	72

Table 7-3: Top 10 constructs ID measure of centrality (ID/n=35)

As with the Total ID+OD, the 10 constructs identified by expatriates as most influenced or where effort is focused on are personal constructs, e.g. their *ability to deal with frustration* or *confidence in one's abilities*; there is little consideration of organizational constructs being most important to their experience in China, except with the dissatisfied sub-group based on the survey discussed earlier and shall be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

7.1.3.2.2 Outdegrees (OD)

The constructs ranked by OD indicates expatriates overwhelmingly identified *improving their career opportunities* as the most important construct influencing the other constructs; *improving their career* influenced 35 of the other 39 constructs. *Approach to problem solving* was the next most important construct; *approach to problem solving* focussed on the expatriate's ability to solve problems in complex ways (being able to adapt) and influenced 33 of the 39 other constructs. This was followed by *ability to deal with frustrations* and *able to engage with people who are different* which both influenced 32 other constructs. The final top five construct was *confidence in one's abilities* which influenced 31 other constructs.

CONSTRUCT	OD	%
improve career opportunities	35	90
approach to problem solving	33	85
ability to deal with frustrations	32	82
able to engage with people who are different	32	82
confidence in one' abilities	31	79
personal development	30	75
international minded (curious)	29	74
outgoing personality	28	72
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	28	72
ability to give and take to get along	28	72

Table 7-4: Top 10 constructs OD measures of centrality (ID/n=35)

Of particular note in the overall description of most important out degree constructs is they are all person oriented constructs; however, as will be explored shortly, an overall description can hide the important difference when the group of dissatisfied maps are explored. Before exploring the maps based on satisfied vs. dissatisfied group, it is instructive to understand what is least important to expatriates.

7.1.3.3 Least important constructs

As can be seen from Table 7-5, the least important constructs included *corruption, because of the importance of China, receiving more scrutiny, personal deals by employees at company expense, fitting in upon return home,* and *receiving training prior to arrival.* Noteworthy is these constructs appear to be focussed on issues external to the expatriate. Furthermore, the constructs appear to be things the expatriate has little influence over such as *corruption.*

CONSTRUCT	ID	OD	Total ID + OD
inculcate home/corporate expectations/culture	8	10	18
received training prior to arrival	9	9	18
fitting in upon returning home	7	7	14
personal side deals by employees at company expense	8	6	14
because of importance of China, receiving more scrutiny	5	8	13
corruption	6	5	11
TOTAL	0	0	0

Table 7-5: Bottom constructs selected by expatriates (ID/n=35)

With regard to *corruption* or *personal side deals by employees at company expense oriented* concerns, the attitude emerging from the interviews of the expatriates appeared to be "it exists but I and my organization do not participate or encourage it". Eddy, Peter, and Darrell discuss this issue in their interview reported in the previous chapter. This issue warrants further consideration in future research, because when discussing corruption, it is apparent that different levels are considered by the expatriates and their Chinese counterpart e.g. interpersonal level vs. the organization level vs. government bodies.

Fitting in upon returning home, repatriation, was a concern for those who faced the possibility of retirement or redundancy. Stacey who was in a 3rd tier city expressed concern as well. Repatriation as a concern was clarified by the expatriate's interviews in the next chapter. Again, it was an external concern that existed but the expatriate could do little about.

*Received training prior to arrival was i*dentified by two participants as having influence on an expatriate's satisfaction (Table 12-23). From the interviews most expatriates had little positive to say about the support and pre-departure preparation, if they received any. Having this construct identified as one of the least central constructs to the expatriate is important to this research given the importance attached to pre-departure training by Black et al (1991).

7.1.3.4 Weighted ID and OD

Hanneman and Riddle (2005) when exploring the ID and OD in a simple count form to describe a construct's centrality echoed concerns raised by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995), that is, although a node may have more connections, all connections are not equivalent.

The measures are a measure of the direct and immediate links between constructs that influence each other. The number of IDs will provide a partial indication of the centrality of a construct. To determine the number of IDs or links from other constructs that influence the construct under scrutiny or IDs, count down the column to gain a total of how many other constructs influence the construct. Count across each row in the adjacency matrix (the adjacency matrix describes the direct immediate links between constructs) to achieve the total number of ODs that a construct influences then count down the column Finally, sum the total count of ID with the total number of OD to determine the total number of degrees. These values can be divided by the number of maps to calculate an average influence (Bougon et all, 1977; Goodhew, 1998). A more advanced metric can be calculated that is based on weightings of constructs. The constructs can then be ranked by their influence.

So far, evidence has been found which illustrates what the overall group of expatriates identify as central to their satisfaction in their organization setting. Through the satisfaction/ITQ survey expatriates were identified based on their respective scores. Through visual inspection it was noted some maps were visually different; these maps included large numbers of negative relationships. There appears to be differences in maps which suggest deconstructing the overall group. Given that red indicated negative relationships in maps yet the red appeared linked to organization constructs within

individual maps on cursory exploration. Drawing on the results of the satisfaction

questionnaire was the direction to explore.

7.1.4 Satisfied vs. dissatisfied maps

To create the satisfied vs. dissatisfied groups, two criteria were followed. First, links that at

least 25% of respondents will select (Goodhew, 2003; Ford and Hegarty, 1984) are

included. Second and more importantly our groups need a minimum of four people

(Markoczy and Goldberg, 1995). The dissatisfied group which consisted of Alan_Kiwi,

Alan_P, John, and Roger contained the four maps identified at the beginning of this

chapter, and the satisfied group contained the rest of the participants.

Whether exploring individual maps as in the previous chapter or a satisfied and dissatisfied

group maps based on weighted mean links as in Figure 7-4 and Figure 7-5, it is visually

evident the perceptions are somehow different. The density of links can be accounted for

by difference in group size, but the visual difference remains.
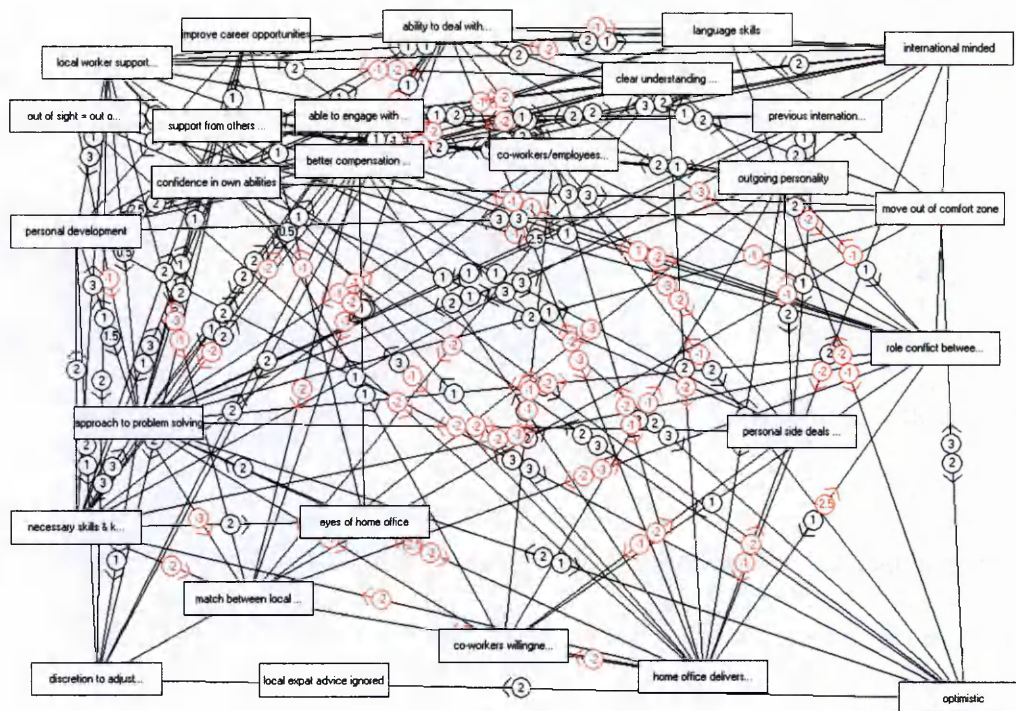
Figure 7-4: Overall Dissatisfied expatriates using weighted means
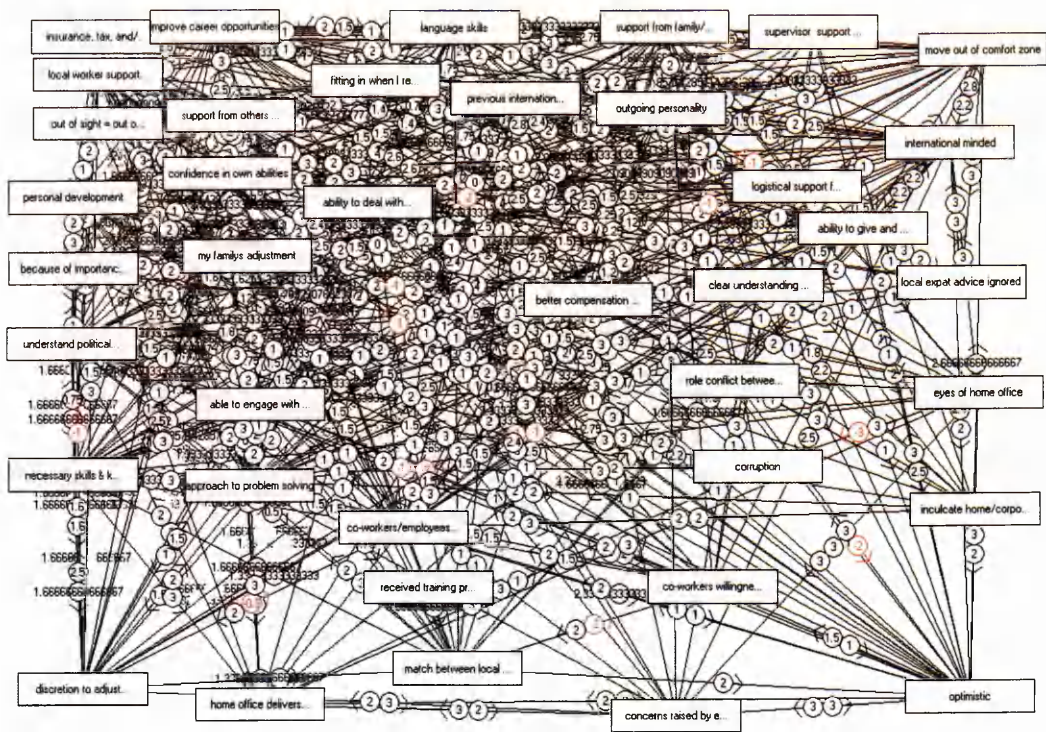
Figure 7-5: Overall Satisfied expatriates using weighted means

Previously in this document two groups have been identified through the survey and visual inspection of the maps.

7.1.4.1 Constructs selected: satisfied vs. dissatisfied by percentage

Table 7-6 and Table 7-7 identify the top ten constructs selected by the satisfied and dissatisfied group of expatriates before any consideration of how important a construct is. From this initial step there appears to be a different consideration of what is important to the two groups' satisfaction. However, a cautionary note must be sounded when exploring the dissatisfied group as it is small (n=4).

CONSTRUCT	# SELECTED	PERCENTAGE
improve career opportunities	19	0.76
ability to deal with frustrations	19	0.76
able to engage with people who are different	18	0.72
support from family / important others	17	0.68
international minded (curious)	17	0.68
confidence in one' abilities	15	0.6
approach to problem solving	13	0.52
personal development	12	0.48
language skills	11	0.44
necessary skills and knowledge	11	0.44

Table 7-6: Percentage of satisfied expatriates who selected the construct

CONSTRUCT	# SELECTED	PERCENTAGE
approach to problem solving	4	1
local worker support in host country	3	0.75
ability to deal with frustrations	3	0.75
confidence in one' abilities	3	0.75
support from others in community at large	2	0.5
clear understanding of why on assignment	2	0.5
personal development	2	0.5
better compensation opportunities	2	0.5
outgoing personality	2	0.5
international minded (curious)	2	0.5
move out of comfort zone	2	0.5
necessary skills and knowledge	2	0.5
role conflict between home office and posting	2	0.5
home office delivers on promises	2	0.5
optimistic	2	0.5

Table 7-7: Percentage of dissatisfied expatriates who selected construct

Direction for construct inclusion within a group comes from Goodhew (1998), who

suggests using a threshold of 25% whereas Ford and Hegarty (1984) suggest a threshold of

60% has been used in previous research. This research selected an arbitrary threshold of

50% as this would insist that half of the dissatisfied group would have to select a construct.

7.1.4.2 Exploration of average top 10 constructs – satisfied vs. dissatisfied

In this exploration, the cohort was n=28 for satisfied expatriates as identified from the survey and n=5 dissatisfied expatriates. Two expatriates were neutral, that is, they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and for purposes of this discussion they are not included. The mean was calculated as: ID + OD / group size and are discussed following.

The expatriates who identify with the satisfied group (Table 7-8) remain as previously explored in the overall group focused on person constructs e.g. *personal development* and *improve career opportunities*.

CONSTRUCTS	MEAN
improve career opportunities	2.39
confidence in one's abilities	2.21
ability to deal with frustrations	2.11
able to engage with people who are different	2.07
personal development	2.07
approach to problem solving	2.07
international minded (curious)	2.04
support from family / important others	1.86
optimistic	1.86
language skills	1.82

Table 7-8: Mean ID/OD satisfied expatriates (n =28)

Table 7-9 lists the top 10 selected constructs for dissatisfied expatriates based on a mean of the total ID and OD.

CONSTRUCTS	MEAN
approach to problem solving	7.4
local worker support in host country	6.2
ability to deal with frustrations	5.8
support from others in community at large	5.6
confidence in one's abilities	5.6
outgoing personality	5.6
home office delivers on promises	5
personal development	4.8
move out of comfort zone	4.4
role conflict between home office and posting	4.4

Table 7-9: Mean ID/OD dissatisfied expatriates (n = 5)

Although much overlap in constructs occurs between the two groups of expatriates, what is notable is the constructs that differentiate the groups are *issues with the home office, home office delivers on promises, role conflict between home office* and *posting*. The dissatisfied group (Table 7-9) are identifying far more external constructs as relevant to their experience.

The picture continues to unravel by exploring the ID and OD with their cumulative weightings. This accounts for more dimensions outlined above, now included are: construct, weight i.e. positive or negative, and differential weighting which helps to fine tune a constructs importance and thus centrality.

7.1.4.3 Exploration of satisfied v. dissatisfied expats' weighted IDs and ODs

Examination of Table 7-10 identifies constructs and thus potential issues that may differentiate the satisfied from the dissatisfied expatriate. Exploration of the table indicates 15 red weightings which represent negative weighted relations/influences and what is apparent is all except one occurred in the dissatisfied group (Dis ID, Dis OD). The

exception occurred with regard to the construct *role conflict between home office and posting.*

Comparing the satisfied and dissatisfied groups, there appears to be two groups of constructs where substantive difference is occurring. Firstly, three comparisons between the ID of satisfied vs. dissatisfied expatriates and two comparisons of OD suggest the group differences focus around person organization issues. The second difference appears to focus on how the groups weight person constructs; however, caution is needed in this exploration given the large discrepancy between group size. Also, of interest is what constructs are held in common. Figure 7-6 and Figure 7-7 highlight the differences and commonalities of the two groups.

Table 7-11 and Table 7-12 present the top 10 weighted ID of the satisfied and dissatisfied expatriates respectively based on the absolute values to ascertain the order of importance, however, results are reported as the negative relation to maintain clarity. Comparing Table 7-11 and Table 7-12, the construct or issue that appears most central to differentiating

between the groups is the *match between local* knowledge and *HO expectations.* Alternatively, *ability to deal with frustration* is the most central differentiating the groups from the perspective of the satisfied group.

Comparing Table 7-13 and Table 7-14, the top 10 OD for satisfied vs. dissatisfied expatriates, the construct that appears to be most important in differentiating the two groups is *match between local knowledge and HO expectations* in relation to the dissatisfied expatriate yet, *ability to deal with frustration* appears most central from the perspective of the satisfied expatriates.

Thus, when both ID and OD weighted rankings are considered in total, it appears the constructs that best differentiate the two groups are the *match between local knowledge and HO expectations* and *ability to deal with frustrations. Ability to deal with frustration* appears to best differentiate the satisfied group and this is supplemented by the constructs *improve career opportunities* and *approaches to problem solving* as these constructs also appear in the top lists of both the ID and OD (Figure 7-6 and Figure 7-7). *Match between local knowledge and HO expectations* appears to differentiate the dissatisfied group and this construct appears to be supplemented by *discretion to adjust roles and methods as necessary.* Exploring Table 7-11 through Table 7-14 and Figure 7-6 and Figure 7-7 the dissatisfied expatriates appear more externally focussed and there are more negative relations whereas the satisfied group appear more internal focused. It would appear the

CONSTRUCTS	SAT ID	DIS ID	SAT OD	DIS OD
insurance / pension concerns	2.09	0	2.38	0
improve career opportunities	8.34	1.29	7.38	1.5
fitting in upon returning home	1.71	0	2.43	0
language skills	3.21	-0.8	5	0.5
supervisor support in host country	1.79	1.67	2	2
local worker support in host country	3.94	1.34	3.22	1.12
support from others in community at large	1.82	1.42	2.31	1.73
ability to deal with frustrations	9.9	0.76	8.9	0.36
previous international experience	2	2	1.85	1.6
support from family / important others	4.92	0	6.04	0
out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunity back home	2.57	0.33	2	0.43
confidence in one' abilities	7.5	1.82	7.57	1.61
able to engage with people who are different	9.15	1.33	7.56	1.67
clear understanding of why on assignment	3	1	2.73	-1.57
logistical support from home office	1.3	0	2	0
personal development	6.31	2.28	6.23	1.63
my family's adjustment	4.65	1	5.29	2.2
better compensation opportunities	4.56	0.88	4.18	0.14
outgoing personally	3.6	0.85	5.22	1.57
international minded (curious)	8.26	2	8.4	1.35
because of importance of China, receiving more scrutiny	2.2	0	2.76	0
corruption	0.33	0	2.6	0
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	2.7	-0.67	2.75	-0.57
personal side deals by employees at company expense	0	-0.38	0	-1.17
ability to give and take to get along	5.04	1.33	4.83	1.83
understand political dynamic of host country/co-workers	3.85	0	5.22	0
approach to problem solving	6.34	0.73	5.66	0.24
eyes of home office	2.79	2	1.94	0.67
inculcate home/corporate expectations/culture	1.5	0	1.8	0
move out of comfort zone	7.45	2.19	7.63	1.39
necessary skills and knowledge	4.25	0.38	5.16	1.25
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	3.24	-2.33	3.05	-2.75
local expat advice ignored	2.44	0	2.78	0
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	1.58	-0.14	2.21	-1
role conflict between home office and posting	1.57	-1.79	0.4	-0.03
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	4.37	1.67	3.85	2
home office delivers on promises	2.31	-1.35	2.77	-0.5
received training prior to arrival	0	0	1	0
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by HO	2.7	0	2.31	0
optimistic	4.26	2.13	5.36	1.6

Table 7-10: Weighted ID and OD (satisfied vs. dissatisfied) (mean weights)

satisfied expatriate is focussed on their career and the other constructs such as *dealing with frustration* and *approaches to problem solving* all reinforce each other. The dissatisfied appear to have more external focussed, and more organization focussed constructs, yet not as reinforcing.

