Aalto University School of Business | Mikkeli Campus

EXPLORING THE SUPPORTING FACTORS OF EXPATRIATE ADJUSTMENT IN THE GAME INDUSTRY

The case of a major Finnish game company

Juha Myllyniemi

Bachelor's Thesis
Instructor: Miikka J. Lehtonen
Date of submission: 08.04.2020

Declaration

By completing this cover sheet and declaration, I confirm that this assignment is my own work, is not copied from the work (published or unpublished) of any other person, and has not previously been submitted for assessment either at Aalto University, or another educational establishment. Any direct or indirect uses of material (e.g.: text, visuals, ideas…) from other sources have been fully acknowledged and cited according to the conventions of the Harvard Referencing System.

Aalto University
School of Business | Mikkeli Campus

EXPLORING THE SUPPORTING FACTORS OF EXPATRIATE ADJUSTMENT IN THE GAME INDUSTRY

The case of a major Finnish game company

Juha Myllyniemi

Bachelor's Thesis
Instructor: Miikka J. Lehtonen
Date of submission: 08.04.2020

Declaration

By completing this cover sheet and declaration, I confirm that this assignment is my own work, is not copied from the work (published or unpublished) of any other person, and has not previously been submitted for assessment either at Aalto University, or another educational establishment. Any direct or indirect uses of material (e.g.: text, visuals, ideas…) from other sources have been fully acknowledged and cited according to the conventions of the Harvard Referencing System.

AALTO UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Mikkeli Campus

ABSTRACT OF
BACHELOR'S THESIS

Author: Juha Myllyniemi
Title of thesis: EXPLORING THE SUPPORTING FACTORS OF EXPATRIATE ADJUSTMENT IN THE GAME INDUSTRY - The case of a major Finnish game company
Date: **8 April 2020**
Degree: Bachelor of Science in Economics and Business Administration
Supervisor: Miikka J. Lehtonen
Objectives The main objectives of this study were to observe the how relocation support influences the adaptation process and the employees in the game industry facilitate that. The relationships between an individual's readiness to adapt and outside forces were measured as well.
Summary The video game industry is a very international industry and up to 20% of the employees in Finland originally came from abroad. The adaptation to the new environment can be measured by considering personal abilities and the support a self-initiated expatriate receives. This study covers the effects that relocation support is perceived to have and how it impacts self-initiated expatriates. Additionally, cultural intelligence of Finnish game company workers was evaluated to facilitate the adaptation and how their mindsets support working in international teams. **Conclusions** The relocation support as well as the atmosphere in Finnish game companies was perceived to both substantially influence the way self-initiated expatriates adapt to the new environment. The effects ranged from reduced stress to better involvement in team efforts.
Key words: Video game industry, expatriates, relocation, teams
Language: English
Grade:

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

The game industry has been growing and expanding rapidly over the years, ever since the early 1970s. Nowadays there are game companies of all sizes with different strategies. New and original game concepts are still surfacing, and competition is vast. The field of research that the game industry is linked to, creative and cultural, has been on the rise. It can be said that on many levels the game industry has been in the highlight.

1.1 International teams in the game industry

Seeking talents in a global setting has made the existence of international teams a commonplace in game companies. Companies are becoming aware of the positive effects that interculturalism can have on teams and the amount of those teams has been increasing. While multicultural teams are said to have drawbacks as well, it is important to understand what factors influence the effectiveness of those teams. The game industry is no exception in the use of international teams. In fact, the sheer amount of international workforce in the game industry is already matching one fifth of all game developers in Finland according to Kostner (2019) and the trend seems to be rising.

The field of international workforce has been previously studied in various areas and settings. These workers who move countries on their own initiative are called self-initiated expatriates, and the abbreviation SIE is commonly used in literature. These people most closely resemble the kind of international workforce that is present in the game industry. SIEs are the professionals who are sought after by HR's talent acquisition. These kind of employees' motives, effectiveness and adaptation have been studied rather extensively (Suutari and Brewster, 2000 & Selmer and Lauring 2012), but to the best of my knowledge it is lacking the game industry specific research and overview.

Because of the high portion of international workforce in the game industry, this thesis will cover forces that affect the expatriates adaptation to the environment, the international teams efficiency and how those come to play in the game industry setting. This topic is highly important to the industry since most teams are impacted to some extent by how these forces interact. The topic is fascinating because globalization is the trend in most industries around the globe and the game industry was chosen to be studied due to the rapid growth and personal interest in the area.

1.2 Research problems

The problems to consider include the effects of relocation support, which are quite little researched at least in the context of the game industry. It should be tested, whether the game company employees find the relocation support or the overall adjustment to the new environment significant, or the opposite. Additionally, the cultural intelligence within employees of international teams should be evaluated in order to measure how well can Finnish game companies support the adaptation of international workforce. Lastly, the efficiency of these international teams should be reviewed from the employees' point of view.

1.3 Research questions

1: *How well are SIE's adapting to the new environment and to the new team subjectively in the video game industry and which factors support this?*

To research this field, it is important to measure how the SIEs are feeling about their belonging to the new host country and company. These feelings are mostly subjective and only with larger samples can grant a clear view into the industry norms. By addressing this question, this thesis will generate an outlook for the industry for future research to utilize as a basis.

2: How *does relocation support affect an SIE and the company?*

By addressing this question, this thesis will draw from previous research about relocation support and compares it to the attitudes existing in the game industry. By understanding its effects to both the company and the SIE, a recommendation could be reached about the way this function should be treated within the game industry.

3: *How are international teams perceived in the game industry and how well do they function?*

As it is known that there is a lot of international teams in the game industry and that SIEs are most of the time if not always part of those teams, it is crucial to know what attitudes are present within the international teams. One part of understanding that is about measuring how effectively the teams function and if the members feel that the way the team is set up supports reaching common goals.

1.4 Research objectives

As this area of research within the game industry is quite underresearched, this thesis will develop a baseline for future research. The level of understanding regarding the needs and wants of SIEs should be broadened. This increase can be done by studying their team's dynamics, their adaptation to the new environment, and their existing attitudes towards the increasingly common international teams. Studying there will benefit both the game companies as well as the SIEs collectively.