Exploration of Table 7-10 suggests the two groups are almost opposite in their assessment of their *match between local knowledge and HO expectations*, ID = 3.24 for satisfied expatriates vs. ID = -2.33 for dissatisfied expatriates. The same perception holds for ODs with a weighting of 3.05 vs. -2.75 respectively for the satisfied vs. the dissatisfied expatriates. This represents a differential of 5.80, which indicates a very large difference of view, yet more importantly it represents how differently the groups perceive their relationship with their home office. It seems the satisfied expatriates perceive each influences the other positively whereas the dissatisfied expatriates perceive that each is having a negative influence on the other.

The second issue reinforcing a differential focus is the construct *role conflict between home office and posting*. When considering the relation of this construct to a person's satisfaction, the difference between satisfied (ID = 1.57) and dissatisfied (ID= -1.79), again suggests the two groups view the relationship in a substantially different light. However, if looking at the OD, although both are negative, they are only slightly so (satisfied OD= -.4 vs. dissatisfied OD=-.03) and hovering around neutral.

The third construct to differentiate the groups is *home office delivers on promises*. Again, the influence is most noticeable within the ID, satisfied ID = 2.31 vs. dissatisfied ID= -1.35 that is, how the person perceives the behaviour of the organization. Table 7-15 indicates

the dissatisfied ranks these three constructs as the lowest; however, all appear in the overall

top 10 constructs for the dissatisfied group if the absolute value is considered.

As mentioned, *match between local knowledge and HO (home office) expectations* was

ranked as the most influential construct; however, it was a negative influence. Exploring

the OD of the dissatisfied expatriates, the other construct having a very negative influence

on the dissatisfied expatriate was *clear understanding of why they are on assignment,*

satisfied OD=2.73 vs. dissatisfied OD=-1.57. Table 7-14 indicates this construct is also in

the top 10 constructs identified as most important if the absolute value is considered

(although presented as negative for clarity).

Drawing on Table 7-10, the constructs common to both groups as identified in Figure 7-6

and Figure 7-7 appear to be weighted qualitatively differently. Calculating the adjusted

weighted means in attempt to adjust for the uneven group size, the means still appear to be

substantially different.

Figure 7-6 and Figure 7-7 show the perceptions of the two groups of expatriates. The

variations on the construct support: *support from family/important others, support from*

others in the community at large, and *supervisor support in the host country* warrants

discussion. What appears evident is all expatriates recognize the necessity of a support

network, the issue is where does the support come from, hence the constructs in the Venn

diagrams are half in.

Confidence in one's abilities appears to be one of the constructs shared by both groups in

relation to ID and OD of influence; however, what is interesting is when the mean

weighted scores are explored there is a qualitative difference in the weights ascribed by the

satisfied vs. dissatisfied expatriates. In the case of ID, the discrepancy is 6.68 (Sat ID = 7.5, Dis ID = 1.82) or the satisfied group seems more confident. Given the unequal group size, even if the mean is adjusted to account for the difference, the differential is 6.76 which still suggests a meaningful difference. The OD for the satisfied vs. dissatisfied group on *confidence in one's abilities*, reveals a similar finding; that is, the satisfied group had a mean weighting of OD=7.57 vs. dissatisfied OD=1.61. Again, even when adjusted, the weighted mean result is 6.83 a finding which mirrors the ID finding.

The other construct which was identified by both satisfied and dissatisfied groups as being both influenced and influencing other constructs was *personal development*. Comparing the ID of the satisfied vs. dissatisfied groups again revealed large differences, 6.31 vs. 2.28; the adjusted mean for unequal group size was 5.81. Both groups identify it as important to ID and OD.

Two constructs, *international minded* and *move out of comfort zone* were shared by both the satisfied and dissatisfied as being significantly influenced by other sources (ID). Again exploration of the mean weights in Table 7-10 for *international minded* indicates the satisfied weighted the construct ID=8.26 vs. dissatisfied ID= 2 and if adjusted the mean was 7.47. The construct *moving out of one's comfort zone* also reflected this situation as evidenced with weighted means of ID=7.45 vs. ID=2.19 in Table 7-10 and an adjusted mean of 6.79.

Two constructs identified by both the satisfied and dissatisfied expatriates were important in influencing other constructs, *able to engage with people are different* and *optimism*. The weighted mean scores were satisfied OD=7.56 vs. dissatisfied OD=1.67 and the adjusted

mean for unequal groups was 6.82. Finally, *optimism* was rated with satisfied OD=5.36 vs. dissatisfied OD=1.6 and when adjusted for unequal group size, the mean was 4.89.

What seems apparent is a core of constructs exists and individual circumstance affects the expatriate which influence their sense of satisfaction

A concern with trying to determine the influence through weighting of the constructs is, because the dissatisfied group is small and the amount of variation among group members is substantial, one person can inordinately affect the importance assigned.

Thus based on the exploration of the causal maps given the underlying structure of the data, further analysis following Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) would be of limited value. Results from techniques such as cluster analysis with a hope of finding two clusters of satisfied vs. dissatisfied would be pointless. Therefore, this research continues to build its understanding by reinforcing what is known to this point about the expatriate's consideration of what is important to them through an exploration of their interviews.

Construct	Satisfied ID
ability to deal with frustrations	9.9
able to engage with people who are different	9.15
improve career opportunities	8.34
international minded (curious)	8.26
confidence in one' abilities	7.5
move out of comfort zone	7.45
approach to problem solving	6.34
personal development	6.31
ability to give and take to get along	5.04
support from family / important others	4.92

Table 7-11: Weighted and rank top 10 ID constructs (satisfied)

Construct	DIS ID
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	-2.33
personal development	2.28
move out of comfort zone	2.19
optimistic	2.13
previous international experience	2.00
international minded (curious)	2.00
eyes of home office	2.00
confidence in one's abilities	1.82
role conflict between home office and posting	-1.79
supervisor support in host country	1.67

Table 7-12: Weighted and ranked top 10 ID (dissatisfied)

Constructs	Satisfied OD
ability to deal with frustrations	8.9
international minded (curious)	8.4
move out of comfort zone	7.63
confidence in one' abilities	7.57
able to engage with people who are different	7.56
improve career opportunities	7.38
personal development	6.23
support from family / important others	6.04
approach to problem solving	5.66
optimistic	5.36

Table 7-13: Weighted and ranked top 10 OD (satisfied)

Constructs	Dissatisfied OD
match between local knowledge and HO expectations (-)	-2.75
my family's adjustment	2.2
supervisor support in host country	2
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	2
ability to give and take to get along	1.83
support from others in community at large	1.73
able to engage with people who are different	1.67
personal development	1.63
confidence in one' abilities	1.61
previous international experience	1.6
optimistic	1.6
clear understanding of why on assignment (-)	-1.57

Table 7-14: Weighted and ranked top 10 OD (dissatisfied)

Constructs	Dissatisfied ID
local expat advice ignored	0
received training prior to arrival	0
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by HO	0
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	-0.14
personal side deals by employees at company expense	-0.38
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	-0.67
language skills	-0.8
home office delivers on promises	-1.35
role conflict between home office and posting	-1.79
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	-2.33

Table 7-15: Weighted and ranked bottom 10 ID (dissatisfied)

Constructs	Dissatisfied O
local expat advice ignored	0
received training prior to arrival	0
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by HO	0
role conflict between home office and posting	-0.03
home office delivers on promises	-0.5
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	-0.57
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	-1
personal side deals by employees at company expense	-1.17
clear understanding of why on assignment	-1.57
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	-2.75

Table 7-16: Weighted and ranked bottom 10 OD (dissatisfied)
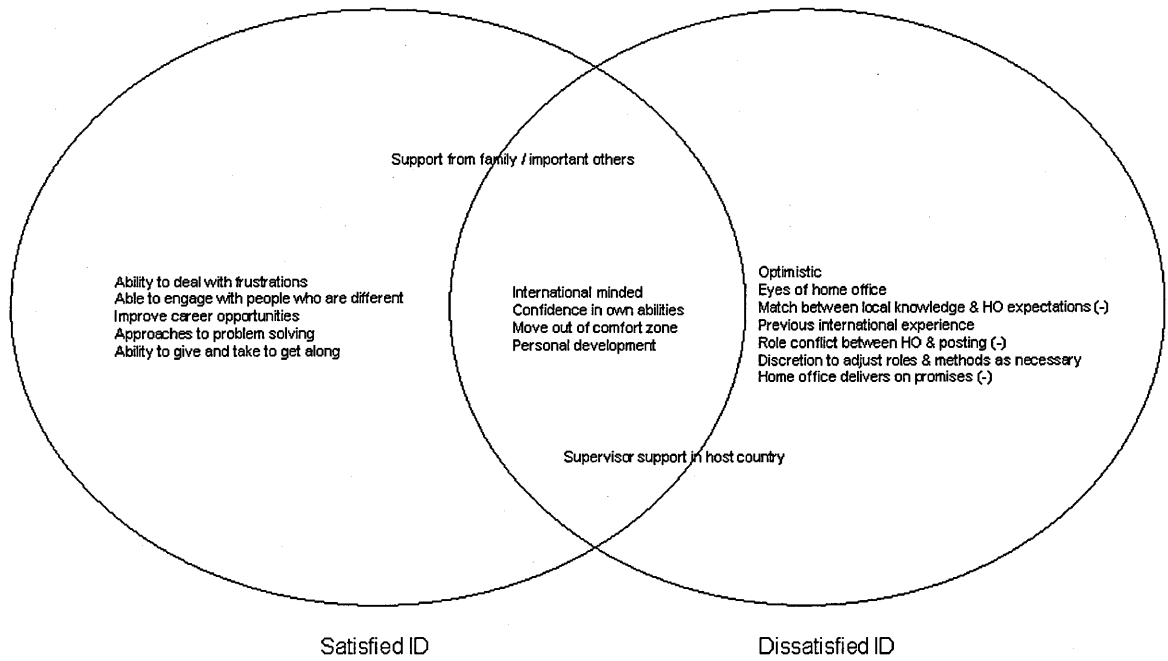
Figure 7-6: Satisfied vs. dissatisfied, top 10 ID
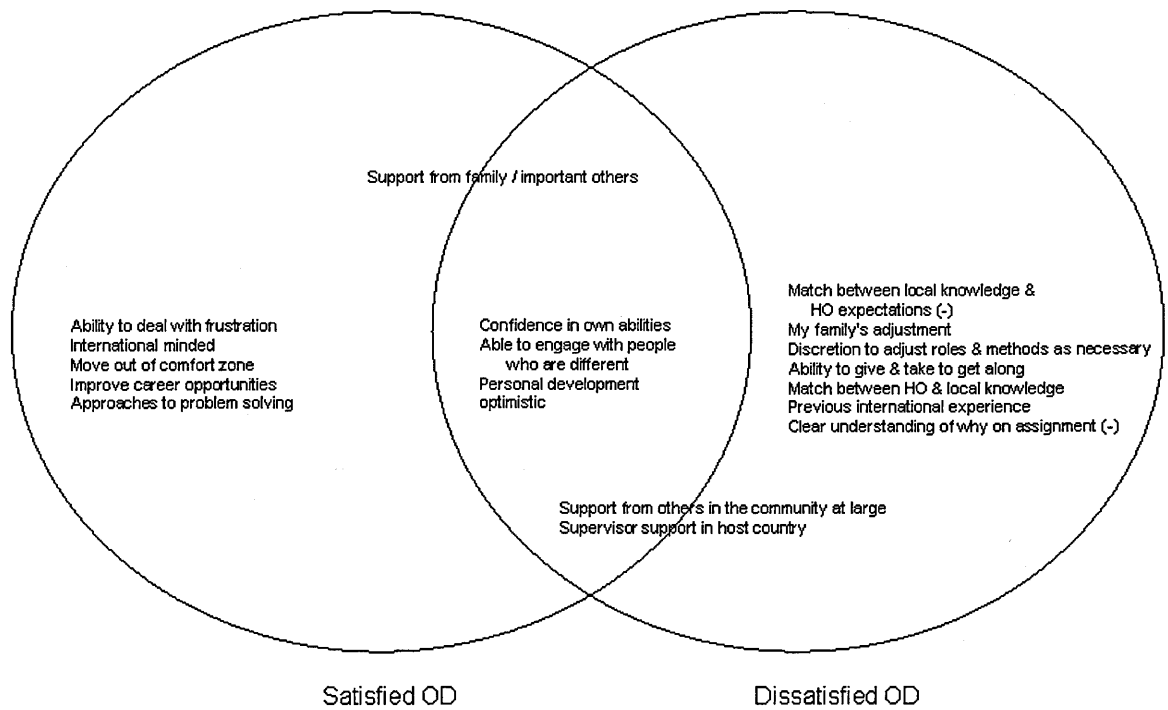
Figure 7-7: Satisfied vs. dissatisfied, top 10 OD

7.1.4.4 Conclusion

The analysis thus far has highlighted the complex nature of the expatriate's causal map.

To summarize the findings thus far:

1. there appears to be a difference between satisfied and dissatisfied expatriates in how they view their situation. The source of satisfaction for satisfied expatriates appears to be more internal, or personal, whereas the source of dissatisfaction for dissatisfied expatriates appears to be external, perhaps organizational.

2. there appears to be a core of constructs which both satisfied and dissatisfied expatriates identify as important to their satisfaction

3. the unequal group size may affect the constructs

As has already been noted, issues were highlighted about drawing inaccurate conclusions from questionnaire data. From the maps, similar caution is warranted if looking overall because of the small group size of dissatisfied and in particular two of the dissatisfied expatriates seemed to hold many of the organizational issues. Having explored the causal maps from a more global perspective, and having explored the individual maps in depth, this thesis will now move to reflect on these findings in the light of previous work in this area.

8 Evaluation of the Findings

8.1 Evaluation of findings

In the previous two chapters the research results and analysis were presented. First, the individual expatriate outcomes to the survey, mapping, and interview were presented, which was followed by the overall findings and analysis of the causal maps. The objective of this chapter is to address how the findings address the research questions.

8.2 Satisfaction/ITQ survey

This research began with a survey to identify whether an expatriate was satisfied and whether they identified themselves as intending to quit. Exploration of the results through the satisfaction question and the follow-up interview suggested that relying on ITQ scores as an indicator of dissatisfaction was problematic. This was because the ITQ did not uncover the reasoning behind the expatriate's response to the questionnaire. Thus some expatriates who had a high intention to quit revealed that their ITQ was a reflection of the organization's routine repatriation process, not the culmination of a process that began with dissatisfaction. They had served their secondment and were scheduled to return to their home office. Some expatriates indicated they were satisfied even though they had a high ITQ e.g. Elizabeth.

Therefore, this research used ITQ as a start point for the individual's satisfaction score. The latter appeared to be a more accurate measure and a group of dissatisfied expatriates were identified. Examination of their maps, supplemented by their interviews, indicated that the satisfied and dissatisfied groups appeared to have a different focus. The satisfied groups appeared to have very internal focus; they identified constructs which would enhance their career opportunities. The dissatisfied group appeared to identify external concerns. The concerns could be with the home office or with their in-country co-workers.

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8.2.1.1 Satisfied vs. dissatisfied expatriates

As evidenced in Figure 7-6 and Figure 7-7, although commonalities exist between the groups, satisfied and dissatisfied expatriates described their experience differently. The maps of the satisfied expatriate identified what was important to them in person construct terms such as able to *deal with frustrations* or *improve career opportunities*. Figure 7-6 and Figure 7-7 suggest the expatriates view their satisfaction in relation to person constructs; that is, is an internal process. Furthermore, they appear focussed on their development, career and personal. They are engaged and curious about the international world. Confidence is critical and they assume they have the skills and knowledge required. They are able to engage with people who are different. The influence of language and family is complicated, however. Having either is advantageous but not having them appears to not necessarily be a hindrance.

It is also instructive to identify the constructs which were least important to their satisfaction in Table 7-5, the least selected constructs. These constructs, when selected, appear to be very specific to an individual expatriate's circumstance. For example, Peter's role with his insurance company required him to deal with the issue of *corruption* in a highly regulated industry. Many others acknowledged it, shrugged their shoulders because there is little to be done, it was a fact of life. What they suggested was they tried to maintain their and their company's ethical compass.

By contrast, dissatisfied expatriates included more constructs external to them, most importantly for example *match between local knowledge* and *HO expectations* or *eyes of the home office*. Furthermore, the relationships for the dissatisfied were often negative.

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Table 8 summarizes the expatriates who identified negative relationships in their maps; to be included they had to have had at least two negative (red) relationships. Their concerns appear to fall into three clusters. First, there are personal level negative influences. JD's map suggested an issue within his family situation. Roger and Herb centre on their lack of Chinese language capability; however, this issue also influences their abilities, especially Herb, to function at the job level. A second cluster appears focussed on relationships with the organization and co-workers at the China organization level; Herb, Alan_P, Winston, and Peter identify *decision making amongst their co-workers* as a frustration. Winston and Peter identify the lack of *knowledge and skills* as impeding their situation. Furthermore, for Peter an issue was the amount of regulations and corruption he had to deal with in the financial industry. Of these expatriates, the main issue seemed to focus on the locals' willingness to make decisions and accept responsibility for the decisions made. Sarah's issue was with the lack of clear expectations for her position as it was newly designated. Simon identified that he had trouble dealing with the locals. A final cluster occurs between the expatriate and their Home Office. Alan_P felt 'out of sight equalled lost opportunities'. He also had issues with promises made and not being honoured. Alan_Kiwi had issues with his home office over home office promises; he also had issues with the home office expectations against what he felt the locals could deliver. Simon felt his advice was ignored by his Head Office. Herb had issues over what his Head Office aspired to achieve against the reality of the work force knowledge. John's issues were two-fold. He was not sure what was expected of him in China as operations were losing money. John also had an issue with promises being kept with regard to support, both settling in and what to expect upon his repatriation.

Expatriate	Function	Issue	Issue Level	Satisfied
John	CFO (eyes of org)	not clear why in China eyes of the American part of the JV company losing money	P x HO	no
Peter	Technical Director eyes of org, HO	company losing money heavy regulations corruption lack of skills	P x HO, local	yes
Simon	Marketing Director	concerns raised not taken seriously by HO his advice was ignored issue relating to interacting with locals	P x HO, local, person	neutral
Alan_K	Project Manager	issues with head office decisions & promises	P x O	no
Sarah	Manager	unclear about role & expectation	P x local	yes
Winston	Quality Assurance Mgr	co-workers skills, decision making	P x O local	yes
Alan_P	Technical Director China	issues with head office promises & behaviour issues with co-workers in China	P x HO, local	no no
JD	Manager, sourcing	family	person	neutral
Roger	Country Manager	lack of language	person	no
Herb	Manager	lack of language home office expectations	person P x HO, O, person	person yes

Table 8: Maps identified with issues

Of the 10 expatriates identifying ne neutral and six satisfied as identified from their survey. However, of the six satisfied, two have been in China for less than a year and according to research may still be in a 'honeymoon' or adjustment phase as suggested by the Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) meta-analysis.