1.5 Overview of the thesis

These research problems, questions and objectives will be resolved by first discussing the existing literature on subjects introduced. This section will be divided into key areas of existing research that influence the study. Next, methodology and research design will be explained thoroughly. The decisions about study design, samples and ethicality will be part of this section. Afterwards, the interviews will be analyzed in the findings section and those findings will be discussed in relation to previous research in more detail in the following discussion section of this thesis. Finally, the conclusions, the implications and the impact of those findings will be overviewed in the conclusion section of the thesis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Foreign workforce in the Finnish game industry

The game industry has been constantly growing since the 1960s. During the 21st century, the industry begun to grow exponentially to reach the point where we are now – the value reaching 152,1 billion dollars in 2019 as stated by Anderton (2019). This kind of growth is never before seen for any industry, according to Ahmad et al. (2017), and with constant technological advancements, the innovation existing in the industry and the increasing time spent on games, the expected direction is still up. Kostner (2019) states that Finland is one of the fastest growing globally and Finland's industry turnover is over two billion euros annually. The most well-known large game companies in Finland include, for example, Rovio Entertainment, Supercell, Remedy Entertainment and Fingersoft. The game industry is filled with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) with only some large game studios with multimillion budgets for games – usually called AAA studios (Ahmad et al. 2017). The main challenges in the industry are the volatility as well maintaining constant innovation. Arguably those reasons alone make efficiency and a lean management desirable, which is in line with the existence of the great number of SMEs. Especially in the case of video game companies, it's important to get the most out of your teams by recruiting the right people, this can be referred to as talent management (Scholz 2012). Generally speaking, organization goes over numerous employees during their lifetime, and talent management focuses on supervising that flow of workforce in order to recognize and manage the best individuals. Scholz also claims that interest as well as importance of intercultural talent management has risen. This concept has been popular among other academics as well, see Sthal (2010). This is no surprise since the world has been increasingly changing towards a global economy from national economies. Meaning that it is becoming easier for organization to operate in foreign countries as well as workforce to flow internationally (Lehtonen, 2019). In the Finnish game industry, according to Kostner (2019), even 20% of game developers are from a foreign country. This number suggests that foreign workforce and talents are already

used to an extent and there is demand for them. This is why self-initiated expatriates are a resource that should be reviewed.

2.2 Self-initiated expatriates

The demand of skilled multicultural employees is met with a number of individuals prepared to offer their experience to organizations operating outside their homeland. These people are called self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) in the academic research by various authors, including Credin (2014) and Doherty (2011). Research on SIEs has been constantly increasing and it's still vastly growing based on the quantity of works published on the subject (Dabic 2015). SIEs are ready to move abroad from their country of origin to live and work on their own. Credin and Selmer (2014) introduce four criteria for the label of SIE: '(a) self-initiated international relocation, (b) regular employment (intentions), (c) intentions of a temporary stay, and (d) skilled/professional qualifications'. Prior to these, the definition of an SIE could include for example refugees, who do not directly fit the desired characteristic of an SIE as they might lack the intentions of a temporary stay, employment intentions or the professional qualifications. This allows for a more narrowed down and clearer research scope and supports the differentiation between individuals. This definition of an SIE still includes those who have had prior international experience in the past as well as those who have not.

The main difference that separates SIEs from other international workers is that the initiative is on their end and they are not backed by any company (Suutari 2000, Biemann and Andersen 2010, Selmer 2015). Literature about expatriation emphasizes the difference between company backed expatriates and self-initiated expatriates (Howe-Walsh and Schyns 2010, Biemann and Andersen 2010). The main dissimilarity is that company backed employees have a pre-determined position in the new country as well as support from the mother company throughout the expatriation unlike the SIEs who have to work those things themselves (Howe-Walsh and Schyns 2010). Other arguments leading to the differences between that two range from the different motives, incentives

and career prospects (Cao et al. 2011 & 2012). These dissimilarities make SIEs more relevant for the purposes of talent management for game companies because they are possible new talents who are seeking employment and possess professional qualifications. Because these reasons, SIEs should be discussed further.

Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) propose that SIEs possess a protean career attitude. The concept of protean career attitude was introduced by Hall (1996) and later discussed further by Hall et al. (1998). They claim that nowadays careers are 'driven by the person, not the organization, and [careers] will be reinvented by the person from time to time, as the person and environment change' (Hall, 1996). This supports the ideology behind SIEs since they build their own careers by taking the initiative in the job market and choosing the country as well as the place they want to work at.

2.3 Self-initiated expatriates' motives

Previous research about SIEs defines various motives for these employees. These reasons to expatriate vary between individuals but the most frequent ones were career development, exploration, self-improvement and financial incentives. Research by Carr et al. (2005) propose similar five reasons for migration: economic factors; political factors; cultural factors; family factors; and career factors. These or similar motives surfaced in literature of various authors such as Suutari (2000), Richardson and McKenna (2002), Doherty (2011), and Selmer (2011 and 2012).

Richardson and McKenna (2002) divided SIEs into four groups based on their motives: refugee, explorer, mercenary and architect. These groups basically represented motives such as the want to change scenery, more blatantly escape current country, want to explore the world and visit countries, want to gain monetary benefits or want to enhance their career. They proposed that among the separate groups had performance differences, which Selmer's (2012) research countered later. Refugees were previously

hypothesized to be not well performing group of expatriates and the results did not follow the same trend. Basically, these groups are not single-handedly a factor that contributes to performance and they do not imply significant dissimilarities between groups. All SIE groups showed positive correlation towards work efficiency and motivation in Selmer's (2012) results.

To the extent of my knowledge, there hasn't been research about how SIEs' choose their employer and what factors or motives drive them to make that decision. Whether that is the image or reputation of a game company that sparks the interest to initiate the expatriation or whether the country's reputation for the industry's sector is the key motivator. Even then, on what basis do those SIEs choose their employer? Are there benefits to location, relocation support for foreign talents or plainly the reputation of the organization. As the motives for expatriation affect the existence of this group of individuals, it is important to analyze how they influence team dynamics and what intrinsic benefits there are for multicultural teams.

2.4 Teamwork in multicultural teams

Hoegl (2001) describes teams as a 'social system with three or more people … who collaborate on a common task'. They also propose a construct to measure teamwork quality, which becomes useful for measuring for example the integration of SIEs to the teams and how well the team works overall. The construct consists of six factors: communication, coordination, balance of member contributions, mutual support, effort and cohesion. The combination of these gives an estimate of how well a team performs. For multicultural teams, these factors are as relevant as for any other team, since a team's performance can be measured regardless of the origin of its members. Multicultural teams can, however, experience above average difficulties in communication and cohesion (Stahl, 2010). If the common language is not the native tongue of either party, can communication, which should be informal and direct, suffer. A team's cohesion, at least

initially, can prove to be more difficult when all individuals do not intrinsically share a background (Stahl, 2010). While Hoegl (2001) describes overall teamwork quality, it is important to review multicultural teams in this setting as well as analyze their intrinsic benefits.

The benefits that multicultural teams possess come from the deep-level differences that are rooted in individual's values and attitudes (Stahl, 2010). These dissimilarities exhibit how individuals are used to solving problems and coming up with answers and even though it is hypothesized that while it takes longer to reach general consensus the idea generation and thus innovation is greater in the process. This is just one example why multicultural teams are sometimes seen as a 'double-edged sword' Stahl (2010) quoted DiStefano et al. (2000).

2.5 Cultural intelligence of employees in Finnish game companies

Bringing back all this research back to the game industry setting, where talents are acquired sometimes to a great extent outside the country of origin for some time already and employees have been collaborating with foreign colleagues (Scholz, 2012). Thus, Scholz (2012) quoted Kerr (2009) 'As a large number live and work abroad, video game developers are constantly honing their cultural intelligence and experiences of cross-cultural integration.' Additionally, Shafi's (2018) interviews for Finnish firm show that because all of the initially foreign individuals' responses indicated that they had integrated to the company's culture successfully. This reaises a question whether the Finnish game industry shares this cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence in literature is defined as 'an individual's capability to effectively manage in the international arena' (Guðmundsdóttir, 2005). Cultural intelligence is about understanding others' viewpoints as well as their behavior in various situations and exhibiting empathy towards others. The better one can mentally process those moments and revise their own behavior accordingly, the higher their cultural intelligence is. If findings suggest a high cultural intelligence of individuals in

the Finnish game industry, should the companies accommodate SIEs integration well to the new organization.