8.2.1.2 Issues arising from the interviews

A second layer of 'smaller' concerns, more individual x organization specific irritants, surfaced from interviews with the other expatriates. The concerns discussed below are not exhaustive; however, they represent concerns which many expatriates shared. Elizabeth, JD, Claus, Lauren and Michael commented on the irritants such as weekly telephone business meetings which made the days excessively long. All of the aforementioned work for American based companies; because of the time zone difference, the days become very stretched out. Although Michael accepted it as he was well compensated, he was

concerned about burnout from the long hours of work. What the expatriates found most irritating was the unwillingness of head office to compromise.

Perhaps a more serious irritant that relates to the home office delivering on promises or support centres around the issue of settling in and support. John's views summarise the feeling amongst some; however, others were quite satisfied with their arrangement e.g. Stan. Some expatriate managers such as Bill were clear they did not get involved in support from the office; it was a 'buddy system amongst the workers'. The following quotes illustrate the expatriates' issues with their respective home offices in their own words:

> ChinAmAir would think that they have an organisation that's called Global Mobility that would help anybody going to any country in the world; it's interesting it hasn't come up in our conversation yet, but they're horrid, [?] I basically had to figure out everything on my own. (John)

> I did a lot of things of my own, yes. I didn't depend on DBChemical, they have this international assignment department that actually help you. But I guess it is a lot of assumption because I'm a Chinese they didn't volunteer, and I didn't ask for it at all .(Cheng)

> it's kind of expected that your working hours will be considerably more than what they are back here [UK]. ... finishing work at 4.30 in Shanghai; I mean, that's a rare occurrence. The, we're in the office normally from about eight o'clock in the morning, and the earliest you're heading out is 5.30, six o'clock, because the time difference, so you need to be calling Europe to speak to headquarters if you need a chat with them, and even when you get home you end up maybe having to call the

States or Canada or whatever, so you can be on the phone at nine o'clock in the evening, talking to people. (Alan_P)

I've never seen an organisation be able to correct or effectively manage the time difference so I've been on both ends where they completely ignored it and they always have an evening conference call. I've been on the side where we've tried to adjust and flex, every other week we would adjust the calls or every other night we would adjust the time. But at the end of the day you have to tell yourself that there's no such thing as nine to five, I mean you're working around the clock and then the way to manage that is I allowed myself, if I worked late I allowed myself to come in at one o'clock the next day if I could do it, or I allowed myself to go play golf at 07:30 in the morning and sometimes I'd allow myself to take a Wednesday off or a Thursday. It's all about being comfortable knowing that I was accomplishing what was expected in a calendar week that I managed. (JD)

this is my second marriage in ten years, I came over here with my first wife and I think we quickly saw that we had different perspectives on how we saw this international assignment to work out. I saw it as a great opportunity to meet people, to expand the network, to spend time with people of all cultures but at the same time I had to work a lot of hours and adjust to my working schedule and my first wife I think saw it, I would say she had a pretty open mind and also wanted to expand international networks but wanted a lot more time with me than probably I was giving. So, the time demands were challenging and because there wasn't a pre-established social network of support I think it weighed heavily. (JD)

I keep my health, have a social life, and try and get settled in Shanghai. It's that balance that I'm struggling with and I know that a lot of people struggle with that because there's certain... I think there's a lot of people in the US that are respectful and understanding that I'm 13 hours later, and they're flexible, and they will get up early one morning and I'll get up early the next time. But then there's a handful of people at the parent company that have no concept of anything outside their eight to five; they don't care. And that is a challenge of 1 am phone calls, of 5 am phone calls. (Lauren)

Normally we work six days a week; we work six days a week. And it is not nine to five; it is not nine to five. In our project, which was finished in February in Shanghai, I was up every morning, out of my apartment at six o'clock, and I was back eight or nine o'clock every night. (Eddy)

And then with the time difference in our head office in New York and China; so I got quite a few phone calls at five o'clock in the morning from my boss saying: I'm sorry I interrupted you, were you having your dinner; when in actual fact it's five am in the morning. (Eddy)

Many of these issues, however, could be more systematically explored using the frameworks which underpin this research. Hence this chapter will now consider these findings in the light of these two frameworks: the Framework of International Adjustment and Attraction Selection Attrition Framework.

8.2.2 Relationship to Black et al (1991) and the meta-analyses

The first framework this research drew upon was Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment in its entirety because over the years researchers had explored parts but never the framework in its complete form (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al, 2005, p. 258).

Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003), each performed a meta-analysis on the extant body of research and suggests general agreement with Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment. The results presented suggest partial support for this framework. Table 8.2 outlines the components of the framework and its two meta-analyses. This section then reflects on those components given the current results of this research.

FAI, Black et al (1991)	Hechanova et al (2003), (k=37)		Bhaskar-Shrinivas et a(2005), (k=66)
Anticipatory factors			
Individual constructs			
language			0.18
previous experience		0.08	0.06
training			
Organization constructs			
selection & criteria			
In-country factors			
Individual			
self efficacy		0.41	0.3
relational skills			0.15
perception skills			
Job constructs			
role ambiguity		-0.41	0.57
role discretion		0.43	0.45
roles novelty		-0.07	-0.03
role conflict		-0.46	-0.3
Organization constructs			
co-worker supports			0.22
logistical support			0.07
frequency interaction		.28, .18 (host, home)	
Non-work factors			
culture novelty			-0.12
family spouse adjustment		.12, .18 (family, spouse general)	0.26
Outcomes			
general adjustment	x work adjustment	.52	-0.19
	x job satisfaction	.22	0.21
	x turnover intent	-.20	-0.28
work adjustment	x job satisfaction	.41	0.44
	x turnover intent	-.18	-0.23

Table 8-1: Meta-analyses of Black et al's Framework of International Adjustment

8.2.2.1 Anticipatory adjustment

Black et al's (1991) original framework proposed a person x organization interaction prior to secondment. Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) state that they omitted cross cultural training, perceptual skills, supervisor support and organization culture novelty from their meta-analysis because 'they had not been subjected to extensive scrutiny' (2005, p. 258). The importance of constructs relevant to anticipatory adjustment constructs appears weak according to the findings of the two meta-analyses presented in Table 8-1.

8.2.2.1.1 Individual constructs

Within the person domain, Black et al (1991) proposed training and previous work experience would lead to accurate expectations and thus adjustment. The two meta-analyses found little support for language or previous work experience as being important to adjustment. There is inconsistency between the meta-analyses and the original framework. Black et al (1991) discuss cross-cultural training whereas the meta-analyses evaluate language skill as important to adjustment.

Expatriates in this study described very little pre-departure training occurred. Accurate expectations for new expatriates would not be created based on the selection process described by Peter, Alan_P, or JD. The common practice was to fly the potential expatriate out on a week long visit, billet them at five star hotels, and show them the sights. There was little discussion of the work. Some expatriates such as JD did receive more in-depth preparation. Besides the 'look and see tour', JD's training included meeting with Chinese Americans in New York to learn about Chinese culture. JD was quite clear; the most valuable resource was fellow expatriates he met in Shanghai when he arrived.

8.2.2.1.1.1   Language ability

Although not in the original framework, language skill warrants discussion because of its inclusion in the Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) meta-analysis; this research did not find a straight forward lack of importance of language in contrast to Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005).

The findings of this research suggest that those who were fluent in Mandarin, the Singaporeans, considered language skills to be important as evidenced by their selecting this as a top 10 construct for their map. Westerners such as Elizabeth or Howard who considered language skills important saw language in a more general context. They considered learning and speaking Mandarin as a means of building bridges with the Chinese and showing respect to the locals.

The majority of the western expatriates saw language skills as valuable but not necessary for several reasons. English was the lingua franca of the international organizations. Claus indicated the overall skill set was critical, not just language skills. Many expatriates had coping strategies such as relying on trusted bilingual Chinese colleagues. Finally, Jackson explained that Mandarin language abilities were valuable but not necessary because the Chinese learned English in school. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

Shanghai in general I think are a pretty demanding place. It's easier for me because I know the language, so I can imagine how difficult it will am for someone who doesn't know the language. (Priscilla, Singaporean)

most important of course the person needs to start learning the language and to start learning the culture of the [unclear]. (Patrick, Singaporean)

if you go to what we call second and third-tier cities, still a lot of people can do

English because they... now they're teaching English in school, when they're at

junior school. So, language, if you can speak English, a lot of people can do it. A

lot of people actually prefer to talk to you [unclear] in English. (Jackson)

As can be seen from the expatriate's quotes below, personal experience and alternate strategies existed to foster communication.

I have a limited amount of resources in terms of English-speaking staff that assist

me, although I do have one process engineer who speaks fairly good English and

he's fairly skilled. So my immediate support are good so I have somebody that I

can count on to help me to get things done .(Herb, American)

...in ship building all of the drawings are done in English. A lot of it are by sign

language. Some ship builders provider translators, so if a guy are on a particular

job and he has a problem then the translator will relay this to the floor man or to

the manager; so this are problem solving. (Eddy, Irish)

So I think lot of companies these days are looking at westerners, foreigners coming

here – do you have set skills? Language are not really the important one; it's can

you bring the customers, can you maintain the customers, can you manage, can you

lead, are you what we require?

And I don't think it's people who say oh it's a language thing, it's a cultural thing;

I think it's just a person's adaptability or inability to adapt to the local things here

(Claus, German)

Thus this research partially disagrees with Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) who suggest language was not relevant to adjustment.

8.2.2.1.1.2 Previous overseas experience

Evidence from the maps and interviews in this research suggests, in contrast to Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003), overseas experience appears to be valuable.

Seven expatriates considered previous experience as critical (Jackson, Alan_P, Winston, Sarah, Lauren, Patrick, and Tony). Ironically, this was Sarah and Lauren's first international assignment. Perhaps more importantly it was the people who identified themselves as *willing to move out of their comfort zone* (Sebastian, Sian, Stacey, Michael, Mark, JD, Roger, Bill, Sarah, Howard, Roz) *and internationally minded* (Jackson, Stan, Gary, Claus, Sarah, Alan_Kiwi, Howard, Eddy, Herb, Lauren, Priscilla, Sian, Tony). Perhaps more important than previous experience was....a person had to want to work internationally and sought international postings.

For some, previous international experience provided entry into traditional expatriate work experiences. Roz, Darrell, Alan_K, Roger, John were commuting to China and when the opportunity to live in China became available they were encouraged to apply because of their existing knowledge of the operations and environment. The anticipation was that previous experience would shorten the time necessary for adjustment. A second way in which previous international experience provided value was by providing an entrance to a more preferred location. For Stan, a posting to Korea created the opportunity to go to China and for Peter; going to India provided the opportunity to move to China. Finally, previous experience helped the expatriate indirectly through knowing what to do or how to find solutions e.g. Joe talked about the value of 'instant' friends from the pub in Shanghai

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that provided a ready support structure. Roger had developed a network of locals from when he was commuting to China and they helped him settle in. They had built up strategies to deal with the differences and thus reduce anxiety and stress.

8.2.2.1.2 Organization perspective

The meta-analyses did not explore Black et al's (1991) propositions that the organization factors such as appropriate selection procedures and criteria were important.

Expatriates outlined different selection processes and many of them were somewhat informal. For some, such as Stan and Sarah, the discussion about an expatriate assignment occurred within the framework of the annual review process, thus placing the international assignment into the context of their career. ChinAmAir had a panel selection; however, as John mentioned he socialized with two of the selection panel members which helped insure his selection. One of the few who appeared to have a thorough selection process was Roz. She and her family were all interviewed by a psychologist; however, she was encouraged to apply for her position because she had been instrumental in setting up the operation in China. Sebastian described a thorough selection and training regimen that included two panel interviews in Germany, a 'look and see' trip to Shanghai, and training in Germany which continued in Shanghai.

As discussed previously, commuting to China was a common entry method into an expatriate posting. They were already interacting with the China operations in thus they had the knowledge and experience (Alan_Kiwi, Roz, Darrell, Colin, Alan_P, Lauren, Tony, Roger, John). For many the process appeared to be one where the person was told: *'apply, you have the experience...how would you feel about living in China and running operations?...'* .

The Singaporeans, as mentioned in the individual constructs section, were a unique group. Operations such as DBChemical were relocating their far eastern operations to China, and other operations of the CanSing Industrial group had been sold or moved to China; the Singaporeans were given the option of layoff or a new job in Shanghai (Chen, Priscilla, Gary, Patrick, Winston). Winston also mentioned the limited opportunity for older workers in Singapore; '*over 40, it's really difficult to gain or secure a position.*'

The final main category were expatriates such as Bill, Alan_P, Colin and Claus who were encouraged to go to China by their organization with no real selection process beyond the organization decision makers deciding they had the skills and should go.

8.2.2.2 In Country adjustment findings

Black et al (1991) proposed that a person's anticipatory adjustment influenced an expatriate's in-country adjustment. Having explored how the findings from this research support Black et al (1991), this research now presents its findings about the expatriate adjusts once in China. As mentioned the meta-analyses omitted perception skills, supervisor support, and organization culture novelty because of 'the lack empirical of scrutiny' (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al, 2005, p. 258).

8.2.2.2.1.1 Individual factors

Black et al (1991) proposed three individual factors, self efficacy, relation skills, and perception skills which influence a person's adjustment in their international posting. Self-efficacy was identified as important by eighteen expatriates or half of the cohort and this finding is in concordance with Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003).

8.2.2.2.1.2 Relational Skills

The constructs *able to engage with people who are different able to give and take to get along* reflected the relational skills necessary. These findings are in contrast to the meta-analyses of Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005). Hechanova et al (2003) did not report a finding.

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The construct *able to engage with people who are different* reflected the relational skills

necessary at the organization level and 19 of the expatriates in the sample of 36 selected

this construct as one of their top 10 constructs (Tony, Simon, Stacey, Howard, Mark,

Michael , Priscilla, Sian, Sebastian, LP, Herb, Sarah, Stan, John, Gary, Eddy, Bill, Colin,

Aiden). Included in this group were the most senior levels of management of their China

operations (Colin, Bill, Michael, Howard, Eddy, Simon, John, Tony, Aiden).

Reinforcing this construct was the construct *able to give and take to get along*. Ten

expatriates identified this construct as important to their satisfaction (Colin, Howard, JD,

Keith, Sian, Simon, Michael, Sarah, Winston, Gary). There was overlap with the group

who selected *able to engage with people who are different* (Colin, Howard,

Michael).Again, five of the country Managing Directors were included (Keith, Colin,

Howard, Michael, and Simon). Priscilla suggested relational skills are important because:

> *you also learn how to deal with people who just see things differently, and adapt to*
>
> *it. I think the key advantage are in recognizing that there are differences and*
>
> *working to resolve the differences. Some people can't take it; they are really*
>
> *frustrated, and those are the people who move, maybe within a year or something.*
>
> *(Priscilla)*

8.2.2.2.1.3   Perception Skills

The final individual construct proposed by Black et al (1991) was possession of the

necessary perception skills; that is, an expatriate should be able to understand 'what is

appropriate or inappropriate in the host country' (Black et al, 1991, p.308). Neither meta-

analyses reported findings. This research offers small glimpses of this construct in action.

The construct *understand political dynamics of host country co-workers* was selected by

eight expatriates or 25% of the cohort; of note, six were from the upper echelon of their respective organization (Colin, Howard, Keith, Mark, Peter, Tony).

In China the concepts of *face* and *guanxi* are presented as important when doing business in China (Fu, Wu, Yang, Ye; 2007). *Face* refers to the Chinese concept of position within the peer group and organization in this research. Expatriates such as Alan_Kiwi or Roger described *face* in an accounting-like conceptualization, that is, face could be accrued or removed based on a person's behaviour. Doing good deeds accumulates face which in turn allows a person to increase their networks within in an organization. A person loses face by making poor decisions, being disrespectful, losing respect and so forth and if face is diminished the person loses authority, access, and power. Face is often considered a uniquely Chinese construct. Expatriates such as Roz, Bill, and Michael acknowledged the concept but were sceptical of it being unique. Western expatriates such as Michael suggested *face* was no different than appropriate behaviour in the west. Embarrassing a person in front of others is inappropriate and one loses 'face'; whereas, praise accumulates as well.

Related to face was *guanxi*, or networks (translation is relationship). Again, expatriates were sceptical and in this case cautious because guanxi was viewed to have two implications. First, as Keith described, it was 'networking on steroids' and the Chinese had refined networking to a high art. As John, Roger, Darrell, and Bill suggested, it was a method to wind their way through the complex government processes. You found a 'fixer' who was connected. In John's instance he needed to have permits approved which had been stalled, thus the issue was who could unstick the process and get approval; however, they suggested this was no different than in America where a person might employ a consultant in Washington to gain access to the appropriate cabinet minister such as Hillary Clinton.

The insidious dimension of *guanxi* was the 'red envelopes' (incentive or insurance as described by a Chinese informant) which were expected in exchange for things to be done by government workers. The expatriates, Eddy, Darrel, Peter, Bill, and Claus, described this situation as an ongoing issue and they were adamant they did not participate.

8.2.2.2.2 Job factors

8.2.2.2.2.1 Role clarity and Role conflict

Findings from this research agreed with Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003) and all researchers supported Black et al's (1991) proposition that role clarity was important to a person's adjustment because role conflict created an anxiety ridden environment. This construct is discussed in relation to role conflict because the two appeared linked.

This current research helps to clarify the nature of role conflict and if it occurs it appeared to be a major influencer in dissatisfaction. Role conflict manifested itself in several ways. Firstly, role conflict could be an ongoing minor irritant with the home office (this is also relevant to the constructs social support and logistical support enunciated by Black et al (1991) and subsumed under organization culture). For example, the weekly meeting was an irritant. This was a concern for Claus, Elizabeth, Lauren, JD, Elizabeth, Eddy, and Michael who worked for an American organization, because they had little control over this aspect of their work and because of the time zone differences, their days became very long.

A second form of role conflict was the expectations the home office had vs. the perceived abilities of the local workforce to deliver on the expectations e.g. Herb, Aiden, and Michael.

A third conflict point was between the expatriate and the local Chinese colleagues. Expatriates such as Michael, Roger, Elizabeth, Bill, Eddy, Priscilla, Stacey, Alan_Kiwi, Sebastian, Darrell, Peter, Keith, Howard felt they often did not have the requisite skills (Michael was appalled at their lack of six sigma training.) and were trying different strategies to improve their skills. What they all found most frustrating was the Chinese unwillingness to make decisions or accept responsibility. Michael recounted how he had recently been drawn into a discussion about carpet selection for some renovations. Peter and Bill suggested the reticence in making decisions was not cultural in the sense of the Confucianism tenet of deference to authority (Fu et al, 2007); rather it was a reflection of their recent history, the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. During this period, making decisions could get a person killed; much of the previous society had been totally destroyed. Expatriates, for example, Elizabeth, Roger, Mark, and Howard were optimistic things were changing.

Finally, Keith and Bill suggested joint ventures (JVs) often had divided loyalties and unclear expectations, did they watch out for their home organization interests and ignore the partner; or did they ignore the home office and operate as an independent organization with funds accruing accordingly to the respective parent organizations. Keith and Bill suggested when the JVs focussed on what was best for the JV, everyone tended to do better including the respective home offices. When this was not the case, their observations suggested the JVs often failed.

8.2.2.2.2.2 Role novelty

Role novelty was not considered as influential by both meta-analyses. In this research, it appears that role novelty may be mixed with other constructs. Few expatriates spoke directly to role novelty; however, the expatriates acknowledged the novelty in relation to

the people they had to interact with. Role novelty was evident when the expatriates

discussed the Chinese co-workers willingness to make decisions and some of their 'guanxi'

business practices. For example, Eddy and Darrel talked about the officials wanting

inducements to expedite permits as did many others. Stan mentioned issues around health

and safety practices which would have been unacceptable in the UK. Herb had suggested

he would transfer his management strategies from the American mid-west. Bill discussed

the concept of preventative maintenance was non-existent. Roger discussed the endless

drinking, karaoke, and banquets. Thus, evidence exists that expatriates had to accept the

status quo in some instances and in some cases change the roles. This was a construct that

also influenced the expatriates frustration levels and thus adjustment.

8.2.2.2.2.3   Role discretion

Role discretion was unclear. Howard expressed frustration that he was often limited in his

ability to adjust practices to better reflect the situation in his hotel in Shanghai. This was

partly a result of the chain's desire for a global brand. Simon reflected Howard's

frustration that the head office often would not heed his advice.

Most expatriates wanted to move the Chinese workers to an acceptance of western

practices and standards. Some Chinese were embracing of learning western ideas and

skills; others, especially older workers as mentioned by Elizabeth, were not so enthusiastic.

Roger and Elizabeth talked about limited success in their strategy of mixed groups. Colin

had a pairing system but he said he viewed each person as offering something unique, the

Chinese would be better at sales and the westerner would usually have the technical

knowledge. Keith, because they were selling into the China market was willing to accept

lower manufacturing standards of their products. Michael had instituted a process where in

the morning the group wrote the objectives and how to achieve them for the day, and at the

end of the day they wrote a brief summary. If there was a problem, they had to write a brief

analysis of it and what the solution would be. Alan_Kiwi and Bill, both of whom were involved in manufacturing, discussed at length how compartmentalized each worker was. Even if they knew there was a problem many employees would not say anything and both gave examples and strategies used to mitigate the situation. Alan_Kiwi instituted a system of checks and double check on products. The reason the expatriates were inflexible and unwilling to accept Chinese standards was mandatory quality control and potential law suits from the customers in the west. Bill who was manufacturing medical equipment for the American market had to have the highest standards possible and one strategy he was employing was a team approach where people of potential were identified and mentored by high performers.

Elizabeth seemed to summarize the situation when she said they had mixed results with their training programmes for the Chinese employees but she was optimistic that things would change. She, as did many of the other expatriates, identified a different attitude between the generations of Chinese workers. Priscilla suggested currently the solution was endless questioning to draw information out of the Chinese and continuous reminding and reinforcing to change behaviour. But in the main, they were optimistic as Howard identified, like anywhere, there are those who want to learn and those who don't.

8.2.2.2.3 Organization factors

Black et al (1991) proposed two organization level factors influence the expatriate's adjustment, social support from co-workers and logistical support.

Organizational culture was mentioned by three expatriates and one, Priscilla, mentioned it only in passing. Alan_P suggested fitting the organization culture was not important unless a person wanted move to the top echelons of the organization. Peter suggested that getting used to a new organization was more difficult than adjusting to China.

8.2.2.2.3.1 Co-worker support

Co-worker support was unclear in the current study; however, from the interviews and maps it appeared that this was an area which led to frustration and anxiety amongst expatriates. Sebastian said he always felt like the 'fall guy' if there was a problem and was not supported during work but he would be invited to socialize with his colleagues after work. Stacey was unique. She worked for a Chinese organization in a 3rd tier city and felt she received little support from her co-workers. She said her co-workers were always making disparaging comments about her in Chinese. Herb hoped to get his Chinese co-worker's support by employing management techniques he had used in America. He would talk with them and reach joint decisions. Because so many expatriates expressed frustration with the Chinese's aversion to making decisions and taking responsibility, it is not clear whether they felt they had the support of their co-workers. Howard felt his Chinese colleagues evidenced their support through their desire to learn western hotel management skills. Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) found support and Hechanova eta l (2003) did not report a finding.

8.2.2.2.3.2 Logistical support

Logistical support from the home office was considered important by the expatriates. As was discussed earlier, logistical support was often an individual irritant.

Participants who worked for ChinAm Air suggested logistical support was lacking even though there were people tasked with the responsibility. John was succinct in his description of support received, *'it was horrid'*. Elizabeth had concern over her housing allowance and she thought part of the issue was the people in Seattle were unfamiliar with China and the real costs. Roger relied on Chinese friends he had made while commuting to China.

Colin, who was the Managing Director for Asia in a different organization, described a very thorough personal support package which was offered by his organization e.g. international school tuition, flights home, taxes paid, tax advice, housing and so on; however, others in the organization (Alan-P, Chen, Sarah) were not as enthusiastic about the support received. Sarah was frustrated with the moving arrangement and the lack of housing support; despite a department tasked with supporting expatriates, she suggested she had relied on her co-workers for help. She was concerned particularly about the amount of housing allowance being enough. Alan_P had a list of concerns, being forgotten by head office, having to fight for the allowances which he was due e.g. clothing, making promises without asking him whether the were technically feasible, and housing issues. Stan and Aidan were satisfied; but Chen, who was from Singapore and spoke Mandarin, was not offered settling help. She felt it was only meant for the western expatriates.

Tony worked for a Swiss MNE and was satisfied even though his 'package' was being reduced. Alan_Kiwi, Sebastian and Lauren felt the logistical settling in support was good.

A second logistical concern which was mentioned previously was the weekly update meeting with their home office. It was an issue for expatriates because these meetings lengthened their day to 12 or 14 hours depending on their head office location. Furthermore, they suggested their colleagues at the head office often showed little inclination to adjust their schedules to accommodate the time differences.

A third logistical concern was Alan_P and Elizabeth both identified that they often needed documents and information that was time sensitive. Both indicated their concerns were routinely not taken seriously by their head office.

Stacey was unique as she worked for a Chinese organization in a 3rd tier city and she found support, both social and logistical very challenging. The standards were not the 'expatriate' living standards of those who lived in Shanghai and worked for MNEs. Stacey's original housing was unsuitable to her expectation, a western expectation. She focused on the Chinese style toilet to express her concern.

From the above presentation, it appears logistical support is important and it seems more important when the support relationship with head office breaks down. Thus, Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) meta-analysis appears to mask the importance of logistical support. Black et al (1991) suggested logistical support was outside the work domain, this research suggests logistical support cuts across all domains and this is contrary to Black et al (1991).

8.2.2.2.4 Nonwork factors

This research supports Black et al (1991) and Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) in that support from the expatriate's family/important others was important to their satisfaction and adjustment. Furthermore, the maps indicate that if there was no spouse/important others in China, the expatriates sought support elsewhere. For example, Alan_P was single and drew on members from the community at large for support. Hechanova et al (2003) found no meaningful relation in her meta-analysis.

Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) found little support for culture novelty and adjustment and Hechanova et al (2003) made no claim. The expatriates in this study acknowledged differences but were sceptical about the influence and adapted as necessary to the culture differences … but only to a point. They were sceptical because based on their experiences they thought the explanations were simplistic. Many saw no difference between them and the Chinese; people wanted security and success, they were interested in learning from the

Chinese as much as any of the Chinese were interested in learning from them. One group looked for commonalities with the Chinese; the other group saw differences.

From the above discussion, the findings appear to offer general support for Black et al (1991) and Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005). What appears critical in assuring a satisfied expatriate is for the home office to have a clear set of expectations and supports for the expatriate and the process should begin prior to departure. However, it appears organizations fall short on this count.

It appears that often the home office does not have a good understanding of the capabilities of their workforce in China, the logistical challenges the expatriate faces, such as time differences, or the cost of living in Shanghai. It is unclear how well the home office listens to advice from the expatriate. Thus the expatriate often finds themselves in the stressful situation of trying to juggle the expectations of the home office while simultaneously developing a workforce to a level capable of producing products to western standards.

8.2.3   Person – Organization fit and the ASA Framework

The second framework presented in the literature review was the ASA framework (Schneider, 1987) and PO fit (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al, 2005, Piasentin and Chapman, 2006). Although a number of iterations exist; at the core, is the idea that the person fits within an organization culture. Implicit within this view is the person is fitting to the status quo.

For the expatriate, a better description would be that they often were in the position of being the minority yet needing the majority fit to them. When in China, the expatriate had unique skills and knowledge and chances were they would never 'fit' as envisioned by Kristof (1996), Kristof-Brown et al (2005), or Schneider (1987). It appears that formalized attraction and selection phases of the framework did not seem to feature strongly in the

data, nor were values emphasized. Pragmatism prevailed. For many expatriates, it appeared that they had been commuting to China and doing the job or a related job so there was a level of familiarity with the job, the organization setting, the people, and China.

Only Klaus, Peter, Alan_P, and Priscilla explicitly mentioned corporate culture or values. Priscilla mentioned organization values in a generic way but made no mention whether she shared any supplemental fit with her organization. Alan_P talked about corporate culture and value; however, he was clear he did not embrace them; furthermore, sharing corporate values was not necessary unless you wanted to move to the highest ranks of the organization. The Singaporeans identified language as crucial to their satisfaction, fit, adjustment; this may fit as a characteristic with Piasentin and Chapman (2006).

Drawing on the interviews and maps, this research found little evidence that the expatriates supplementary fit (person shares characteristics similar to other individuals in the environment) (Kristof, 1996), was considered when their interviews were coded against the definition outlined by Kristof (1996). Yet, Piasentin and Chapman (2006) mention 78% of the studies in their critical examination of the literature relied on supplementary PO fit.

Instead, the results of this research suggested the conceptualization offered by Piasentin and Chapman (2006, 2007) provides a conceptualization of this framework which could contribute to the expatriate's fit or adjustment and thus satisfaction. Piansentin and Chapman's (2006) conceptualization of PO fit departs from the views held by researchers such as Kristof (1996), Kristof-Brown et al (2005).

Supporting, Piasentin and Chapman (2006), both conceptualizations of complementary PO fit, needs-supplies fit (the organization supplies something the expatriate wants e.g. *career*

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development) and demands-abilities fit (the expatriate supplies something the organization wants e.g. *knowledge and skills)* appeared to be identified. An exchange perspective appeared to more accurately describe PO fit as each party provided the other party with something of value and through their interviews and maps the expatriates identified needs-supplies PO fit as pre-eminent.

Selection of the construct *career development* by 19 expatriates and *personal development* by 14 expatriates for their maps indicates the primacy of needs-supplies PO fit. Several examples highlight the variety of personal reasons why people chose to work internationally, For example, Stan and JD talk about the opportunity to work with senior management and this is an opportunity they would not get in their respective home country. As Roger explained, he took this assignment because, *I'm 63 years old; I had a choice to make. I could skate till retirement or I could stimulate myself. So I chose the latter.* Tony stated, t*he main reason was the challenge. You know, working so long with the organisation in Australia and in parts of Asia, it became routine, almost mundane work, and there was, no real challenge.*

Although not as common, demands-abilities PO fit was also identified in the expatriates maps and interviews. Alan_P, Colin, Peter, and Tony for example, talked about demand-abilities or what they provided the organization. Some expatriates appeared to indirectly discuss what they were contributing to the organization. For example, Bill suggested *I am in Shanghai because the boss, Mr. O from Singapore, asked me to come up to Shanghai to look for opportunities.* He had the skills required to evaluate business opportunities. Darrel was seconded to China because *he had experience with the manufacturing and rolling out of ERP systems* and Stacey, had western marketing expertise which the organization wanted.

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Reinforcing the problem of trying to classify the type of complementary fit was the person's perspective. Those who were in positions of recruitment and senior management e.g. Bill, Claus, Colin, and Tony suggested the expatriate nowadays needed to provide skills and abilities that were unavailable locally, that is, they had a demand-ability view. Yet, as expatriates themselves, Claus, Tony, Colin also identified themselves as needs-supply fit. This dual perspective reinforces the view that it is an 'exchange' between the person and the organization rather than a fit which is important.

Piasentin and Chapman's (2006) proposition that complementary fit,

> "... as occurring when an individual possesses unique characteristics that are perceived to be different from other employees' characteristics, yet valuable to the organization... predicted positive work attitudes, including greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and lower turnover intentions" (p.342)

appears to be a more appropriate description of the expatriate's experience.

The expatriate offers unique skills as they have the skills that the Chinese operations feel they need and the overseas experience was also fulfilling the personal objectives of the expatriate. Furthermore, they perceive themselves as different and this dissimilarity of characteristics is valuable to the international operation. Thus the expatriate fulfils all the criteria e.g. Darrell had ERP development experience, Roger had sales skills, Stacey had knowledge of western marketing methods, Bill, Mark, Keith, and Herb had knowledge of North American business operations

A final reason why Piasentin and Chapman's (2006) research resonates with the expatriate is, as they suggest, "people may fit with an organization but not with the employees of an organization....this may be especially true for employees who work in large multinational companies" (p.212). The expatriates reflect this point.

To be eligible for an international posting, the expatriates had been with their organization for a few years e.g. Stan, Alan_P, and Sarah, thus they have some sense of fit, yet when in China they have little in common with the local employee. For example, in this research, the skill sets are different and language differences limited interaction. Herb was the only American sent to China from his organization and the balance of his crew was made redundant. He had to use a trusted bilingual translator to communicate with his Chinese colleagues and he admitted he didn't understand the local organization politics. Sebastian reflects a similar situation. He was sent to China yet his co-workers blamed mistakes on him. It appears Herb and Sebastian fitted with their organization but not necessarily with the employees. This point by Piasentin and Chapman (2006) also appears to be reflected in Black et al's (1991) framework.

From this research, it appears that the expatriate spends little time concerning themselves with their fit as described by Kristof (1996) and Kristof-Brown et al (2005). They appear to be in China to provide skills and knowledge and in exchange receive the opportunity to develop their career and personally. Three related points further hamper the view of fit as promulgated by Kristof (1996) and Kristof-Brown et al (2005). Firstly, the expatriate is in China for a limited time period and fitting in requires time (Cooper-Thomas, Van Vianen, and Anderson, 2004). Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al's (2005) analyses of the adjustment literature and Elizabeth's recounting of her settling in experience reinforces that fitting in takes time; it seems at least a year is required. Second, Alan_P suggested the last three to six months of a secondment are spent preparing to leave. This leaves little time for fitting in. It appears from the maps and interviews that a more accurate description is the view of fit proposed by Piasentin and Chapman (2006).

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9 Discussion and Conclusion

9.1 Discussion and conclusion

The main objective of this thesis was to identify the constructs expatriates identified as important to their satisfaction in their international organization setting. This was framed as the over-arching research question. In order to answer it, and to provide additional richness and depth, two sub-questions were derived. The first enquired as to the constructs which differentiate satisfied expatriates from dissatisfied expatriates in the international organizational setting. The second enquired as to whether the frameworks of PO Fit and Framework of International Adjustment adequately reflect the expatriate's experience in the international organizational setting.

Answering these questions required methodological innovation and a mixed methods approach was adopted. The approach featured the use of a short questionnaire, causal mapping and semi-structured interview. Calls have been made for mixed methods approaches in international research by researchers such as Cooke (2009) to help understand a very complex environment. This research followed this suggestion and identified the positive value of such methods. In particular, causal mapping had not been employed in this research domain before and this researcher wanted to ascertain the potential to develop an in-depth understanding of the expatriate experience that would also allow for comparison between expatriates.

9.2 Research questions answered

At the start of this project, the primary objective was to understand why expatriates leave their organizations. To explore the issue, this research began by asking, 'why do expatriates leave their assignments, often prematurely'; however, obtaining a sample of expatriates who had quit or were quitting would be difficult to obtain. Therefore, to answer

this question, this research asked 'What constructs did the expatriates identify as most influential to their satisfaction within their international organization setting in China? What constructs differentiated the satisfied and dissatisfied expatriates?' Satisfaction was used because satisfaction has been shown to have a consistent relationship with intention to quit and quitting. By understanding *what* was important to the expatriate, an understanding of *why* they leave could be determined.

This research drew on two seemingly disparate frameworks, the Framework of International Adjustment (Czernobilsky, et al., 1985) and ASA / PO fit (Genetzky, Shira, Schneider, & Easley, 1985). Both seemed to be addressing the individual perception of their experience within their organization setting. The first describes the expatriate process as one of anxiety or stress reduction in their international setting (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al, 2005; Black and Mendenhall, 1991; Black et al, 1991) and thus adjustment, while ASA / PO fit (Genetzky, et al., 1985) described a process of fitting with their organization, or anxiety reduction within their organization setting (Cooper-Thomas, 2006).

This research has demonstrated that satisfied expatriates can be differentiated from dissatisfied expatriates by their personal focus and their ability to deal with frustrations and reduce anxiety. Both groups shared a common core set of constructs, yet unique to the satisfied expatriates was their focus on their *career development* and *ability to deal with frustrations*. The dissatisfied group identified issues with an external source and this separated the two groups. Common to both groups was a desire to challenge themselves and grow personally and to do this they would *step out of their comfort zone* and *engage with people who were different*. Being *optimistic* and *confident* was central to their experience regardless of whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied. Finally, *support networks* were interesting because having a support network was identified by expatriates

as necessary for their satisfaction. If the expatriate had no family, it appears they drew on others in the community or their managers for support.

Drawing on the findings of this research, the satisfied and dissatisfied groups appeared to have a different focus and the indications from the findings suggest several constructs or factors were most important in influencing a person's satisfaction. The above conclusions are drawn from the maps and interviews because the surveys appeared to mask the people who were wrestling with challenges and it is the identification of challenges that is important. Identification of issues can allow them to be addressed.

Members of the satisfied group were very focussed on the career opportunities offered by going to China. The other constructs setting the satisfied expatriate apart were their *ability to deal with frustrations and approaches to problem solving*. They were *willing to give and take to get along* and identified greater problem solving capabilities *(approaches to problem solving)*. The satisfied expatriates appeared to have a clear personal objective and more strategies or better understanding of what was necessary to achieve it. The expatriate as evidenced by the constructs selected as central to their satisfaction were focussed at the person level; they were focussed on themselves. Keeping anxiety and stress in check was important as evidenced by the constructs they selected.