2.6 How to attract self-initiated expatriates

As we have discussed the benefits of SIEs to teams and to organizations, it should be of interest to understand what is researched about their acquisition. In order to understand this to a greater extent, Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) suggest that we examine their needs and wants. They claim that by making the adjustment easier for the expatriates, their efficiency in the workplace increases since they spend less time stressing about personal issues regarding the adjustment to the new culture. Lazarova et al (2010) also believe that adjustment leads to performance. Supporting SIEs' adjustment seems to be an effective way to appeal to SIEs with no prior international experience because it tackles some of the obstacles they have to face when expatriating to a new country. To support this, Scholz (2012) states that 'Finding talented people is important, but it is fundamental that the right talented people are brought together'. This 'bringing together' can be expressed as providing support for new talents, team members, to get familiar to the workflow. Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) suggest strategies such as mentoring on the workplace and in some cases even extending that support on non-work subjects in order to reach better overall adjustment. Lazarova et al. (2010) also bring up the importance of family, a non-work subject, to the overall adjustment of an individual.

For some SIEs their family and spouse are a factor that should not be overlooked. As Lazarova et al. (2010) suggest, these assignments abroad can induce stress to the expatriate family and that stress is likely to have spillover effects on the expatriate themselves. Partially linked with this, they present a relationship between the adjustment of the partner and the adjustment of the expatriate. Again, supportive structures for out-of-work dimensions could influence work performance and possibly the duration of the stay in host country because the SIE doesn't have pressure from personal life to move back to home country.

To the best of my knowledge, research on how game companies support SIEs' integration to teams and organizations themselves was limited. The current literature is lacking in this specific industry. Adaptation support and its effects should be thus researched so that conclusion can be drawn whether it has a meaningful impact. Previous research by Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) would encourage efficient cultural adaptation to reach enhanced performance. The results could reveal efficient (or hindering) patterns for employee integration in organization's daily operations.

Cultural intelligence, as discussed before, is a trainable skill or a quality of a person as stated by Scholz (2012). People have different cultural backgrounds and that's something others should appraise rather than try to change. Cultural intelligence can help people from different cultural backgrounds understand each other better and support their communication right from the start. As discussed by Hoegl (2001), efficient communication has an influence on total teamwork quality.

2.7 Adaptation begins from an individual level

This research attempts to fill the gap in research that is about the relocation support's effects for SIEs' adaptation in the game industry. Finding out whether there are existing structures in the game industry for this and if those are a factor for SIEs when choosing the country itself or place of work. Are these structures noticed by the individuals working in an organization? We need to research the relationship of these structures to SIE's motives as well as SIE's performance on a team level.

Cao et al. (2012) describes the factors within which the employee's expatriation can be deemed to be successful and created a framework on which the success can be evaluated and measured. This framework served as a basis for the framework introduced

in this literary review. The other main source for the framework in this literature review was Howe-Walsh and Schyns' (2010) matrix of cultural adjustment.

The main force that Cao et al. (2012) bring up is one's career capital, which is used to predict career success by measuring cultural intelligence, career networking and protean career attitude – introduced earlier by Hall (1996). All these factors try to predict an individual's ability to manage as an employee in a foreign setting and have positive spillover effects from one to another. For example, Cao et al. (2012) suggest that total career network size has a positive influence on cultural influence. The same can be said about other cultural and motivational skills an individual possesses. All of these forces in the model are moderated by cultural adjustment, which explains how well overall an individual can perform in the setting. In addition, this model proposes the existence of hindering effect taking the form of cultural distance, that Hofstede originally included in his cultural dimensions (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010). This is an outdated way of understanding individuals. Instead of cultural distance, people's cultural identities are more important (Jameson, 2007). Cultural identity doesn't stereotype individuals based on nationality or anything similar. It's a concept that allows individuals to belong to the groups that they feel they belong to and possibly have the values inherent in those groups. By looking at individuals' cultural identities, one can find similarities between people with seemingly different backgrounds. This is why this non-essentialist approach should be utilized instead of the cultural distance.

Literature on cultural interaction and cultural teams supports this framework, since most of the forces interacting have been researched to an extent. This framework is increasingly relevant because Stahl (2010) ,for one, agrees that there are benefits in cultural teams. This goes in line with Suutari's work (2000) that also suggests that expatriates are commonly used by multinational enterprises for knowledge transfer. This means that measuring individuals' career success can be of help when for example recruiting new employees or managing talents in a team. Additionally, all of the career capital forces, or qualities, can easily be linked to SIEs. As discussed previously the

protean career attitude is highly important to SIEs as they design their own career by choosing their place of work. The more they exhibit this motivation, the more willing they are to give their best in working situations. This of course positively effecting the final career success. Scholz's research (2012) concludes that cultural intelligence is likely to be beneficial in creative workplaces. We can thus believe that cultural intelligence is a factor that affects how effectively can multicultural employees work as a team.

These suggestions are based on three major facets of adjustment by Black et al. (1991): work adjustment, interaction adjustment and general adjustment. Additionally, Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) combined these facets with Black's (1988) proposed subjective and objective to create a three by two matrix of cultural adjustment. For the purposes of this study, and to support the research design, only subjective adjustment will be considered when discussing adjustment. Additionally, the interaction adjustment is present in both work and general adjustment, and thus it will be removed as a factor to make the framework simpler. This modifies the matrix to be a two by one matrix, which can be seen in the middle of the framework. This matrix could be utilized to map which area of adjustment, is well supported and which needs more time and effort for increased adaptation. It is important to consider that also the adaptation that happens outside of work has an impact on the overall result.