The dissatisfied expatriate was focussed at a different level; they appeared focused more externally as they faced challenges. Challenges usually had a dimension of dispute with the home office in particular. Some were in the unenviable position of keeping tabs on their colleagues and operations as the 'eyes of the organization', they were essentially the sheriff or spy. There was conflict between the home office and the China operation and they struggled with the locals. Sometimes layered on these operational issues were personal issues which were anxiety inducing and exacerbated the overall frustration of individuals.

Because a mixed methods approach was used findings within the person's survey/map/interview protocol sometimes appeared contradictory. This research was concerned with socially desirable responses from the participants and the outcomes of the methods were sometimes in conflict. Caution had to be exercised in interpretation. For example, Herb's map and interview appeared to be at odds with his survey. The survey identified Herb as satisfied; his map indicated great amounts of frustration and anxiety. Confounding this result may have been the length of time Herb had been in China. He had been in Shanghai for approximately six months so was still adjusting and this may have affected his level of satisfaction response. Was Herb dissatisfied, was he overwhelmed, or was he frustrated but content with his new challenge? It was beyond the scope of this current research to know, but what is important is that the mixed methods highlighted concerns which would otherwise have remained masked. Being able to identify discrepancy allows researchers to develop new research agendas and practitioners to identify and address issues within the organization, the expatriate or a combination of the two.

The expatriate appears to be in a balancing act that some find difficult to manage. It appeared home office expectations and policies were often set with little or no awareness of the capabilities within their operations in China. The sample continually reinforced the point that skill levels amongst the Chinese were weak. Furthermore, decision making capabilities and willingness to accept responsibility for decisions made were limiting operations, however, the expatriates in the main seemed frustrated but optimistic about the Chinese workforce. The expatriates suggested there was a difference between the older workers who had worked in the state run enterprises and the younger workers raised since Deng Xiaoping opened China to the world.

Was this decision-making issue a culture trait or was it because the Chinese did not possess the knowledge and thus confidence to make a decision. If the former was the case, was it due to Confucian tenets of deferring to authority or consensus building (Fu, Wu,Yang,Ye, 2007)? Or was the decision making and responsibility issue due to the fear instilled during the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution where making a decision could truly get the person killed? Indications from the interviews of expatriates such as Peter and Bill suggest if it was culture, it was culture in relation to the Cultural Revolution.

The consensus amongst expatriates was the Chinese did not have the skill sets necessary in many domains e.g. manufacturing, and quality control. However, the expatriates were optimistic that with time things would change. Many often talked about the seismic changes and challenges they had witnessed over very brief time periods in China. Everything was in a constant state of change and this created a very challenging environment for the expatriate and Chinese operations. Turnover amongst the Chinese was very high and keeping quality talent was particularly difficult. The longer serving expatriates in the sample had watched their operations evolve in 10 years from state owned, Dickensian style foundries to factories employing advanced technologies available.

9.2.1 Relation to frameworks

This research drew on two frameworks and found both to be addressing something similar: both addressed how a person reduces anxiety within their organizational setting.

9.2.1.1 Black et al (1991) Framework of International Adjustment

The first framework this research drew upon was Black et al's (1991) Framework of International Adjustment which was a theoretical proposition which had never been explored in full until Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005). The Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005)

and Hechanova et al (2003) meta-analyses of the body of research found general agreement with Black et al (1991). This research found partial support for this framework.

9.2.1.1.1 Anticipatory adjustment

Evidence from this research suggests organizations appear to give little thought to anticipatory or pre-departure selection nor does it appear that much consideration is given to repatriation. This may be organization specific; yet, others also suggested the possibility of returning to home office was limited because with time, the expatriate who had been in China a long time had limited knowledge of the head office and its politics. They had become China experts.

Expatriates in this study described very little pre-departure training. Accurate expectations for new expatriates would not be created based on the comments by the expatriates concerning pre-departure 'sight seeing' visits to their new locations. However, many had developed realistic expectations because they had been commuting to China every few months before returning to their home country. As identified, the expatriate was involved in a balancing act and even with realistic perceptions of China operations there was still the home office interaction which could and did cause anxiety.

In Black et al's (1991) original set of propositions, language was never discussed, yet, it was included as part of the meta-analyses of the framework (Table 8-1). Although not in the original framework, language skill warrants discussion because this research did not find a straight forward lack of importance of language like the two meta-analyses. The findings of this research suggest that those already with language skills consider them to be important to their work. Those who did not have language skills saw it as valuable but not necessary, and viewed it in a more general context, for example, as a way of showing respect.

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Contrary to the views Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003), overseas experience appears to be valuable. Many in the sample stated their previous overseas experience had aided their current situation. Previous commuting arrangements allowed a knowledge foundation of the operations to be created and many were posted in a particular location because of their familiarity with it. The anticipation was that previous experience would shorten the time necessary for adjustment. A second way it provided value was that it offered an entrance to a more preferred location enabling expatriates to find a way of reducing anxiety and stress in that location. They had already built up strategies to deal with the differences and thus could reduce their anxiety and stress. If expatriates had only experienced 'sight seeing' as part of their pre-departure selection and training an accurate expectation of living in China would not be created. In general the most common selection process was an informal assessment based on either the expatriate having already commuted to China, an 'on the hoof' management decision, an annual review process or informal networks. Only two of the expatriates had experienced a formal assessment and selection procedure for the expatriate assignment.

9.2.1.2 In Country adjustment findings

The in-country adjustment process takes on a more comprehensive conceptualization and goes beyond the person x organization interaction. However, the meta-analyses highlight how certain elements of Black's model have little or no empirical support and differential emphasis is placed upon these elements. For example, perceptual skills, supervisor support and organization culture novelty are omitted because of 'they lack empirical scrutiny' (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al, 2005, p. 258). Language skills were given differential levels of consideration. Hechanova et al (2003) did not include language skills in keeping with the propositions presented by Black et al (1991), Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) included language skills and they were not considered important in the organization setting.

Black et al (1991) proposed that three individual factors, self efficacy, relational skills, and perceptual skills influenced a person's adjustment in their international posting. Self-efficacy was identified as important by expatriates as eighteen expatriates or half of the cohort identified confidence as critical to their experience and this is in concordance with Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003). The constructs *able to engage with people who are different* and *able to give and take to get along* reflected the relational skills necessary at the organization level and 19 and 10 expatriates respectively selected this as one of their top 10 constructs. Included in this group were the most senior people in their Chinese operations. These findings were in contrast to the meta-analyses of Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003) did not report a finding.

The final individual construct proposed by Black et al (1991) was perceptual skills; that is being able to understand 'what [is] appropriate or inappropriate in the host country' (Black et al, 1991, p.308). Neither meta-analysis reported findings, but indications from this research suggest it addresses some aspects of the culture domains specific to China, *face* and *guanxi*. The expatriate's views appeared to vary. Some were adamant the concepts were romantic or trade ploys. These expatriates considered the concepts to be no different than the western concepts of respect and networking. Other expatriates accepted the difference completely. Guanxi was more complex because it had higher level ramifications. As an example, one of the expatriates explained how his organization had sold some advanced avionics to Taiwan; China wanted the technology but it was a restricted sale. To show their displeasure, permits which the organization needed were held up. Hillary Clinton was in China a few weeks later and a reception and photo shoot was arranged for the appropriate permit granters. Socializing with the Secretary of State increased their face to ensure business ran more smoothly in future.

9.2.1.2.1　*Job factors*

9.2.1.2.1.1　Role clarity

Findings from this research agree with Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) and Hechanova et al (2003) and all researchers supported Black et al's (1991) proposition that role clarity was important to a person's adjustment. A lack of clear direction was very important in contributing to an expatriate's anxiety and stress. Results from the current study support the meta-analyses and Black et al's (1991) proposition that role conflict affects adjustment by creating an anxiety ridden environment. This research found that the two constructs were important to a person's satisfaction level.

This current research helps to unpack the issue of role conflict in the expatriate. If role conflict occurred, it appeared to be a major influencer in a person's dissatisfaction. Role conflict manifested itself in several ways. Firstly, role conflict could be an ongoing minor irritant with the home office (this was relevant to the constructs social support and logistical support enunciated by Black et al (1991) and subsumed under organization culture). A second form of role conflict focussed around the expectations the home office had about the perceived abilities of the local workforce to deliver on the expectations

Role novelty was supported as influential by both meta-analyses; however, it appears that it may be mixed with other constructs. In this research few spoke directly to role novelty; however, the expatriates acknowledged the novelty in relation to the people they had to interact with. Role novelty was evident when the expatriates discussed the Chinese co-workers willingness to make decisions and some of their co-workers 'guanxi' business practices. Evidence revealed that expatriates had to accept the status quo in some instances and in some cases they changed the roles. This was a construct that also influenced the expatriates frustration and thus adjustment.

Role discretion was unclear. In the current research there seems to be a general agreement with the meta-analyses and Black et al (1991); however, there is a caveat. Most were trying to move the Chinese workers to accept western practices. Some Chinese were embracing; others were not. This was connected with the generation to which the workers belonged as well as their skill levels. Furthermore some expatriates viewed workers as 'compartmentalised' and as reticent in highlighting any problems which had occurred. Some expatriates attributed this to face, not wanting to embarrass or lower a person's status in the group; whereas, others attributed it an unwillingness to make decisions based on their recent history. Regardless, all expatriates were trying to understand and bring the Chinese around. The reason given by expatriates was very straight forward, quality control and potential law suits.

9.2.1.2.2 Organization factors

Organization culture was mentioned by three expatriates and one mentioned it only in passing. Co-worker support was unclear in the current study; however, from the interviews and maps it appeared that this was an area which led to much frustration and anxiety amongst expatriates. There were the language issues which limited interaction amongst some. Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) found support. Hechanova eta 1 (2003) did not report a finding. A lack of language impeded many expatriates. Logistical support was considered important by the expatriates in this study and was often very poor. It was a very mixed situation; however, it could become an irritant for expatriates. Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) appears to mask the importance of logistical support.

9.2.1.2.3 Non-work factors

Echoing Black et al (1991) and Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) this research suggests that non-work support is important to the expatriate's work adjustment. Family support or

support from important others is very important to their satisfaction and adjustment. Furthermore, indications are that if there is no spouse/important others in China the expatriates will seek support elsewhere. However, Hechanova et al (2003) found no meaningful relation in her meta-analysis.

Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al (2005) found little support for culture novelty and adjustment; Hechanova et al (2003) make no claim. The expatriates in this study appeared to acknowledge and adapt as necessary to the culture difference. Cultural differences which were referred to centred on decision-making and accepting responsibility, *guanxi*, and face.

9.2.2 Relation to ASA and PO fit

It was argued that the conceptions of 'fit' as envisioned by Schneider (1987), Kristof (1996) and Kristof-Brown et al (2005) were less relevant to the experience of the expatriate. The expatriate had unique skills and knowledge within their context and chances were they would not 'fit' as envisioned by Kristof (1996), Kristof-Brown (2005), and Schneider (1987). At minimum most anticipated being in China for their secondment of two or three years and most could not bridge the language divide although they would try for civil and respect purposes. PO fit theory seems to view the process as the minority fitting or adjusting to the majority usually based on a value congruence, yet, with the expatriate this is not necessarily the case.

Piasentin and Chapman (2006) may provide a better description of expatriate PO fit because the expatriate seems to fulfil both forms of complementary fit simultaneously; they provide unique knowledge and skills to the operation while also developing their skills and career portfolio. The essential reason Piasentin and Chapman (2007) may be a better description of the expatriate x organization fit is "an individual must perceive that he or she is dissimilar to existing organizational characteristics on important criteria (e.g.

abilities, knowledge, personality traits); second, the individual must also perceive that this dissimilarity makes him or her unique in the organization and, therefore, of value to the organization" (2007, p.342). It seems expatriates fit both criteria. Finally, Piasentin and Chapman (2006) suggest, "people may fit with an organization but not with the employees of an organization." (p.212).

The expatriate has unique skills to offer, they add value, and they recognize they are dissimilar because of language and skill base for example, yet they fit with the organization. To be seconded on an international assignment, the expatriate would have worked for the organization for several years; therefore, the expatriate would seem to fit with the organization, at least their home branch of the organization, otherwise according to ASA/PO fit theory they would have departed the organization. Thus, this research suggests Piasentin and Chapman's conceptualization of PO fit may be a more accurate description of the expatriate's situation.

9.3 Contribution to theory

This research began by presenting two distinct bodies of research, one body of literature focussed on a person's adjustment to their international assignment, the other body of research focussed on the fit between a person and their organization.

Black et al (1991) presented their framework of international adjustment which described how a person (expatriate) adjusted to their new international setting and drew upon the anxiety and stress reduction literature to underpin their framework. Reducing a person's anxiety within their new setting aided adjustment and thus affected an expatriate's adjustment which is linked to job satisfaction, and job satisfaction is linked to ITQ (Bhaskar-Schrinivas et al, 2005). Furthermore, it is a social cognitive framework as it addresses the active learning and evaluation in the new social milieu, in this research case,

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China. To adjust, as presented earlier, Black et al (1991) proposed an expatriate needed to adjust to not only the organization environment, but also the community at large and the people. To achieve this, a multitude of person, organization and other constructs were proposed. What is of interest is that expatriate satisfaction appeared to focus around their work and organization in general and thus the relevance of PO fit.

ASA and PO fit as suggested by Chatman (1989) Kristof (1996), O'Reilly et al (1991) and Schneider (1987) suggest people are attracted to and select into organizations with which they share common values and they leave if they don't fit. Cable and Parson (2001) and Cooper-Thomas, Van Vianen, and Andersen (2004) explain the process of PO fit as a socialization process, and therefore a social cognitive process (Verquer, et al, 2003). Furthermore, PO fit is linked to satisfaction and satisfaction is linked to intention to quit (Verquer et al, 2003; Piasentin & Chapman, 2006). It seems PO fit is describing something similar to Black et al's conceptualization of adjustment.

What differentiates the two frameworks is Black et al (1991) include adjustment to the environment at large and includes factors extraneous to the organization as influencing adjustment. However, both frameworks are discussing the same underlying issue, performing effectively in their organization setting and both describe a cognitive process of evaluating and reducing anxiety.

It seems more appropriate to conceptualize both frameworks as describing not so much a specific level of job satisfaction rather it seems more a description of a description of a level of personal contentment, a degree of comfort and sense of accomplishment through their organization. Critically the results of the causal maps for satisfied expatriates indicate that these are people who enjoy the challenge of their position, the opportunities presented,

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and they enjoy the opportunities to stretch themselves and grow. Importantly, for those expatriates who were dissatisfied, their relationship with their organization appeared to be the primary problem.

In spite of this, PO fit research seemingly ignores international dimensions and may need refinement; furthermore, satisfaction is about more than a match of corporate and personal values. Piasentin and Chapman (2006) appear to offer a more appropriate description of PO fit in the expatriate domain. Drawing on Piasentin and Chapman (2006), international PO fit addresses how a person deals with their anxiety within the international organization bearing in mind that dealing with that anxiety is a cognitive process. The conceptualization of the expatriate x international organization fit should perhaps be expanded to include international dimensions. Mallol (2007) and Mitchell et al (2001) may support Piasentin and Chapman (2006) with their conceptualization of job embeddedness. Black et al (191) offers facets to understand the expatriate's interaction. From the maps and interviews, it is apparent that the issue of PO fit within the international domain should be expanded to consider the following relationships: expatriate x host country colleagues, person x home office; person x colleagues, person x people host country nationals.

An alternate explanation may be to draw upon attribution theory to explain the expatriate's satisfaction in their Chinese operational setting.

9.4 *Attribution Theory, an alternate explanation?*

Attribution theory has been suggested as an alternate explanation to understanding the expatriate's satisfaction in their international organization setting (Corbett, 2012 personal conversation). At the core of attribution theory is how a person explains their own behaviour and that of others. However, drawing upon attribution theory to explain behaviour requires caution because attribution theory is not a unified theory or framework;

rather it is a series of micro-theories (Augoustinos & Walker, 1995; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Kelley & Michela, 1980). Being a series of micro-theories may lead to alternate explanations for the same behaviour.

This research was interested in what constructs expatriates identified as important to their satisfaction. It was not focussed on what they attributed their satisfaction to, what meaning expatriates attributed to their sense of satisfaction. Furthermore, this thesis attempts to understand what constructs the expatriate identifies as important to their personal satisfaction not attribute interpretation or meaning of HR policies as Nishii, Lepak, and Schneider, (2008) do.

Kelley and Michela (1980) suggest attribution theory appears to offer linear explanations; however, evidence from the causal maps in the example from this research which follows suggests that comprehension and decisions are very complex and possibly not linear processes.

Indications from the findings of this research suggest that the expatriates perception of their current situation is not an either/or comprehension of their organization setting. Attribution theory suggests satisfied expatriates identify internal reasons for their satisfaction whereas dissatisfied expatriates would ascribe external reasons for their satisfaction. Satisfied expatriates do in part identify internal constructs such as *improve career opportunities* or *personal growth*; however, they also identify external influences as being important e.g. *support from family/ important others*. Dis-satisfied expatriates appear to identify external factors as a cause which would support an attribution theory perspective e.g. *home office delivers on promises*; however, it also appears that internal constructs may influence the expatriate's perspective e.g. lack of *language abilities*. These

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findings indicate that drawing on attribution theory as an explanation to describe the expatriate x satisfaction link requires further exploration.

An important consideration is this research draws on cognitions whereas as Kelley and Michela (1980) suggest "the common ideas of attribution theory are that people interpret behaviour in terms of its causes and that these interpretations play an important role in determining reactions to the behaviour "(p. 458). Two different frames of reference are being considered, a cognitive vs. a behaviour frame of reference.

Evidence within the international domain for support of attribution theory is scarce and appears tenuous; therefore, this research presents the research Nishii of et al, (2008). They explore attribution theory from the perspective of the person within the organization; more specifically the relationship between HR attributions and satisfaction and commitment is interrogated.

Nishii et al (2008) suggest "little attention has been paid to employees' attributions about the why of specific HR practices they experience ...the core idea in the research is that employees respond attitudinally and behaviourally to HR practices based on attributions they make about management's purposes in implementing the actual HR practices" (p. 505). Employee attribution is based on whether the employee perceives HR practices as employee oriented or whether the HR strategy is strategic focussed defined by Nishii et al (2008). Confounding the issue is individuals exhibit a dispositional interpretation of policies; some employees interpret HR policies as manipulation whereas others may view the same policy as opportunity. These differential attributions may be linked to general individual dispositions of people.

Kim and Wright (2010), drawing on the work of Nishii et al (2008), propose exploring the HR attribution theory in organizations in China. Their paper is a proposition only, thus its contribution is limited. What is confounding for this current thesis is the cohort of interest are expatriates and don't seem to fit with Kim and Wright's (2010) focus.

Although offering a new direction of enquiry, the above research does not seem to address the issue explored in this thesis because Nishi et al (2008) are interested in understanding how/why employees interpret or attribute meaning and motive to the organization's HR policy. Furthermore, Nishii et al (2008) appear to describe a more general description of how employees describe HR policy motives. For example, are HR policies perceived in a positive or more negative light by the individual employees? A final concern with the Nishi et al (2008) study is, it is a case study based on an American organization and this may limit the interpretation of findings. Based on the research of Nishii et al (2008) and Kim and Wright (2010) this line of enquiry may prove fruitful in further unravelling the complex expatriate assignment in the future.