The framework that will be used as a guideline in this thesis, focuses on the individual as well as the outside forces that can hinder or support career success of any SIE in a new job assignment. Starting from career capital that the individual possesses. These are core competencies that support career success, and all of these have a positive correlation towards cultural adjustment as well as career success – the better, the better.
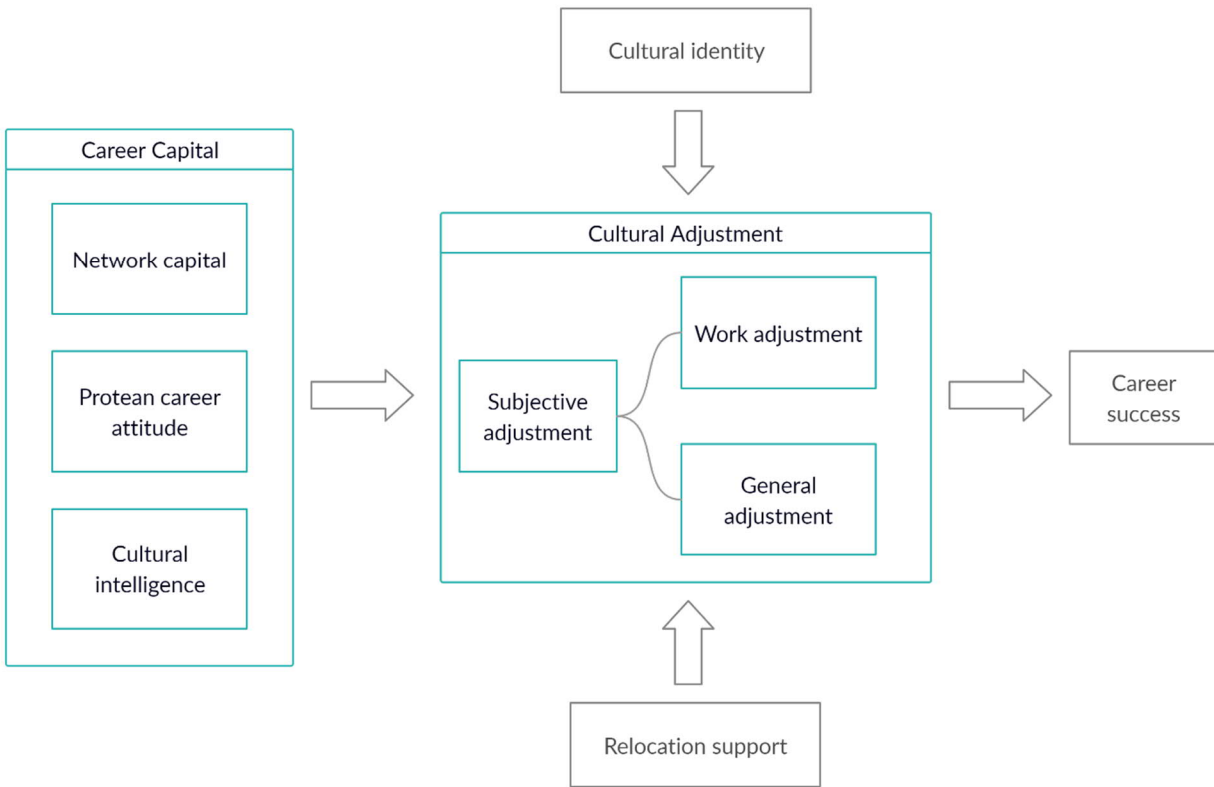
First, the extent of one's network capital can define how much they have interacted with other people overall, including outside of work. This gives out a good general picture of how well the person has managed connections in the past and whether it is likely that the employee is able to make new connections with ease. Second, the individual's attitude towards building their own career regardless of the organization that they are working for. The amount of effort and passion they have towards their own career development and learning can greatly influence the way they interact with others and how successful they are in the long run. Third, cultural intelligence, as mentioned before, is the measurement of how well an individual can monitor the situation, change their behavior to fit the setting and act accordingly. This of course has many implications for how well they communicate and get along with others as well as improves ultimately their chances of career success.

The section of the framework labeled cultural adjustment covers the whole process of adaptation that an SIE experiences. Here, subjective adjustment or the adjustment that the individual experiences, is affected by two areas: work adjustment and general adjustment. General adjustment is about everyday activities such as shopping, hobbies or friendships. Work adjustment is about interactions in the workplace and networking there. They are both considered in this framework because it is equally important to adapt to the general environment in addition to the working environment.

The moderating forces for cultural adjustment are cultural identity, which allows people to define themselves in groups that they feel they belong to (Jameson, 2007). This moderating effect can ease adjustment if the new team or organization shares similar identities or vice versa. Again, cultural intelligence factors in also when people interact with different cultural identities. The other addition to the existing framework is the overlying effect of relocation support. This was added on the premise that all organizations are different the same way that the adjustment can be within different teams, and the framework should facilitate that in some way. The hypothesis is that existence of relocation support could effectively increase the rate of adjustment and ultimately increase performance and innovation.

2.8 Conclusion

This review of literature has found extensive existing knowledge of SIEs as well as their interaction with the organization they work for. This review focused on the Finnish game industry and how SIEs are treated in this setting. Their relationship to team dynamics as well as innovation and knowledge sharing has been researched thoroughly as well. The overall effect of having multicultural teams is still considered to have positives and negatives. This review found a gap in research about relocation support affecting adaptation.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this section, the data collection as well as the decisions that influenced the research design will be discussed in detail. The reasoning and analysis regarding the methodology and it's possible drawbacks are also clarified. This section will introduce the sample size and the appropriate demographics for the purposes of this study and lastly discuss ethical outlooks of the study design.

3.1 Research design

This research was created to explore the game industry as an environment for the SIEs. The intention was to record their feelings and attitudes towards a few factors that were found most likely be significant, such as relocation support. Even though previous research has utilized both quantitative and qualitative research on similar topics, qualitative research was chosen for the purposes of this thesis because that explores individuals' emotions and attitudes towards situations in teams and feelings towards concepts more efficiently. This decision was also made on the basis of convenience. It is rather difficult to reach a sufficient number of survey respondents from Finnish game companies for the purposes of this thesis. The data gathered from thorough interviews was a more realistic way of gathering relevant data.

3.2 Data collection

Data gathered for this thesis is both primary and secondary. Secondary data consists of previous research on the fields of game industry, self-initiated expatriates and intercultural teams. These were introduced in the literature review section of this thesis. The secondary data was utilized and analyzed to construct a basis for this thesis. Additionally, it built the groundwork upon which the framework was based on. This framework in turn guided the gathering of the primary data, namely the interviews. The interviews were done

through video calls because of both convenience and restrictions of visiting organizations offices due to corona virus outbreak happening during the data gathering phase.

For the purposes of this study, two pilot interviews were used in order to test the quality of the questions for the thesis. These two pilot interviews showed that the questions were made in an efficient fashion and the questions could be answered in an appropriate amount of time. The responses gotten in the pilot interviews also showed that the interview could now be used to get the primary data. Answers from these pilot interviews will not be used as primary data, because the responses were from different companies and it might make the data skewed if those responses were analyzed.

The primary data was collected after the pilot interviews were completed. Interviews similar to the two pilot interviews were conducted over a period of one week. The questions used in the interview can be found in the appendices, see appendix 1. All of the respondents were treated with similar respect and were told that the interview will be recorded. The video calls were recorded in order to be able to make clearer analysis to reach the findings discussed in this thesis.

3.3 Sample and interview design

Interviewees were chosen to represent individuals who work in a game company and have some experience of working in an international team or setting. The number of respondents, sample size, for this study was six (n=6) and they all worked at the same major Finnish game company and they worked in different teams. The respondents were both home nationals (Finnish) (n=3) and expatriates (non-Finnish by origin) (n=3), which reveals both parties' views on the matter at hand. There were respondents of both genders, with a distribution of two females (n=2) and four males (n=4). The respondents had worked at the company for different durations, which gave us some insight between how people who are already adapted or who are still in that progress differ. The duration

of how long the respondents had worked at said company varied between six months to six years. Additionally, all of the respondents had either worked or lived abroad before beginning to work for their current employer.

Respondent #	Origin	Gender	Years worked at the company	Languages comfortable with speaking
1	Home National	Male	1	Finnish, English
2	Home National	Female	6	Finnish, English
3	Home National	Male	5	Finnish, English
4	Expatriate	Male	1	English, German
5	Expatriate	Female	0.5	Finnish, English, Hungarian
6	Expatriate	Male	5.5	English, Spanish

Intention of having Finnish respondents alongside SIEs was to get to know a bit of their mindset and experiences of interaction with the SIEs. This way cultural as well as emotional intelligence already existent in the company could be estimated to be later reflected to the framework. The non-Finnish respondents were expected to be able to tell about their experiences or lack of experiences with relocation support as well as adjustment to the new environmental setting and team.

The interview was designed to be a semi-structured one, with same questions being asked from all respondents. Still, the follow-up questions varied on a case to case basis depending on the thoroughness of the answer following the question or to reach a clearer idea of the respondent's views on the question.

One goal of these interviews was to gain insight on how international teams function in the game industry, from both Finnish and non-Finnish parties' perspectives. Another goal was to map how aware the respondents were of their team dynamics and their contribution as well as the drivers of success. Lastly reviewing the importance individuals give to relocation support as both a way to choose employer and its effect on adaptation.

Interviews as a method of research can be misleading at times. They can suffer from various behavioral patterns that might skew the answers without the respondent having such intentions. These types of flaws must be acknowledged as a limitation caused by using interviews as primary data, and one should pay attention to this when interpreting the results. One such example might revolve around how safe the respondents feel when talking to the interviewer. Do they feel and know that what they respond will stay anonymous and that it is only for the purposes of the study? Do they feel that they should only provide positive answers about for example their employer? This is not always the case but should not be undermined when analyzing results.

3.4 Anonymity and ethicality of research

The responses used as primary data for this thesis came from one major Finnish game company, which will not be disclosed further. The ages of the respondents are not shown for the purposes of masking them. Their nationalities are also only referred to as either Finnish or non-Finnish by origin, to keep them anonymous. They will not be referred to as anything else than as 'respondents' or 'international/Finnish respondents' for the same reason. The interviews followed good ethics and norms in research. Individuals were not made to answer in a specific manner or guided towards any response to any extent.

3.5 Conclusion

The research design was created to fit the ideas of this exploratory study of individuals' feelings and attitudes towards SIEs and adaptation. Qualitative research was found to fit the cause the best because the study is more exploratory, and this method was more convenient to reach appropriate sample size of respondents. The limitations of qualitative research, such as skewed results due to human behavior, were understood and discussed as well. The respondents were interviewed with ethical means and are kept

anonymous in order to protect their privacy. This is also true for the company they work for, which is kept anonymous in this thesis.

4. FINDINGS

The interviews raised important points about individuals, teams, and interaction. Relocation support was one of the main focuses of the interview and it was found to be an important factor for SIEs affecting for example the initial stress level when moving countries. The responding individuals were all internationally experienced and were readily open to new connections. This led to exploring the in-team interactions, which were portrayed quite positively by respondents. Additionally, the teamwork quality was estimated to be quite high based on this sample. What was found, is how all of these forces together influence the outcomes of expatriation and teamwork in an international setting.

4.1 Company's HR functions influence the beginning of adaptation

As discussed in the literary review section, the ability to adapt differs from person to person. This is why it is important to choose the fitting ones to the posts. This done by the company's human resources team. This is one factor that was not previously considered outside the individuals capabilities. However, the effects seem to carry further. As multiple respondents described that they trust in their newer employees already when they first meet. This is mainly because they believe or know that their human resources team pick the most fitting individuals to employ. This has effects for the new employee as well as to the rest of the team: being trusted can influence greatly how open people are willing to be from the start, which in turn allows others to do the same.

The company's HR function is responsible for choosing people with the right mindset for international teams. As shared by all respondents, they enjoy being part of an international team. They believe that they can benefit and learn from the different backgrounds people have, and they remember to be 'sensitive to differences'. As another respondent answered: 'it can be difficult to be open if you have no previous international experience'. While this refers to individual's abilities, such as cultural intelligence, and can

be trained, it is always easier if the newcomer has already trained their thinking to be able to interact in an international setting. This way the probability of unnecessary cultural clashes is probably reduced marginally.

Overall, the HR function of a company has an enormous impact on the outcomes for current teams and the predicted effectiveness for SIEs. The influence can be seen in the proficiency in the use of languages all the way to how well they are able to interact from the start. The following chapter will focus on the cultural intelligence and individual actions that show how it is expressed in this major Finnish game company.

4.2 Culturally intelligent people share an international mindset

As depicted in the framework, the adaptation of any employee can be affected by the emotional and cultural intelligence they possess, as well as how others interact with them – also in turn could be measured by their emotional intelligence. The study suggests a clear pattern in how Finnish people working in game companies should communicate in professional situations. They should analyze the situation and use their best judgement in order to choose the appropriate way to act. This was brought up in most interviews, the language used in daily operations was English and Finnish was used only when having 'casual coffee machine conversations' or when the people in the conversation knew that everyone hearing the conversation could speak Finnish.

As it is understandable that people do not like to speak poorly of themselves or their behavior, the responses that respondents gave about their actions are purely subjective as this study didn't include observing employees' behavior. That being said, the responses pointed towards employees following a respectful code of conduct in the workplace. All respondents felt included by the use of language in work situations to large extent.

All Finnish respondents mentioned that they would switch to English if any international employee would join the conversation. In some cases, it was enough that there was someone who does not speak Finnish in the general area in order for them to switch to English. This is admirable, but as previously mentioned overly positive comments should be taken with criticism when the sample size is this small and interviewees evaluate their own behavior. As such, an international respondent did mention that at times their colleagues do have conversations in Finnish. Generally, people act as they say, but exceptions to the rule do exist. This is normal.

Still, considering the language barriers in conversations show the emotional intelligence of employees in Finnish game companies. The international employees, too, highlighted the importance of being sensitive to differences caused by the number of different backgrounds in the teams and overall in the company. Even if people consider their actions to be inclusive, the opinions of the other party should be heard in order to reach final conclusions. This gives an estimate towards how inclusive employees in the Finnish game industry are.

All of the respondents had had prior international experience, either by having completed a school exchange program or having worked abroad previously – and in some cases both. This most likely positively influenced their readiness and capabilities of working with people from different cultures and has improved their emotional intelligence. This also shows, to an extent, their ability to create networks between people, which can be interpreted to create a good basis for situations like this where one is working in an international setting. Again, choosing the people with this kind of international mindset increases how well existing personnel can facilitate new SIEs adaptation.

Many respondents described their teamwork to be in fact better due to the diversity of their teams and organization. Previous study also found that in creative industries different backgrounds increase the quantity of ideas because the different team members

have different experiences from their personal lives (see Stahl, 2010). This in turn has in many occasions been proven to correlate towards better results in the end. Previous research did mention that this would in turn influence longer idea generation and overall processes. While no responses from the interviews directly showed that this would be the case for the major Finnish game company, it can be an underlying effect that is caused by international teams.