Although attribution theory offers promise for future research exploration, boundaries needed to be drawn and the theoretical boundaries for this thesis were the Framework of International Adjustment and attraction selection attrition/ person organization fit. This research was about the expatriate adjustment or fit within in their international organization setting; what constructs did expatriates identify as important to their satisfaction. Perhaps attribution theories can add enrichment to the understanding; however, it is beyond the scope of this research. Attribution theory may help develop the 'what-why link' in future research.

This research has made the following contributions to the international human resource research.

9.5 Contribution to methods

9.5.1 Mixed methods

A mixed methods approach was an appropriate choice for this research for several reasons. Firstly, this research was interested in satisfaction and their intention to quit. If this research relied only on the findings from the questionnaire, wrong conclusions may have been drawn about the expatriate. As identified earlier, masked within the 'intention to quit' questionnaire were expatriates who were not dissatisfied with their China posting but who were scheduled to repatriate to their home office as part of the normal rotation e.g. Elizabeth. The interviews identified this weakness in the survey.

Maps identified people with issues who registered as satisfied and more importantly, maps helped identify where concerns may lie. Knowing where concerns may be occurring provides new veins for exploration; if a practitioner, it identifies points that may need addressing through training, for example. Yet all added to the richness of understanding. Thus, mixed methods have created findings that one can have confidence in and also generate ideas for more research. This is important considering the small sample size.

Unquestionably different people found different aspects of the three methods more engaging. This is important because it helped to ensure quality of responses but also when needing the participant's help to further expand the sample they were willing to oblige. Through their comments and the expatriate's introductions to more expatriates, Hammersley's (1992) suggestion that mixed methods may provide a tactical advantage was supported.

This researcher wanted to test the feasibility of conducting mixed methods research in an international setting. This was of interest because not all researchers are fortunate to have multiple research partners around the globe, quality funding, or easy access to the necessary organizations or samples. With few supports, little funding, and limited access, could an individual create meaningful research in a foreign environment? Could meaningful information be discovered which a person would have confidence in? The methods and findings of this research suggest mixed methods holds promise.

Causal mapping allowed for the visualization of the interconnectedness and complexity of the expatriate's perception of their satisfaction in a standardized fashion which would allow comparison between maps. What this researcher found especially valuable was deconstructing maps to highlight the negative influences. Deconstruction of the maps appeared to provide support for Bougon and Komocar (1990) and their suggestion that loops act like generators. These loops appeared to be central to people's interpretations of their satisfaction. This method of using maps also provided the information from the perspective of the map creator and this was a unique method in expatriate research. This structured method was also unique to PO fit research. The map revealed the network of constructs and linkages; the map did not provide context for the choices. An interview added context to the expatriate's choice of constructs or links.

Application of the Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) formulation to causal maps needs more research but holds promise. The issues with the distance ratio calculations were several. First, the sample was small and the groups unbalanced. Second, to this researchers knowledge there is no test of significance hence researchers such Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and Clarkson (2003) performed cluster analysis on their samples. They too ran into

issues with the lack of an eventual test of significance. A third issue was the groups shared a set of common constructs and this impeded the identification of differences. With a small sample, selection of the balance of constructs created too much variability within each group – hence the caution in drawing conclusions.

The satisfaction questionnaire appeared to provide evidence of an expatriate's state of satisfaction. Evidence based on the number of negative relationships displayed in an expatriate's map may not have disconfirmed their level of satisfaction; however, the map provided visual evidence that further exploration of the expatriates claims were warranted. Was the amount of negative relationships revealing a person who was providing a socially desirable response; was their map – satisfaction response a function of their length of time in China?

Interviews provided insights but also had limitations. The interviews of the Singaporean participants at CanSingIndustrial were very brief and thus the information added was limited. Some expatriates provided socially desirable responses to interview questions. Maps helped counter these concerns. The method used to create the maps would make manipulation of the outcome difficult if not impossible because it required the creator to juggle 90 pair wise comparisons. It was through the interview and map that the superiority of Piasentin and Chapman (2006, 2006) conceptualization of PO fit became apparent. This was impossible from the questionnaire. Thus a mixed method was an appropriate choice.

9.6 Contribution to practice

This research suggests attention should be paid to the expatriate's opinions and needs. As presented in this thesis, the expatriate was in a position of tension, balancing the expectations from head office which may or may not be possible against the expectations and abilities of the local workforce. Being in the field the expatriates have the knowledge

of what is possible and where problems exist at an operational level and therefore they are in a position to help develop better strategies which can benefit both the organization and its employees, as well as reducing the expatriate's frustration and thus anxiety. Exacerbating the tension and anxiety is the expatriate is expected to infuse their knowledge and skills into operations. Listening to the expertise from the trenches may help create a clearer understanding of what is expected, improve outcomes, and reduce stress for the expatriate.

Expatriates offered strategies which they felt on their own were of limited success; however, many of the ideas fit together and may provide an improvement.

A deeper consideration of who is sent on an expatriate assignment is required. Rather than just sending expert managers who will direct operations organizations should also consider sending people who can work side by side with the host country workers at the foreman or tradesmen level. This level of employee can help raise skill levels by showing the local workforce what is required and correcting and modifying behaviour from the ground up rather than top down. Furthermore, skills could be taught or improved and questions answered immediately. Thus quality would be improved and by addressing this anxiety inducing issue, anxiety may be reduced.

A strategy to address this issue is a system of continual interaction and reinforcement at the appropriate level. Sending more trades people and floor managers, people who would work side by side at the appropriate levels would foster an environment of continuous learning and reinforcement. This would also change the social dynamics and may begin to break down barriers and move to what is usually desired, a movement to western methods and standards of practice. This approach may also foster the willingness and ability of the local

staff's desire to make decisions or accept and responsibility. Integrating with the local community would also develop a more realistic perception of what is feasible given the current workforce and environment. Expatriates, for example could relay R and D ideas to the head office to modify designs to a prototype more suited to the workforce in the overseas location and their skills. This would of course depend on the language abilities of the local workforce and expatriates alike. In China, this may be a viable course of action for western organizations that use English as their lingua franca as Chinese students learn English in school. It may or may not be feasible to equip a potential expatriate with enough Mandarin to communicate advanced concepts e.g. 'routine maintenance schedules' in the length of secondment even with active pre-departure training.

When identifying people for international postings perhaps those who can best deal with frustrations should be identified as candidates. Importantly, there needs to be assurance that the person is interested in stepping into the unknown and challenging themselves in unique circumstances. It is important for expatriates to accept that teaching will be a part of any role whether an expatriate expects it or not. Candidates should thus be skilled at finding common ground between different individuals and be able to look beyond the superficial. The reality that it will not be easy needs to be reinforced. High expectations appear to be placed on the expatriates and it appeared the assumption is work has to take precedence over other aspects of a person's life.

For those expatriates at management level, additional frustrations with head office communications could easily be reduced with flexibility and support. For example, teleconferences draw days out to between 12 and 16 hours. It requires little effort to reschedule such events.

Support and help settling in are similarly important but just as important is for the home office co-workers to understand the expatriate experience in field. The situation may be improved by having the *appropriate* home office employees visit the international operations in situ. This would allow the home office people to develop a realistic understanding of what is required.

Although only referred to a few times by expatriates in this sample, some were treated differently based on their country of origin and their existing language skills. Those with existing language skills were considered to need little help but the experience of some of the Singaporean expatriates in the study shows that help with practicalities and logistics was still required. This situation should be addressed as it undercuts teambuilding and is discriminatory.

Pre-departure information and handover should also be attended to. Expatriates who participated in this study made a number of suggestions for improvement. Firstly, it was important to create a more realistic sense of what an expatriate and their family should expect. They suggested rather than the 'look and see' trip which was really a sales trip, a more effective trip would be a two week trip which began with the five star hotel, wining and dining, and a day or two for sight seeing to acclimatize and this would be followed by time with the candidate in the office or factory. A furnished apartment would be provided as short term lets were readily available and they would have to care for themselves. The last day or two would again be 'guided' to answer any questions and discuss their experience. This strategy would offer a more realistic picture of what the expatriate (and their family) can expect.

Also suggested by the expatriates was that a new expatriate employee should have a two month hand over period where they worked alongside their predecessor. Many of the expatriates in the study were simply given a handover file and they were expected to work things out for themselves. This arrangement would allow the current expatriate to introduce the replacement to the people and operations; furthermore, the expatriate would be introduced to expatriate 'instant friends'. They might not maintain the social group once acclimatized, but they would be able to access a support network sooner and thus adjust or fit more quickly. There may be an issue with head office as this would require an added expense of several months of salary; however, the expatriate thought it was money well invested as the dividend was a person who could contribute more quickly.

These are just a few ideas. Many changes could be instituted which cost little yet would ameliorate much frustration. Other suggestions might require a major rethinking of why people are being *ex patria*. What was evident was more often than not communication and a willingness to listen was at the heart of the frustrations. Expatriates believed many in the home office felt they were on a holiday plus paid more money therefore they deserved to have a tough time. Those in the field felt under supported. Unfortunately many participants felt additional support was difficult to acquire if it had budgetary implications.

9.7 *Limitations to the research*

As with any research project, this current research has some limitations. Comments will be made about limitations in relation to the sample, method and the constructs used.

Is the fact that most of the sample was from Shanghai-based expatriates a weakness in the research design as many often did not consider Shanghai to be the 'real' China? The criticism is valid on one level as all indications were that Shanghai was like any world class city. However, at this point in history it is places such as Shanghai to which

expatriates are seconded and therefore it is a relevant setting. Furthermore, as Buchanan, Boddy, and McCalman (1988, p. 129) point out, 'the researcher should adopt an opportunistic approach to field work in organizations.' As the researcher's key informants had very good access in Shanghai this was a sensible choice.

Causal mapping offers great opportunities and indications are that the method used in this research will provide valuable insights; however, limitations exist in the current method. To use the Markoczy and Goldberg or Langfield-Smith and Wirth methods, clarification of sample size for proper analysis is needed. It is a new approach and has been used twice and both researchers used large samples (n > 100); however, indications from personal correspondence with Langfield-Smith (2010 person correspondence, Appendix) suggested large samples are not critical. This view stands in contrast to Daniels (2010 person correspondence, Appendix) who suggested large samples were critical. This research would have benefitted from a larger group of dissatisfied expatriates as four is the minimum threshold set out by Marloczy and Goldberg (1995)

Application of the Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) formulation to causal maps needs more research but holds promise. The issues with the distance ratio calculations were several. First, the sample was small and the groups unbalanced. Second, to this researchers knowledge there is no test of significance hence researchers such Markoczy and Goldberg (1995) and Clarkson (2003) performed cluster analysis on their samples. However, they too ran into issues with the lack of an eventual test of significance. A third issue was the groups shared a portion of common constructs which would reduce the identification of differences, and with a small sample selection of the balance of constructs created too much variability with in each group.

A second issue with this research is whether some of the constructs overlapped or were too similar in meaning. Were some participants choosing *career opportunity* in lieu of *personal development*? Also, the researcher questions whether some participants took certain constructs for granted, example, *confidence in own abilities, requisite knowledge and skills,* or *optimistic.* A tighter construct pool might reduce the variability within groups. This could be seen when the deconstructed maps were subjected to Markoczy and Goldberg's formula.

9.8 *Future directions*

Evolving from this study are several research directions which could be pursued. Some are refinements of the current methods.

9.8.1 Expatriate constructs required

This was a small exploratory study in China where most of the expatriates, although from a wide cross-section of countries, lived in Shanghai, a very cosmopolitan city with all the western amenities. Indications from the expatriates were that the next phase of expatriatism in China will be to second and third tier cities, cities which lack many western amenities. Are the constructs identified by the expatriate the same or different when they are posted to second and third tier Chinese cities. Although this issue is framed in terms of the Chinese experience, this issue has relevance for any person being seconded to a less developed centre in a foreign country.

A second direction would to develop an understanding of Chinese expatriates experience in advanced countries such as the UK or Canada as they are only beginning to invest in the west. How do the Chinese expatriates perceive their situation if in London or Edmonton, the equivalent of a tier one and tier three city in the west? Do the Chinese identify the same constructs as important to their satisfaction? A reason for the focus on first world

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countries is it will allow a more like with like comparison and second, currently Chinese do second workers to many countries; however, they are often to countries that allow them to maintain practices as they would at home.

The social constructs *guanxi* and *face* are perceived to be uniquely Chinese (Fu et al, 2007) and influence business relations. Many expatriates in this research are not convinced of their uniqueness. Because of the considered importance, clarification of this issue would be most valuable for business.

9.8.2 Action research

As suggested earlier in this chapter, section 3.4, some expatriates have suggested ideas to address the issue of decision making amongst the Chinese. An action research (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Easterby-Smith, et al, 2002) approach could provide insights and possible solutions to the decision making and responsibility accepting issue described by the expatriates. Expatiates could be inserted at the appropriate organizational levels to foster a continuous learning paradigm. A question to be answered is, would an organization consider this approach as it would require them to take risks?

9.8.3 Frameworks exploration

This research brought together two disparate research bodies, Framework of International Adjustment (Black et al, 1991) and ASA and PO fit (Schneider, 1985, Piasentin and Chapman, 2006). It appears that PO fit as envisioned by Piasentin and Chapman (2006) may be a more robust match. Research should continue, using mixed methods, to bring the frameworks together. As presented both appear to be about anxiety reduction.

An obligatory call for longitudinal studies is almost always included in a research paper's 'future directions' section. Based on the information provided from the maps and the

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interviews, coupled with (Davies, 2007) finding describing adjustment as a inverted 'S' rather than a 'U-shape' as described by Black et al (1991) exploration of this should be a high priority as the process is not well understood but has important ramifications to the expatriate process..

The methods used in this thesis would be most suited to exploring this important issue as it is an issue at the heart of both the international adjustment and fit process. With a small cohort measured quarterly, a richer picture of the adjustment process could be created and this information could clarify the adjustment/fit time line and an understanding of when challenges occur, what challenges occur, and how long it takes expatriates to overcome the challenges.

9.8.4 Causal mapping

Causal mapping as presented in this research and envisioned by Markoczy and Goldberg (1995), Clarkson (2003) or Clarkson and Hodgkinson (2005) appears to offer opportunities to develop in-depth profiles of expatriates that can be compared; however, until methods are clarified what is discovered will remain exploratory in nature. Although the required sample size needs clarification, as has been discussed, it is still unclear as to how groups such as dissatisfied and satisfied expatriates can be compared. Critical to this is the a priori construct pool that is employed. This pool should perhaps be re-evaluated. In this research, although the pool was developed based on the two frameworks and extant literature, it seems there may have been overlap in constructs which led to both being selected and this led to increased variation.

This research drew on Bougon and Komocar (1990) to develop the ideas of cycle in causal mapping. Cycles appear to be important; however, in most causal mapping exercises cycles are omitted because of the added complexity. This research suggests developing Bougon

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and Komocar's (1990) ideas is very worthwhile as it can help us understand the dynamics of issues and thus offer potential methods to resolve issues.

It appears from exploration that causal mapping may provide a tool to create accurate exploratory maps with small samples. This would be enormously helpful for research where current model making requires large samples usually with n>100. This would be invaluable in the field of international research where access to data is extremely difficult.

9.9 Conclusion

This research was driven by a problem presented to me by an expatriate at the coal face in China and important to this researcher was providing findings that might help people in similar situations. Expatriate research has seen a resurgence since this thesis began and this resurgence highlights the interest and value of understanding the international human resource. Despite the current economic and political instability, indications are that more and more people are going ex patria. International assignments are available to many more people and most find them challenging but rewarding. Continuing to unravel the expatriate's experiences remains important.

This research has contributed to the expatriate literature. A promising new approach to exploring the expatriate experience has been identified. Whether discussing a person's fit with an organization or a person's adjustment in an international work setting, the underlying issue is helping people manage anxiety and stress.

What is apparent from this research is the organization has a major role to play in assuring that the international human resource is better managed. Business strategies for overseas operations often are not well thought out and advice from the field seems to be ignored. The expatriate works in an environment where they are often pulled in two directions. The

home office has its expectations which are difficult to meet given the reality of the workforce quality. Pulling in the direction within the overseas organization is the expatriate must teach as much as manage. A particular stressor for many expatriates is getting the locals to make decisions. Organizations need to support the expatriate in their efforts to change this behaviour because it requires them to change life long attitudes and behaviour. Finally, organizations often add to the stress by not supporting the expatriate on the personal and more administrative level such as housing allowances or meeting schedules. These are stressors that exacerbate an expatriate's frustration but are easily addressed.

Organizations should ask why they are locating overseas, what they hope to achieve, and are the appropriate resources available to achieve success. It appears that stress and breakdown begins when there is unclear or unrealistic expectations, or when small incidents are not resolved to mutual satisfaction.

Despite the challenges, the opportunity to work internationally was considered a great opportunity for the people in this research.

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11 Appendix A: Roster, Consent Form, Map Constructs & Interview Questions

10.1 The expatriates

DBChemicals:

1. Aiden: Irish (Northern Ireland), General Manager

2. Jackson, Canadian (Hong Kong), General Manager

3. Colin: Singaporean, Director and General Manger, Asia

4. Alan: English, Technical Director

5. Sarah: English, Business Development Manager

6. Cheng: Singaporean, Human Resources Manager

7. Andrew (Stan): English, Business Development Manager

2. ChinAm Air:

1. Elizabeth: American, Director of Training and Development China,

2. John: American, CFO

3. Roger: American, Director of Sales and Marketing, China

3. CanSingIndustrial (light manufacturing, high value, niche production):

1. Bill: Canadian, Managing Partner

2. Gary, Singaporean, Sourcing,

3. JP: Singaporean, Manager

4. Patrick: Singaporean, Sales

5. Thay: Singaporean, quality assurance and sourcing

6. Winston, Singaporean, QA manager

4. From the Expatriate Community:

1. Alan_Kiwi: New Zealand, Sourcing & Production Manager, clothing mfg.

2.   Darrell, Australian, Manager of Operations, slurry pump manufacturing

3.   Eddy: Irish, Site Supervisor, Ship building

4.   Herb: American, Injection Mouldings Manager, automotive industry

5.   Howard: English, Managing Director, hotelier

6.   Joe: American, director of sourcing, medical equipment and fund manager

7.   Klaus: German, Managing Director, freight forwarding

8.   Keith: American, Managing Director, automotive industry

9.   Lauren: American, Director of Operations, human resources consulting

10.   Mark: American, Managing Partner, automotive industry

11.   Mike: American, Vice President, China, medical equipment manufacturing

12.   Peter, Canadian, Technical Director, insurance (actuary)

13.   Priscilla: Singaporean, Marketing,

14.   Roz: American, Sales, medical equipment

15.   Sebastian: German, Manager, Research and Development, manufacturing

16.   Sian: English, medical (nurse/acupuncturist),

17.   Simon: English, Advertising Manager, advertising

18.   Stacey: American, Communications Manager, manufacturing (lived inland)

19.   Tony: Director of Sales, China, Railway Equipment

20.   Yashiro: Japanese, Production Manager, HomeEntertainment

21.