The benefits the respondents mentioned to gain when working in international teams revolved around personal development, understanding of the world around them, and the different skillsets the numerous backgrounds bring to the workplace with them. This suggests that people are driven to work in the team and to develop themselves, which could result in more effective outcomes from those teams. In the interviews, respondents were asked about possible conflicts that had happened in their international teams. The responses showed that the cause of those conflicts was rarely the international setting under which the team performs. The causes were more directly linked with the job and position the team was working on, for example artistic differences.

4.3 Relocation support

As mobility between countries has been increasing, the respondents were asked about how familiar they are with relocation support and its functions. None of the Finnish respondents had had experience of the relocation support programs that companies can offer to SIEs. This was expected, because the study was done on their home country and most of the respondents were relatively young. Still, most, if not all, were aware that such programs existed. As they had not experienced this firsthand, they could only give out answers of their perception towards the system, its effectiveness and helpfulness. The answers were unanimous from the Finnish employees as well as from the international employees. The effects of this support were seen as a really influential way of making the new employee feel trusted and important to the company. This trust was created by the company to put resources into making the new employee's transition easier. By

supporting the individual, they feel like they are meaningful to the company. In other words: the organization values their present and future contributions, and cares about their well-being.

Several international respondents highlighted how effectively the program can reduce stress and they believed that it had a direct impact on their mental, if not physical, capacity to perform during work. This was brilliantly voiced by respondent number 4:

'All of the admirative paperwork, the immigration process, taxes. When all of that is facilitated for you, then it takes a huge amount of stress away from you. If that stress is taken away from, your professional life is obviously positively affected. You don't have to sit at work thinking that I have to go sort my tax papers'.

Based on this, it can be said that relocation support directly influences SIEs' ability to perform in a team after the relocation by removing detrimental stress. Less strain on the individual moving to a country even on one area can prepare them to have more energy to tackle other issues that relocation support cannot assist with.

Each respondent felt that it is also a factor among others that they value if and when seeking a job abroad. The weight for it, however, was not as great as they give to the company itself and how good fit it is for them. Still, it is worth mentioning that as one respondent cleverly put it: if you only see stress for all the arrangements related to the relocation, that can create a 'psychological barrier' that can keep an individual from ultimately coming to work for a foreign company. Having this in mind, it can be said that relocation support has great effects that can increase SIEs effectiveness and willingness to accept the job offer.

SIEs that have families have been discussed a lot in literature, and in the interviews the significance of moving countries was not undermined. One respondent said that if they and their partner couldn't reach a consensus, that would be it for the relationship. These are things that should be considered by the company as well, if possible. Family ties have been discussed a lot in previous research about SIEs. Family has been seen previously, too, as an important factor when discussing the relocation.

4.4 SIEs' adjustment to the new environment

We can find suggestions from the answers that all of the companies put effort into making SIEs' adjustment to the new working environment as easy as it can be. The company for example offers hobbies for the employees to enjoy together and many of the respondents, Finnish and non-Finnish, stated that they have friends within the company too, which could suggest that the atmosphere is open to new connections. As a respondent 3 with 6 years of experience in the company said: 'Many employees hang out with their colleagues outside of working hours too'. In addition, some responses indicated that the openness is one of the most important things in their working in an international team. This too, would support the adjustment of SIEs to the companies, as the framework suggests. Answers do go in line with this framework, as all of these things are considered positives by respondents as well.

For what we can say about SIEs' general adjustment to Finland, most respondents were able to continue with their hobbies as well as find new groups of friends. As pointed out by one of the respondents: 'the process is not instant and can take longer than a year to gain stronger bonds between people'. This also shows how adaptation is not instant and neither is the creation of strong friendships or bonds. They both develop over time and can have supporting or hindering forces, such as differences in cultural identities.

Still, the host country, Finland, was considered to be a nice place to stay. Responses ranged from Finland having highly educated people, which make interesting friends, to the cleanliness of Helsinki. International respondents also acknowledged the differences and similarities between their country of origin and Finland, and some cherished that. The surroundings, as well as inhabitants of Finland, meet or exceed their demands for the most part. As mentioned by Cao et al. (2014), network size with the host country nationals, perceived organizational support (relocation support), and career satisfaction all have an impact for SIEs to stay in the host country. From what can be said from the responses of international respondents, the results are leaning towards intentions of staying in host country.

4.5 International teamwork analysis

As Hoegl (2001) states, the most important factors when reviewing teamwork are communication, coordination, balance of member contributions, mutual support, effort and cohesion. We can link a lot of the findings to these six areas of teamwork evaluation. Following this, each of the areas will be discussed based on the respondents' input in the form of their answers.

The way that the Finnish game company in this case tackles communication is done by both the HR when recruiting employees and by the individual team members respecting the official language. As the responses suggest, no-one feels excluded by the choice and usage of language. At times, a respondent stated that they might need to concentrate a bit more when communicating, but that was the extent of the issues with that. Interactions with other teammates would be considered within communication, and the responses suggest that openness and respect go both ways in work communication and interaction.

Coordination was a topic often brought up by the respondents when asked about what are the key factors that supports in reaching goals and making progress. The responses

were ranged from 'clear goals' to 'good structure' to 'knowing what you do and why' and 'great supervisor/boss'. These responses would indicate that the teams can work well in terms of coordination. The structure was also described to be 'low hierarchy' with 'no-one breathing on our neck', which implies the degree of freedom that exists in these teams. The coordination can be efficient without direct orders and by analyzing the responses, we can assume that this method works well for the tasks these people have.

Balance of member contributions was mentioned in a few responses. They were about how different people used voice in teams and how they had had to adjust their voice to be able to contribute. A respondent mentioned that sometimes by terms of nature, some individuals are louder and more talkative than others, which is good in a sense. They also said that others remain quieter and require someone to ask them of their opinion. The way that the responses were structured indicated that both styles of communication and contribution were heard approximately equally in the end. In addition to this, no respondent introduced inequality as a reason for conflict or mistrust. This correlates with the way people are allowed to have their turn speaking, the balance is there.

Mutual support was mentioned a few times when discussing conflicts and trust. Responses as well as the way the responses communicated the answers would suggest that at least in the scope of this study, those teams were operating in teams with quite high mutual support. Responses that indicated this included 'no pointing fingers when team efforts fail' and respectively together finding out how to perform better next time. Another response suggesting this was how in uncertain situations teammates were able to find solutions on their own and take initiative. For example, their group organized communication for distance working and everyone were supporting each other to get through these unordinary times.

Effort is an important factor but similarly it is one that is relatively difficult to measure with just questions and interviews. Only lack of conflicts related to lack of effort mentioned

during the interviews lean towards effort, but with this data no conclusion can be made for this area. Observing as a way of research could give more insights on the amount of effort in those teams.