Sample, n = 36

5. Others:

1.   Dee: Australian, wife of Darrell

2.   Dr. Haiyan Yu, PhD: Chinese, Academic, East China Normal University

3.   Mr. Mu: Chinese, Manager, light manufacturing

4.   Noreen: Irish, wife of Aiden

5.   PK Chow: Singaporean, Businessman/partner, light manufacturing

6.   Shawn: American, Musician

6. Chambers of Commerce:

7.   Ian: English, Executive Director, British Chamber of Commerce, Shanghai

8.   Richard: Canadian, Exec Director, Cdn Chamber of Commerce, Shanghai

9.   Siobahn: American, Director of Committees, AmCham (American C of C)

7. Testing phase:

10.   Lin: Chinese, PhD candidate

11.   Hyoan: Korean, visiting academic

12.   Quirin: German PhD candidate

13.   Bill: Canadian, Businessman, light manufacturing

14.   Alan: English, Technical Director – Asia

15.   Marjorie: Canadian, Manager, Freight Forwarding

Dear Sir/Madam:

Under the supervision of Drs. G. Mallory and K. Ball, I am investigating people's experiences while on international assignments. Following is a brief description of my research and I look forward to your participation.

Purpose of Research:

Research from industry and academia highlight the unique challenges of the expatriate assignment. Early attrition rates are approximately 25% and this rate has remained constant for over 20 years. Industry and research indicate this attrition rate is a significant cost for both the organization and individual. Furthermore, indications are that organizations intend to send more people on international assignments

This project is interested in better understanding the dimensions and issues that affect an expatriate's sense of fit or adjustment with the international assignment. By understanding what affects a person's intention to stay or leave, better preparation and supports can be developed which may benefit both the individual and the organization.

This research would like to map your unique experience, that is, which factors are important to you and how you see them interacting. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to the possibility of your participation.

The information you provide will be:
KEPT confidential & the data will be anonymised in any reports and publications.
obtained and used in accordance with ethics guidelines of the Open University.
may be audio recorded BUT only to enhance the completeness of the research & not shared.

studied by the researcher, R Davidson, for use in the research project.
used for scientific publications & shown at scientific meetings, conferences etc
(may) be used on the research project website (may) be shown in public presentations to non-scientific groups

protected in compliance with the Data Protection Act and Open University guidelines.
NB: YOU can withdraw at any point by simply telling me during this session or contacting me until the completion of data collection, November 1, 2009. If notified, I will destroy the data from files and shred any paper items.

What will be required:
The expatriate experience is not well understood. To improve our understanding we would like to map out how you interpret your experience. This will take approximately 40 minutes of interview and developing a mental map. A causal map is a graphic representation that helps clarify how the dimensions that you elucidate as important relate to create your experience.

Upon completion:
A copy of your responses will be available only to you. More complete but anonymised findings from the overall project and suggestions will be available upon conclusion.
If you would like to talk with my supervisors or myself, please contact us at the addresses below.

Thank you for your participation and support.

Researcher:	Advisor:	Advisor:
Ross Davidson	Dr. G. Mallory	Dr. K. Ball
Open U Business School	Open U Business School	Open U Business School
Open University	Open University	Open University
Milton Keynes, UK MK7 6AA	Milton Keynes, UK MK7 6AA	Milton Keynes, UK MK7 6AA
E-ail: r.a.g.davidson@open.ac.uk	E-mail: g.r.mallory@open.ac.uk	E-mail: k.s.ball@open.ac.uk
Tel: 01908 652812	Tel: 01908 558 48	

Figure 11-1: Consent Form, description of research

Declaration of Consent

I have been informed about the aims and procedures involved in the project I am about to participate in.

I reserve the right to withdraw my participation at any stage in this interview and to the point where all data collection is complete, November 10, 2009 by notifying R. Davidson or a supervisor (see below). If I do so, I understand that any information that I have provided as part of the study will be destroyed and my identity removed.

I understand that my confidentiality will be protected in accordance with the standards laid out under the Data Protection Act and the Open University.

My information and responses will be kept confidential & for research only.

I may be audio recorded BUT only to enhance the completeness of the research & not shared.

My information used in reports, presentations, and publications will be anonymised.
Feedback of results will be results made available when ready.

Should I have concerns and wish to discuss this project with someone other than the lead researcher, R. Davidson, his advisor contacts have been provided (see below).

I have read this consent form and have had the chance to ask questions about the research project.

I agree to participate in this research project.

Name: .... (print)

Name..
Email: ....
Date.........................
__DO NOT WRITE UNDER THIS LINE – TO BE FILLED BY THE RESEARCHER___

Signature of researcher..
Please return to the researcher
Ross Davidson
Open University Business School
Open University
Milton Keynes, UK MK7 6AA
E-mail: r.a.g.davidson@open.ac.uk   Tel: 01908 652812

Advisor:
Dr. G. Mallory
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Open University
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01908 558 48

Advisor:
Dr. K. Ball
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Open University
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Figure 11-2: Consent form

Expatriate Project 2010 – PhD Thesis – R Davidson

1. Understanding the International Assignment.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research.

Developing a more complete understanding of the international work experience is the goal of this research. By better understanding your experience, protocols can be enhanced which will the international assignment for the expatriate and the organization.

A brief 3 step process is involved (part can be completed online.

Step 1. complete survey below
Step 2. together, we build a mental map of your experience
Step 3. brief discussion of your specific international assignment

Information you provide will be held in confidence and not shared. This research follows the ethical guidelines as expressed by the Open University Ethics Committe and the UK Data Protection Act (1998). Should you have any questions or concerns or wish to withdraw your participation, please contact, myself Ross Davidson or Dr. G. Mallory.

* 1. *Please complete the following information to acknowledge your willingness to participate.*

Name:

E-mail:

Time on assignment to date:

Please take a moment and reflect on your current international work assignment.

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Figure 11-3: Satisfaction / Intention to Quit Questionnaire, Introduction

2. Your expat experience: your sense of satisfaction

The following questions are to get a sense of your satisfaction with your current asssignment.

2. *Please tell us about your level of satisfaction with your current international assignment.* (check one per row):

	disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree somewhat	agree	agree strongly
Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this international assignment	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this country	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this organization	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I frequently think about leaving my current organization	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I will likely search and apply for another job	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I will likely leave this organization within 1 year	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

3: *A few demographics to complete your story.*

Company or industry:

Position with your organization:

Multiple international assignments (number):

Important others with you (spouse/children/other):

Education level(bachelor/advanced degree/etc.):

Age:

Nationality:

Page 2

Figure 11-4: Satisfaction/Intention to Quit Questionnaire

↑importance of China; receiving more scrutiny thus ↑ pressure to perform

corruption

co-workers/employees willingness to make decisions

personal side deals by employees at company expense

ability to give and take to get along

understand political dynamic of host country co-workers

approaches to problem solving

eyes of home office

inculcate home/corporate views/culture

move out of comfort zone

necessary skills & knowledge

match between local knowledge & home office expectations

local expat advice ignored

co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make

role conflict between home office & posting

discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary

home office delivers on promises

received training prior to arrival

concerns raised by expats taken seriously by home office

optimistic

Insurance, tax, and pension concerns

improve career opportunities

fitting in when I return home after being gone for so long

language skills

supervisor support in host country

local worker support in host county

support from others in the community at large

ability to deal with frustrations

previous international experience

support from family/important others

out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunities at home

confidence in own abilities

able to engage with people who are different

clear understanding of why on assignment

logistical support from home office

personal development

my family's adjustment

better compensation opportunities

outgoing personality

international minded

Figure 11-5: Construct Pool Used to Create Expatriate's Causal Map

Figure 11-6: Screen Capture of Pair-wise Comparisons with Cognizer Software

	ability to	understand	approach to	eyes of	inculcate	move out of	necessary	match	local expat	co-workers	role conflict	discretion to	home office	received	concern	optimistic	Od
insurance,	1	0	5	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
improve	8	2	13	1	1	17	11	5	1	3	-1	3	2	2	1	9	35
fitting in	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
language	7	9	4	0	0	6	8	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	24
supervisor	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	14
local worker	6	4	3	0	0	4	3	2	0	1	-1	5	-1	0	0	7	25
support from	3	2	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	5	20
ability to	9	8	22	0	0	17	6	-2	4	4	-3	6	-3	3	2	15	32
previous	1	1	2	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	15
support from	6	1	7	5	0	7	3	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	3	11	26
out of sight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	-2	0	0	2	12
confidence	9	6	20	3	0	18	13	3	2	1	0	14	2	0	3	16	31
able to	13	11	11	0	1	17	8	7	5	1	1	4	0	3	4	10	32
clear	3	2	2	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	-2	4	-2	0	0	0	19
logical	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14
personal	3	3	14	0	1	15	4	2	1	0	2	1	0	3	0	13	30
my family	3	0	4	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	15
better	0	-1	4	1	0	5	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	25
outgoing	3	0	8	0	2	11	2	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	2	23
international	12	11	18	5	0	14	13	2	6	0	0	7	0	3	8	8	29
because of	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6
corruption	0	3	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	5
co-workers?	2	3	3	0	2	3	3	2	0	6	-1	4	-1	0	0	1	28
personal	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	-1	0	0	0	6
ability to	0	5	10	0	0	8	4	2	2	2	2	3	0	2	2	5	27
understand	6	0	6	3	0	4	5	2	2	-1	0	8	2	0	0	3	29
approach to	10	3	0	3	0	11	8	0	6	4	4	4	-2	3	6	8	33
eyes of	0	3	5	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	4	17
inculcate	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
move out of	7	5	8	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	
necessary	8	3	20	1	2	6	0	2	0	1	-3	5	3	0	0	0	27
match	3	5	2	0	0	0	5	0	0	4	-3	4	-3	0	0	2	21
local expat	4	3	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	13
co-workers	0	2	2	0	0	1	-1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20
role conflict	2	0	-1	0	0	0	-2	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	-2	14
discretion to	3	8	6	0	0	2	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	21
home office	0	2	-2	0	0	0	-2	-3	0	-2	-5	0	0	0	2	3	24
received	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	9
concern	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	-3	0	0	2	3	2	0	3	16
optimistic	4	2	10	3	0	14	0	0	0	3	3	2	2	0	3	0	27
Id	26	26	33	14	8	25	28	19	13	20	17	18	21	3	14	28	

Figure 11-7: Part of the 40 x 40 expatriate map output: bottom = ID; right = OD

11.1   *Interview protocol*

Following is a recounting from my field notes. The focus of the questions was two-fold. First, I wanted to incorporate the constructs used in PO fit and the Framework of International Adjustment in broad terms. Secondly, I wanted to learn in general how they saw their experience. The question prompts for each interview were written in my journal to ensure question consistency.

Thanks 'person's name' for participating so far. Just a few questions and we will be done.

1. Can you tell me a bit about how you arrived here in China and what you are currently doing?

2. Why are you here? Do you have a clear understanding.... A clear purpose? Clear what is expected of you?

3. Can you tell me a bit about the selection process? Why you? Settling in? Support from Head Office? Shanghai? Who helped? How?

4. Can you talk about the positives you've faced at work. Your situation? The challenges you face?

5. What do you view as critical to YOUR satisfaction?

6. (for the females only) As a female expat in China could you talk about your experience? Any special or unique challenges you face?

7. Can you talk about your experiences interacting with the Chinese?

8. Several concepts keep coming up in relation to business in China and there seems to be as many explanations as there are people. Can you explain Guanxi and Face. How do you understand them? What do they mean to you?

9. As we are almost done, to conclude, if you were invited to address your (insert appropriate situation e.g. Alma Marta, daughter's graduating class) what suggestions or advice would you give them?

10. Anything else you would like to add?

Thank you. Recorder is turned off. Often we talked some more informally and it was at this point that revelations sometimes occurred. They were made aware that the information might be incorporated in to the project. Objections were never raised and I would conclude by asking if they knew of anyone who might participate.

12 Appendix B: Demographics and Results of Questionnaire

Statistics		gender	industry	nationality	education_level	important others	position_with_organi zation	number of intl_assignments
N	Valid	36	36	36	35	36	36	36
	Missing	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Median					2.0000			2.0000
Mode					2.00			1.00
Sum					70.00			86.00

Table 12-1: Summary counts

participant	gender	prev intl assigns	industry	nationality	education level	age	import others	time on assign	posn with org
1	male	2	chemical	Irish	> bachelor degree	47	family	5	gm
2	male	1	chemical	Canadian	bachelor degree	55	family	11	general mgt
3	male	2	chemical	Singaporean	< bachelor degree	60	none	8	general mgt
4	male	8	chemical	English	bachelor degree	55	none	18	unit_mgr
5	female	0	chemical	English	bachelor degree	30	family	25	unit_mgr
6	male	1	chemical	English	bachelor degree	34	none	2	unit_mgr
7	female	0	chemical	Singaporean	bachelor degree	45	none	1.75	staff function
8	female	0	aeronautical	American	> bachelor degree	40	family	2	general mgt
9	male	0	aeronautical	American	> bachelor degree	50	none	1.5	general mgt
10	male	3	lightmfg	American	bachelor degree	63	family	2	general mgt
11	male	3	lightmfg	Canadian	bachelor degree	47	family	10	general mgt
12	male	0	lightmfg	Singaporean	< bachelor degree	37	family	7.5	unit_mgr
13	male	2	lightmfg	Singaporean	< bachelor degree	47	none	10	unit_mgr
14	male	0	lightmfg	Singaporean	bachelor degree	50	none	2.5	unit_mgr
15	male	0	lightmfg	Singaporean	999	9.99	none	9.99	staff function
16	male	0	lightmfg	New Zealand	< bachelor degree	62	none	2	unit_mgr
17	male	1	service	German	bachelor degree	42	family	21	general mgt
18	male	0	lightmfg	Australian	< bachelor degree	49	family	15	general mgt
19	male	3	heavy mfg	Irish	< bachelor degree	54	none	5	general mgt
20	male	0	lightmfg	American	< bachelor degree	41	family	0.5	unit_mgr
21	male	13	service	English	bachelor degree	55	none	2	general mgt
22	male	1	lightmfg	American	bachelor degree	39	family	10	unit_mgr
23	male	1	service	American	> bachelor degree	43	family	14	general mgt
24	female	0	service	American	> bachelor degree	28	none	0.25	general mgt
25	male	1	lightmfg	American	> bachelor degree	45	family	0	sales/marketing
26	male	1	lightmfg	American	bachelor degree	42	999	4.5	general mgt
27	male	2	service	Canadian	< bachelor degree	51	family	1.5	unit_mgr
28	female	1	service	Singaporean	> bachelor degree	30	family	1.75	staff function
29	female	1	service	American	> bachelor degree	37	family	5	general mgt
30	male	0	lightmfg	German	> bachelor degree	29	none	0.75	unit_mgr
31	female	3	service	English	bachelor degree	32	none	5	staff function
32	male	2	service	English	< bachelor degree	45	family	1.25	general mgt
33	female	0	lightmfg	American	bachelor degree	36	none	0.75	unit_mgr
34	male	0	heavy mfg	Australian	bachelor degree	49	none	6	unit_mgr
35	male	1	lightmfg	Japanese	bachelor degree	48	family	2.5	general mgt
36	999	999	999	999	999	999	999	999	999

Table 12-2: Demographics of Sample

400

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	28	77.8	77.8	77.8
	female	8	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 12-3: Gender Breakdown

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Light_mfg	15	41.7	41.7	41.7
	Heavy_mfg	2	5.6	5.6	47.2
	Aeronautical	3	8.3	8.3	55.6
	Service	9	25.0	25.0	80.6
	Chemical	7	19.4	19.4	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 12-4: Industry Categories Represented

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	American	11	30.6	30.6	30.6
	Australian	2	5.6	5.6	36.1
	Canadian	3	8.3	8.3	44.4
	English	6	16.7	16.7	61.1
	German	2	5.6	5.6	66.7
	Irish	2	5.6	5.6	72.2
	Japanese	1	2.8	2.8	75.0
	New_Zealand	1	2.8	2.8	77.8
	Singaporean	8	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 12-5: Nationalities Represented

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< bachelor degree	8	22.2	22.9	22.9
	bachelor degree	19	52.8	54.3	77.1
	> bachelor degree	8	22.2	22.9	100.0
	Total	35	97.2	100.0	
Missing	999.00	1	2.8		
Total		36	100.0		

Table 12-6: Education Levels of the Expatriates

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	family	18	50.0	50.0	50.0
	back home	1	2.8	2.8	52.8
	none	16	44.4	44.4	97.2
	999	1	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 12-7: Important Others with the Expatriate

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	general mngt	17	47.2	47.2	47.2
	unit_mgr	14	38.9	38.9	86.1
	staff function	4	11.1	11.1	97.2
	sales/marketing	1	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 12-8: Position Category held with Their Organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	15	41.7	41.7	41.7
	2.00	11	30.6	30.6	72.2
	3.00	6	16.7	16.7	88.9
	4.00	2	5.6	5.6	94.4
	9.00	1	2.8	2.8	97.2
	14.00	1	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 12-9: Number of International Assignments

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	.00	14	38.9	38.9	38.9
	1.00	10	27.8	27.8	66.7
	2.00	6	16.7	16.7	83.3
	3.00	4	11.1	11.1	94.4
	9.00	1	2.8	2.8	97.2
	13.00	1	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 12-10: Previous International Experience

12.1 Satisfaction/ITQ survey results

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	disagree	2	5.6	6.1	6.1
	disagree somewhat	2	5.6	6.1	12.1
	neutral	4	11.1	12.1	24.2
	agree somewhat	5	13.9	15.2	39.4
	agree	13	36.1	39.4	78.8
	agree strongly	7	19.4	21.2	100.0
	Total	33	91.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	8.3		
	Total	36	100.0		

Table 12-11: Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this organization.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	disagree strongly	9	25.0	27.3	27.3
	disagree	12	33.3	36.4	63.6
	disagree somewhat	1	2.8	3.0	66.7
	neutral	2	5.6	6.1	72.7
	agree somewhat	4	11.1	12.1	84.8
	agree	4	11.1	12.1	97.0
	agree strongly	1	2.8	3.0	100.0
	Total	33	91.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	8.3		
	Total	36	100.0		

Table 12-12: I frequently think about leaving my current organization.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	disagree strongly	9	25.0	27.3	27.3
	disagree	11	30.6	33.3	60.6
	disagree somewhat	4	11.1	12.1	72.7
	neutral	2	5.6	6.1	78.8
	agree somewhat	2	5.6	6.1	84.8
	agree	1	2.8	3.0	87.9
	agree strongly	4	11.1	12.1	100.0
	Total	33	91.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	8.3		
	Total	36	100.0		

Table 12-13: I will likely search and apply for another job.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	disagree strongly	10	27.8	30.3	30.3
	disagree	7	19.4	21.2	51.5
	disagree somewhat	3	8.3	9.1	60.6
	neutral	5	13.9	15.2	75.8
	agree	4	11.1	12.1	87.9
	agree strongly	4	11.1	12.1	100.0
	Total	33	91.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	8.3		
	Total	36	100.0		

Table 12-14: I will likely leave this organization within 1 year.