As it comes to cohesion, a most respondents stated that they had good friends even within the team. As cohesion evaluates the degree of willingness to stay with the same team, the overall cohesion should be quite high. What can be said about effort, can be said about cohesion to an extent as well. The survey design didn't include questions directly linked to measuring cohesion in the team, which leaves this variant a bit vague and should not be given any weight in this research.

Overall, within the areas that the questionnaire and the interviews were able to answer the teamwork, adjustment and relocation were found to be well understood, paid attention to and appreciated. Based on the case of this Finnish game company, the readiness to facilitate any SIEs is on a good level in the industry. The teams are open, they relish different backgrounds and ideas and remember to be sensitive to differences. The environment supports this as well by providing enough freedom and ways to be heard and improve systems of work. This all combined with an effective relocation support mechanism provided by the company, allows probable career success to new SIEs and solid effectiveness to the international teams. The next portion will discuss how this reflects on the current research on the subject.

4.6 Synthesis of findings

So, it seems that the cycle of adaptation of an SIE begins already from the instance the applicant is accepted to the company. From there on, the individual can experience positive feelings such as belonging and trust or negative feelings such as stress and anxiety. These positive feelings can be reinforced, and the negative ones can be reduced

by relocation support, as this study finds. This all can happen before the SIE has moved countries, which is important to notice.

When arriving to the new workplace, the individuals' personal attributes come to use. Their cultural intelligence, motivation to improve themselves, and their ability to network can impact the rate of adjustment to a great extent. This is as effective to the adjustment to the new general environment, the non-work life. On the other side, it is important for the home nationals to also possess these attributes to ease the adaptation process. As far as this study can tell, the structure is there to support for example communication between individuals with different backgrounds.

All of this factor in the teamwork quality of the international team, and at what pace it improves after a new SIE is introduced to the team. For the case of this major Finnish game company, the employees felt that they enjoyed working in an international team. They felt that they can improve themselves to understand other people and the world around them better. Overall, the quality of teamwork in the international teams seems to be on a good level as far as this study can show.

4.7 Conclusion

The findings have ranged from the meaningfulness of attributes and behavior of individuals to the impact that relocation support from organizations can have. They operate in different areas of adaptation but altogether combined affect the subjective adjustment of an individual. From what the study suggests, no area was overlooked, and the company puts effort into supporting the adaptation process of new recruits. This shows in the attitudes and interactions during and outside work. In both cases people who are open and welcoming are supporting the adaptation process. By creating and having these networks, the SIEs are more likely to stay in the host country for a longer period of time.

5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The main links to previous research comes from relocation support for SIEs and the international teams' functions and perceptions. There were mainly positive views of relocation support, but international teams however were seen as a more controversial topic still with both negatives and positives attached to them. These were the most significant findings from the study itself as a contribution to industry specific expatriation and international team research.

5.1 Relocation support as one of the key factors

As proposed by Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010), organizational support or relocation support has a great impact on SIEs' adaptation and effectiveness during the first few weeks in the new professional and personal environments. The effects relocation support offers increased adaptation into professional and personal life as proposed by Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) and supported by responses to this study. The positives were mostly mental and influenced the stress levels to be lower than without such support.

Some comments indicated the existence of relocation support being a norm in, at least, game companies. From that, we could propose that a lack of offering this service might incur losses in productivity and interest in the employer as this was one factor respondents consider when accepting a job offer. This again suggests the increased importance of offering these kinds of services to those who need them. As mentioned by a respondent to the survey, it is still encouraged to find fitting employees locally if at all possible, and only offer the support when necessary.

5.2 International teamwork, a stable in creative industries

As previously mentioned by Stahl (2010), there are very relevant positives to multicultural teams. As they described, multicultural teams provide various perspectives to creative problems, such as artistic designs, and by bringing those alternatives to the process improve the end result. This was also something that was highly appreciated by the respondents. The personal experiences, improvement and satisfaction were also positives that Stahl (2010) had perceived to exist in the culturally diverse teams. As with the first, this was also true for the case of this company in question.

The teamwork quality measured by the constructs provided by Hoegl (2001) was, as a reference, a good indicator to see how well these teams performed in action. This study suggested adaptation to be one factor that contributes to better teamwork quality in international teams. As the responses guide the judgement of adaptation, there is a general trend towards effective adjustment of SIEs in the case of this company.

5.3 Networks in the host country have an impact

In a study by Cao et al. (2014), they propose that the networks created in the host country, relocation support and career satisfaction estimate the willingness of SIEs to stay in the host country for a longer period of time. As some of the international respondents in this study have already stayed in Finland and worked for the company multiple years, their responses being aligned the same way as Cao et al. (2014) describe could reinforce the idea that that is the case for these individuals as well. The responses indicated that those people have a network of people locally with which they were satisfied with. Additionally, the amount of organizational support they received was perceived sufficient. None of the respondents indicated having intentions of leaving the host country, Finland, at least for the time being.

5.4 Conclusion

This thesis contributed towards three main areas: relocation support, international teams and importance of host country networks. As those topics have been studied extensively (Cao et al., 2014; Stahl, 2010; Howe-Walsh and Schyns, 2010), the focus of this research discussed those in the setting of the game industry. The findings followed results of the previous research closely. Positives of international teams described be Stahl (2010) were present in the case of this game company. Importance of career satisfaction and networks seemed to follow the work of Cao et al. (2014). Relocation support was seen as a staple for providing confidence and trust to new SIEs, as also proposed by Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010). Respondents did feel the international setting contributing to the creative work they do by broadening their team's range of ideas. Their answers implied good friend networks in the host country and the intention for a longer stay.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Main findings

As international teams are something relatively common in the game industry, the way they are organized and supported has been important. This study found a connection between the capacity of new employees functionality and adaptation, which was enforced by both relocation support as well as other organizational factors as the cultural and emotional intelligence of employees of the company. Relocation support was one of the key supporting factors in the beginning of an SIEs life in the new country. Afterwards the more important factors are the interactions within the team and networking in the local area. For some, the meaningful step forward is getting used to the cultural differences. The important part is to consider the non-work environment and adjustment also beside the work environment because that reflects also to the working life.

Some key findings include the shared mindset between respondents and perceived benefits of international teams, which arguably has proven significant to support adaptation. Teamwork quality was found to be high in multicultural teams in the case of this major Finnish game company, and it is a stable for the quality and diversity of creative ideas. Research of positive qualities about multicultural teams was inevitably present in this environment and context and it should be cherished. That combined with satisfactory network of new friends in the host country reinforces the probability of longer and more satisfying life in the new country for the SIEs.

6.2 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study, as mentioned partially in findings, include the assessment of effort and cohesion as those should have been either asked more directly or observed to gain a more realistic answer. Other limitations of this study include the number of respondents with international background. The more respondents the study would have

had, the more data there would have been to analyze. This would have reduced the impact that one interview's setting influences the answers. Longitudinal study would have given more holistic answers as well.

6.3 Implications for future research

It can be said that people with similar mindsets, such as the passion for making games, are easily brought together. As respondents of this study said, game companies are seen as workplaces where there is a lot of artistic freedom and low hierarchy. A suggestion for further research is to compare the thoroughness of adaptation between a general tech company and a game company. This would be interesting to see whether a similar drive to make games and the general atmosphere of a game company is something that influences adaptation.