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12.2 Graphs of Demographics
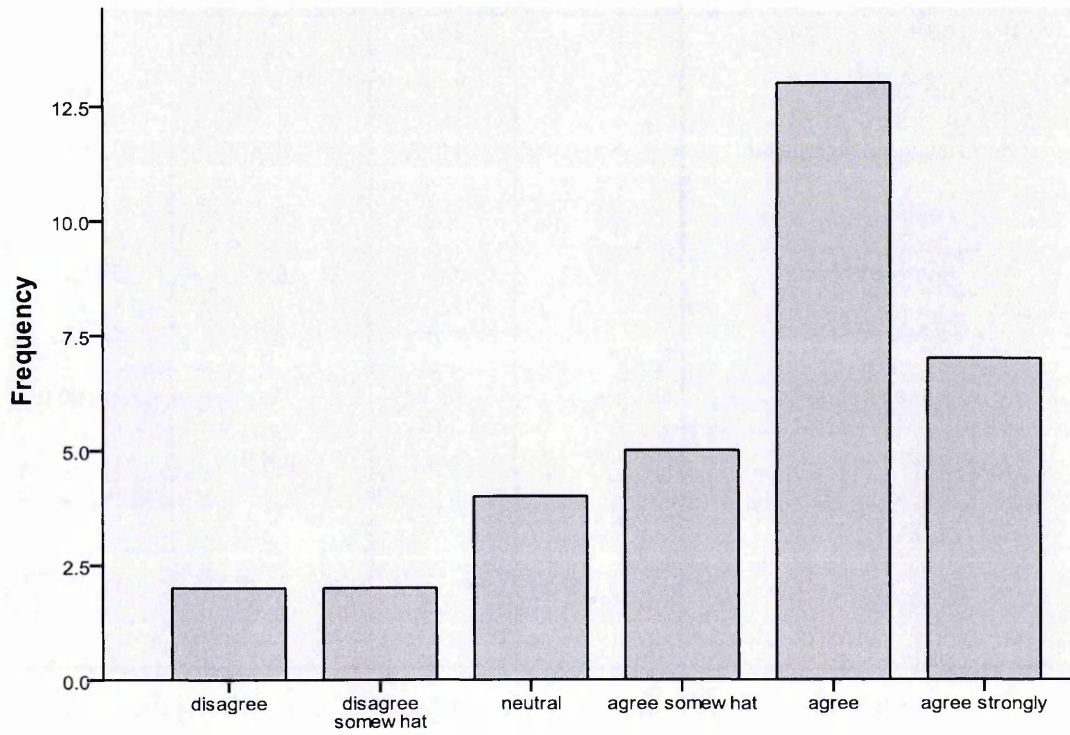
Figure 12-1: Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this organization.
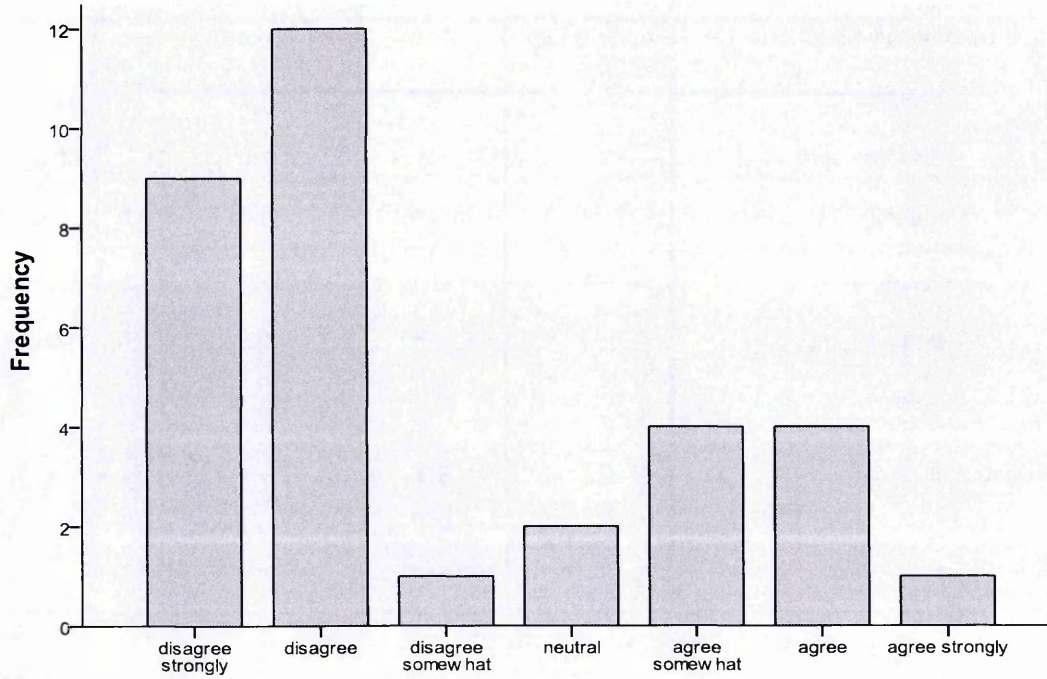
Figure 12-2: I frequently think about leaving my current organization.
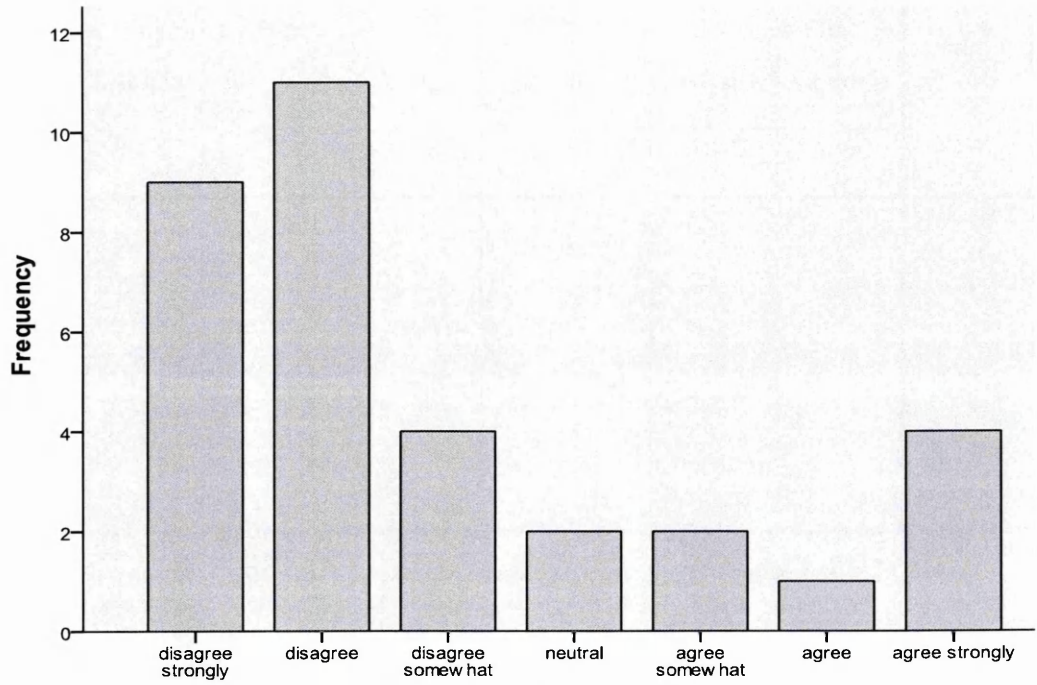
Figure 12-3: I will likely search and apply for another job.
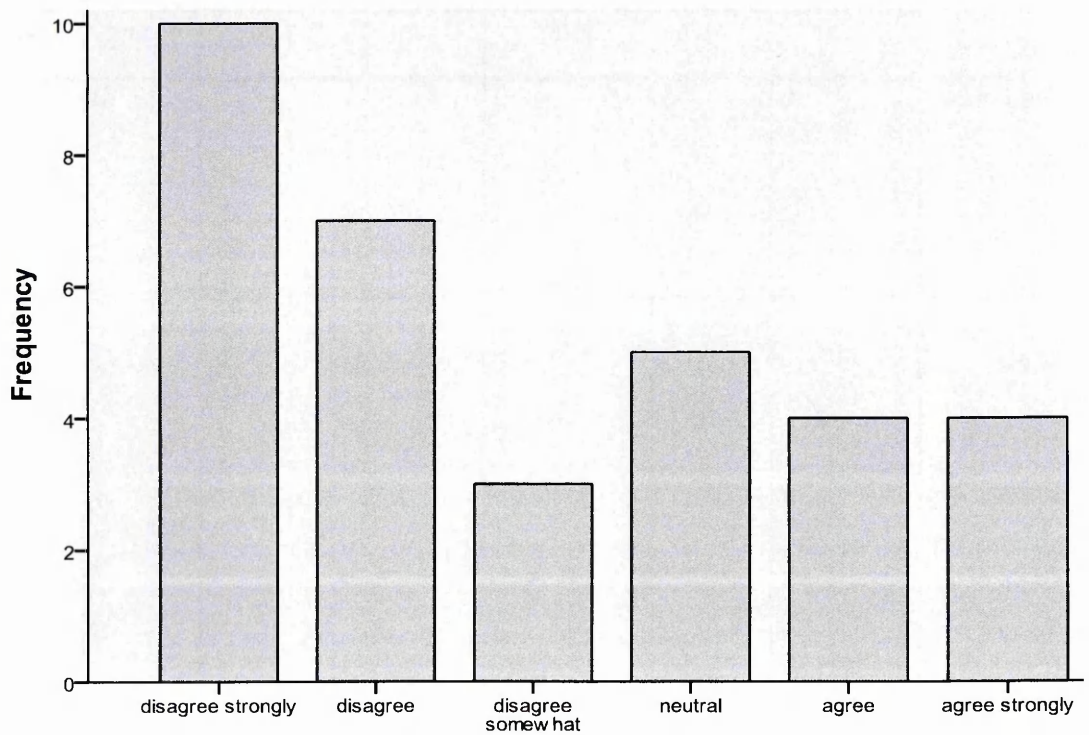
Figure 12-4: I will likely leave this organization within 1 year.

expat_name	sat_org						
	disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree somewhat	agree	agree strongly
	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Alan_Kiwi	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Alan_P	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
John	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Roger	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	0	2	2	0	0	0	0

Table 12-15: Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this organization.

expat_name	think_re_leave						
	disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree somewhat	agree	agree strongly
	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Alan_Kiwi	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Alan_P	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Cheng	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Joe	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
John	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mark	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Simon	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Stacey	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Tony	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	4	4	1

Table 12-16: I frequently think about leaving my current organization.

expat_name	will_search						
	disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree somewhat	agree	agree strongly
	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Alan_Kiwi	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
John	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Mark	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Peter	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Simon	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Stacey	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Tony	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	2	1	4

Table 12-17: I will likely search and apply for another job.

expat_name	will_leave						
	disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree somewhat	agree	agree strongly
	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Alan_Kiwi	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Elizabeth	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Joe	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
John	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Peter	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Roger	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Simon	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Stacey	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	4	4

Table 12-18: I will likely leave this organization within 1 year.

12.2.1.1 All individual satisfaction and ITQ scores

Count

		sat_org						Total
		disagree	Disagree somewhat	neutral	Agree somewhat	agree	Agree strongly	
expat_name	Aiden	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Alan_Kiwi	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Alan_P	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Bill	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Cheng	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Claus	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Colin	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Darrell	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Eddy	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Elizabeth	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Gary	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Herb	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Howard	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Jackson	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Joe	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	John	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Keith	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Lauren	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	LP	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Mark	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Mike	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Patrick	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Peter	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Priscilla	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Roger	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Ros	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Sebastien	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Simon	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Stacey	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Stan	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Tony	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Wintson	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Yoshiro	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total		2	2	4	5	13	7	33

Table 12-19: Individual satisfaction score

Count

		think_re_leave							Total
		disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree somewhat	agree	agree strongly	
expat name	Aiden	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Alan_Kiwi	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Alan_P	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Bill	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Chong	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Claus	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Colin	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Darroll	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Eddy	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Elizabeth	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Gary	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Herb	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Howard	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Jackson	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Joe	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	John	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Keith	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Lauren	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	LP	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Mark	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Mike	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Patrick	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Peter	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Priscilla	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Roger	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Ros	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Sebastien	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Simon	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Stacey	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Stan	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Tony	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Wintson	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Yoshiro	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		9	12	1	2	4	4	1	33

Table 12-20: Individual 'will think about leaving' score

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expat_name * will_search Crosstabulation

		will_search							Total
		disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree somewhat	agree	agree strongly	
expat name	Aiden	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Alan_Kiwi	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Alan_P	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Bill	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Chong	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Claus	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Colin	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Darrell	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Eddy	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Elizabeth	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Gary	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Herb	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Howard	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Jackson	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Joe	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	John	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Keith	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Lauren	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	LP	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Mark	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Mike	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Patrick	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Peter	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Priscilla	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Roger	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Ros	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Sebastien	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Simon	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Stacey	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Stan	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Tony	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Wintson	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Yoshiro	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total		9	11	4	2	2	1	4	33

Table 12-21 Individual 'will search' score

Count

		will_leave						Total
		disagree strongly	disagree	disagree somewhat	neutral	agree	agree strongly	
expat name	Aiden	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Alan_Kiwi	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Alan_P	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Bill	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Chong	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Claus	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Colin	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Darroll	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Eddy	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Elizabeth	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Gary	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Herb	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Howard	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Jackson	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Joe	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	John	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Keith	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Lauren	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	LP	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Mark	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Mike	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Patrick	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Peter	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Priscilla	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Roger	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Ros	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Sebastien	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Simon	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Stacey	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Stan	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Tony	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Wintson	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Yoshiro	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total		10	7	3	5	4	4	33

Table 12-22: Individual 'will leave' score

12.3   Construct Breakdown

Constructs	# who selected	rank
ability to deal with frustrations	23	1
improve career opportunities	21	2
international minded	21	3
able to engage with people who are different	20	4
approaches to problem solving	19	5
support from family/important others	18	6
confidence in own abilities	18	7
personal development	15	8
necessary skills & knowledge	14	9
language skills	13	10
move out of comfort zone	12	11
better compensation opportunities	11	12
ability to give and take to get along	11	13
co-workers/employees willingness to make decisions	10	14
optimistic	10	15
outgoing personality	9	16
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	9	17
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	8	18
local worker support in host county	7	19
clear understanding of why on assignment	7	20
my family's adjustment	7	21
match between local knowledge & home office expectations	7	22
previous international experience	6	23
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	6	24
support from others in the community at large	4	25
eyes of home office	4	26
home office delivers on promises	4	27
Insurance, tax, and pension concerns	3	28
supervisor support in host country	3	29
out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunities at home	3	30
logistical support from home office	3	31
local expat advice ignored	3	32
role conflict between home office & posting	3	33
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by home office	3	34
fitting in when I return home after being gone for so long	2	35
↑importance of China; receiving more scrutiny thus ↑ pressure to perform	2	36
inculcate home/corporate views/culture	2	37
received training prior to arrival	2	38
corruption	1	39
personal side deals by employees at company expense	1	40

Table 12-23: Complete list of constructs selected

CONSTRUCT	ID	OD	TOTAL ID + OD	TOTAL AVERAGE
improve career opportunities	37	35	72	2.12
personal development	36	30	66	1.94
approach to problem solving	33	33	66	1.94
ability to deal with frustrations	32	32	64	1.88
confidence in one' abilities	32	31	63	1.85
able to engage with people who are different	29	32	61	1.79
outgoing personality	29	28	57	1.68
international minded (curious)	28	29	57	1.68
necessary skills and knowledge	28	27	55	1.62
optimistic	28	27	55	1.62
ability to give and take to get along	26	28	54	1.59
language skills	29	24	53	1.56
support from family / important others	26	26	52	1.53
better compensation opportunities	27	25	52	1.53
co-workers/ employees willingness to make decisions	24	28	52	1.53
local worker support in host country	24	25	49	1.44
understand political dynamic of host country co-workers	26	23	49	1.44
move out of comfort zone	25	20	45	1.32
home office delivers on promises	21	24	45	1.32
support from others in community at large	20	23	43	1.26
match between local knowledge and HO expectations	19	21	40	1.18
co-workers willingness to take responsibility for decisions they make	20	20	40	1.18
clear understanding of why on assignment	20	19	39	1.15
discretion to adjust roles & methods as necessary	18	21	39	1.15
my family's adjustment	22	15	37	1.09
previous international experience	16	19	35	1.03
supervisor support in host country	19	14	33	0.97
eyes of home office	14	17	31	0.91
role conflict between home office and posting	17	14	31	0.91
concerns raised by expats taken seriously by HO	14	16	30	0.88
insurance / pension concerns	11	16	27	0.79
local expat advice ignored	13	13	26	0.76
logistical support from home office	10	14	24	0.71
out of sight = out of mind = lost opportunity back home	10	12	22	0.65
inculcate home/corporate expectations/culture	8	10	18	0.53
received training prior to arrival	9	9	18	0.53
fitting in upon returning home	7	7	14	0.41
personal side deals by employees at company expense	8	6	14	0.41
because of importance of China, receiving more scrutiny	5	8	13	0.38
corruption	6	5	11	0.32
TOTAL	0	0	0	47.2

Table 12-24: Complete list of ID and OD

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12.4 Correspondence

Figure 12-5: Correspondence with Langfield-Smith re causal map comparison

Ross

If you are thinking of using the Markoczy and Goldberg formula, you might want to look at some of Markoczy's work in order to get an idea of the sample sizes she used, and then add around 20-50% for good measure (standards improve over time).

However, I'd suggest checking out the the work of Clarkson and Hodgkinson in the journal Organizational Research Methods for more up to date techniques for comparing maps.
It might even be worth emailing Gail Clarkson - I was her external too.

Best
Kevin

On Wed, 3 Feb 2010 16:20:44 +0000
  R.A.G.Davidson <r.a.g.davidson@open.ac.uk> wrote:
> Dear Professor Daniels:
>
> Dr Julian Edwards, whose viva panel you served on as an external
>examiner, suggested I write you to get an answer to a question no on
>seems to have an answer to...or at least I haven't found an answer to.
>
> You have been involved with Drs. Markoczy and de Chernatony in
>developing statistical interpretations of Causal Maps and comparing
>elicitation methods. For my PhD Thesis I am using mapping in relation
>to Expatriate assignments and decision making and am interested in the methods you
>developed to compare maps. I understand the maps; however, a question
>I have is - what is an acceptable or adequate sample size to use the
>formula appropriately?
>
> Any thoughts or insights into this matter are truly appreciated.
>
>
> Regards,
>
> Ross Davidson
England & Wales and a charity registered in Scotland
>(SC 038302).

Figure 12-6: Correspondence with K. Daniels re: causal map comparison