Second thing that this study couldn't answer and that is a big topic under the expatriation research is how individuals' families adapt, interact or interfere with the adaptation to the new environment. As there were too few international respondents with families, this subject could not be properly studied. In future research, it would be interesting to explore if patterns are similar to other industries. That future research could also explore whether the game industry's relocation support or some other factor makes it easier, or harder, for families to adjust than in other industries.

REFERENCES

Ahmad, N.B., Barakji S.A.R., Shahada, T.M.A. and Anabtawi, Z.A. (2016) 'How to launch a successful video game: A framework' *Entertainment Computing* (23):1-11.

Anderton, K. (2019) *The Business Of Video Games: Market Share For Gaming Platforms in 2019 [Infographic]* Available from: https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinanderton/2019/06/26/the-business-of-video-games-market-share-for-gaming-platforms-in-2019-infographic/#7362311b7b25 [Accessed on 2 January 2020].

Biemann, T. and Anderssen, M. (2010) 'Self-initiated foreign expatriates versus assigned expatriates. Two distinct types of international careers?' *Journal of Management Psychology* (25):430-448.

Black, J.S. and Gregersen, H.B. (1991) 'Antecedents to cross-cultural adjustment for expatriates in Pacific Rim assignments' *Human Relations* (44):497-515.

Cao, L., Hirschi, A. and Deller, J. (2012) 'Self-initiated expatriates and their career success' *Journal of Management Development* (31):159-172.

Credin, J. and Selmer J. (2014) 'Who is a self-initiated expatriate? Towards conceptual clarity of acommon notion' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (25):1281-1301.

Dabic, M., González-Loureiro, M. and Harvey M. (2015) 'Evolving research on expatriates: what is 'known' after four decades(1970– 2012)' *The International Journal of Human Resource Managament* (26):316-337.

Doherty, N., Dickmann, M. and Mills, T. (2011) 'Exploring the motives of company-backed and self-initiated expatriates' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (22):595-611.

Jameson, D.A. (2007) 'Reconceptualizing cultural identity and its role in intercultural business communication' *Journal of Business Communication* (44):199-235.

Kostner, P. (2019) *Finland, still a gaming superpower in 2018* Available from: https://www.helsinkitimes.fi/207-themes/player-one/16289-finland-still-a-gaming-superpower-in-2018.html [Accessed on 13 February 2020].

Guðmundsdóttir, S. (2015) 'Nordic expatriates in the US: The relationship between cultural intelligence and adjustment' *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* (47):175-186.

Hall, D.T. (1996), 'Protean Careers of the 21st Century', Academy of Management Executive, 10, 4, 8–16.

Hall, D.T., and Moss, J.E. (1998), 'The New Protean Career Contract: Helping Organizations and Employees Adapt', Organizational Dynamics, 26, 3, 22–37.

Howe-Walsh, L. and Schyns, B. (2010) 'Self-initiated expatriation: implications for HRM' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (21):260-273.

Hoegl, M. and Gemuenden, H.G. (2001) 'Teamwork quality and the success of innovative projects: A theoretical concept and empirical evidenc' *Organization Science* (12):435-449.

Lazarova, M., Westman, M. and Shaffer, M.A. (2010) 'Elucidating the positive side of the work-family interface on international assignments: a model of expatriate work and family performance' *Academy of Management Review* (35):93-117.

Lehtonen M.J., Ainamo A. and Harviainen J.T. (2019) 'The fourfaces of creative industries: visualising the game industry ecosystem in Helsinki and Tokyo,Industry and Innovation' *Industry and Innovation* (1):1-26.

Richardson, J. and McKenna, S. (2002), "Leaving and experiencing: why academics expatriate and how they experience expatriation", Career Development International,Vol. 7,pp.67-78.

Scholz, T.M. (2012) 'Talent Management in the Video Game Industry: The Role of Cultural Diversity and Cultural Intelligence' *Thunderbird International Business Review* (54):845-858.

Selmer, J. and Lauring, J. (2011) 'Acquired demographics and reasons to relocate among self-initiated expatriates' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (22):2055-2070.

Selmer, J. and Lauring, J. (2012) 'Reasons to expatriate and work outcomes of self-initiated expatriates' *Personnel Review* (41):665-684.

Shafi, S. (2018) 'Employees' Self-Cultural Integration Through Cultural Intelligence: A Case Of Finnish Firm' *SocioEconomic Challenges* (2):32-43.

Stahl, G., Mäkelä, K. and Zander, L. (2010) 'A look at the bright side of multicultural team diversity' *Scandinavian Journal of Management* (26):439-447.

Suutari, V., and Brewster, C. (2000), 'Making Their Own Way: International Experience Through Self-initiated Foreign Assignments,' Journal of World Business, 35, 4, 417–436.

Suutari, V., and Taka, M. (2004), 'Career Anchors of Managers with Global Careers,' Journal of Management Development, 23, 9, 833–847.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questions used in the interview.

About company:

What company do you work at?

How long have you worked at *Company X* ?

> How did you find this company and why did you apply?
>
> Did company image influence your decision? How? To what degree?
>
> Did the host country's (Finland's) image influence your decision? How? To what degree?

Have you worked abroad or had other international experience prior to this post?

> How about during this post?
>
> Would you like to?

About background on people here:

What is your nationality?

What languages do you speak and at what level?

> What is your native language?
>
> What languages do you feel comfortable with speaking?
>
> What is the language you use in daily operations?
>
> Do you feel included/excluded by the language used in daily operations? Why?

With how many people do you interact daily?

> What languages do you use with those people?

About teams & daily operations:

Do you work in a team?

> Does your team have multiple nationalities?
>
> > Has that changed the way you work in any way? How?
> >
> > Could you describe your experiences working in an international team?
> >
> > What helps your team to reach goals and make progress? Why those?

How would you describe trust within your team? Which moments lead to this?

Has there been any significant moments that influenced (positive/negative) mutual trust?

What kind of conflicts does your team encounter? (Artistic, technical or maybe interactional?)

Could you walk me through the last conflict you had and solved?

If you had an idea to change an existing system of work, would you share that?

How would that process happen?

(For Finnish) How do you interact with international employees in your team?

About relocation support:

Do you know if *Company X* offers support to new employees that come work here from abroad (relocation support)?

Why have you / have not heard of this?

(If foreigner) Would it have helped you adjust to the new country in a personal or a professional level? Why?

(If foreigner) If you knew that support existed, would it have influenced your decision of employer? Why?

(If Finnish) If you were to apply to a foreign company, would you find this useful? Why?

About adjustment:

Do you enjoy it here in Finland? Why?

If you have family, do they enjoy it here? Why?

Was it a big decision to move here? And were both parties for the move?

Do you have friends outside work?

Are those friends close?

Are you satisfied with the friends you have here locally?

Do you get in touch enough with friends that don't live here?

Apart from work, do you feel like there is enough time and possibilities for hobbies?

If you are missing a hobby, how are you coping without it?